

Housing Committee

Date: **19 January 2022**

Time: **4.00pm**

Venue **Council Chamber**

Members: **Councillors:** Gibson (Joint Chair), Hugh-Jones (Joint Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Williams (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Barnett, Fowler, Meadows, Osborne and Platts

Contact: **Shaun Hughes**
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AGENDA

47 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declaration of Substitutes: Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

(b) Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public - To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

48 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

7 - 26

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021.

Contact Officer: Shaun Hughes

49 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

50 CALL OVER

- (a) All agenda items will be read out at the meeting and Members invited to reserve the items for consideration.
- (b) Those items not reserved will be taken as having been received and the reports' recommendations agreed.

51 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions presented to the full council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to receive any questions submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 13 January 2022;
- (c) **Deputations:** to receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 13 January 2022.

52 ITEMS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

27 - 30

To consider the following items referred from the Council meeting held on the 16 December 2021.

- (1) Petition
- (2) Deputation: One Deputation from Jim Deans
- (3) Notice of Motion

53 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

31 - 36

To consider the following matters raised by councillors:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to consider any written questions;

Two questions have been received from Councillors Platts and Pissaridou
- (c) **Letters:** to consider any letters;
- (d) **Notices of Motion:** to consider any Notices of Motion referred from Council or submitted directly to the Committee.

One Notice of Motion received from Conservative Group: Proposer Councillor Mears, Seconder Councillor Meadows.

- 54 HOUSING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2021/22 37 - 78**
- Contact Officer: Ododo Dafe Tel: 01273 293201
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 55 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2022/23 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 79 - 118**
- Contact Officer: Craig Garoghan Tel: 01273 291262
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 56 NEW HEATING AND HOT WATER CONTRACT (HRA) 119 - 142**
- Contact Officer: Miles Davidson Tel: 01273 293150
Ward Affected: All Wards

57 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

To consider items to be submitted to the 3 February 2022 Council meeting for information.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 24.3a, the Committee may determine that any item is to be included in its report to Council. In addition, any Group may specify one further item to be included by notifying the Chief Executive no later than 10am on the eighth working day before the Council meeting at which the report is to be made, or if the Committee meeting take place after this deadline, immediately at the conclusion of the Committee meeting.

PART TWO

58 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

To consider whether the items listed in Part Two of the agenda and decisions thereon should remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Shaun Hughes, (01273 290569, email shaun.hughes@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 17 NOVEMBER 2021

HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Gibson (Joint Chair), Hugh-Jones (Joint Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Williams (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Barnett, Fowler, Meadows, Platts and Phillips

PART ONE

32 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declaration of Substitutes: Councillor Phillips substituted for Councillor Osborne.

(b) Declarations of Interest: Councillor Williams declared she was a member of ACORN.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public: To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

The Press and public would be excluded from the meeting when the committee discussed appendix 2 of item 42.

33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 33.1 The minutes from the 22 September 2021 were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Councillor Meadows requested that councillor questions be given in more detail.

34 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

- 34.1 Welcome to November's Housing Committee. It's good to be in person again, even if we are still wearing masks and socially distanced!

Though the pandemic is still very much with us, still having the largest number of new daily cases and total recorded deaths than anywhere in Europe, it does feel that with vaccinations there are opportunities to recover from some of the impact of the lockdowns and the need to adjust our service delivery. It feels like this is beginning to happen in several areas some of which are covered by reports on today's agenda. I will touch first on some of the areas not covered:

Firstly, there is a senior management restructure. It is hoped that this will in the fullness of time enable housing staff to deliver improvements such as housing repairs, homeless prevention and assessment. At this stage 2 assistant director of housing posts have been created and I am pleased to be able to congratulate Martin Reid in being successfully appointed as Assistant Director, Housing Management. Martin will continue to lead the Housing service to ensure continuity of management in the department at a senior level while we recruit to the other vacant posts. Would also like to congratulate Sylvia Peckham and Ododo Dafe on their appointment to the restructured posts of Head of Temporary and Supported Accommodation and Head of Strategy and Supply respectively.

Secondly, as questions on today's agenda indicate we are being challenged by ACORN to provide a target date for the achievement of Landlord selective licensing. Assuming sufficient officer capacity for all the stages to proceed on schedule and an absence of hitches, we commit to bringing a report for decision on implementation of a licensing scheme at Housing Committee in November 2022. The evidence will determine the type of scheme chosen. After this Housing Committee decision, it will take an estimated 4 months before a selective licensing scheme will be able to begin, taking us to Feb 2023 as the earliest possible start date. All going to plan, we commit to Feb 2023 as our target date for implementation of a selective licensing scheme, but it will take longer for a more full, city-wide scheme to become fully operational as this would require secretary of state approval. We will work to get the resources and evidence to meet the earliest possible target date but need to be clear that many obstacles will need to be overcome. Currently officers do not believe we have enough evidence to apply for licensing. If we are to succeed, we need to:

- Improve our evidence of poor property condition or ASB need
- Gather evidence to the standard required by legislation to support any scheme
- Demonstrate evidence of the difference made by existing HMO licensing schemes
- Monitor evidence that existing enhanced enforcement approaches and other tools at the council's disposal have been insufficient and licensing is necessary

Labour and Greens are committed in our joint programme to achieving licencing and as a first step in September we agreed to find the resources to research where and why licensing has been achieved successfully over the last couple of years. We have been successful in finding the money for this and researchers are being recruited. We are also committed in our joint programme to create a dedicated private rented sector enforcement team to proactively enforce housing and energy efficiency standards, including:

- fixed penalties and action against landlords guilty of criminal breaches of environmental health and safety regulations
- tackling hazardous housing conditions by increasing capacity for 'HHSRS' hazard inspection and taking the initiative in identifying properties for inspection.

We have already invested £195,000 on expanding enforcement capacity. Staff will be in post this month so we hope we can help support renters much better now. There is also capacity to enforce on hard-to-heat homes. To develop our work, we are convening a PRS members working group meeting, jointly with Labour representatives on the 29th November. The purpose of that meeting would be to agree monitoring of enforcement such as the number of requests for assistance/enforcement cases opened, how many closed satisfactorily and the resulting actions. In time, this monitoring will be reported quarterly to housing committee. This group can also firm up effective monitoring and reporting of the impact achieved with the existing HMO licensing schemes. Once we have sufficient monitoring data, we will be able to review our PRS Enforcement Strategy. With greater capacity and a more proactive commitment, we will be in a position to act faster, and where landlord actions render this appropriate, we will pursue early action within the existing, jointly agreed PRS Enforcement Strategy. This should achieve more prosecutions than in the past and, where these occur, we will publicise them. This enhanced enforcement will reflect our stance of zero-tolerance towards rogue landlords, and we are happy to support the motion on this at today's housing committee

Thirdly we are striving to prevent homelessness and end the need for rough sleeping. Our work has been recognised by government and we have been awarded funds to expand our capacity to house both entrenched and new rough sleepers to around 80 places through the No second Night Out and Off street Offer services. We are also delighted to be awarded funding to help support private tenants in rent arrears and at risk of homelessness and prevent eviction where the landlord is willing to keep them accommodated.

Turning to areas covered today's agenda I am keen to highlight the Moulsecoomb hub. This report progresses the biggest and most exciting council led housing regeneration project the council has embarked upon this century. It promises 211 new council homes at a relatively high eco specification (adopting circular economy principles) as well a community hub, a skate park and new football pitches. This project has already obtained nearly £1.7m funding from the government to progress. Sadly, the pandemic has delayed the timetable by around a year so these homes are not expected now until 23/24 meaning that the achievement of our joint programme target of 800 additional council homes currently looks like it will be a year late. Nevertheless, we are still on course to more than double the number of additional council homes that were delivered by the previous administration under our joint programme despite the challenges of the pandemic

Last week I visited new council homes on the Bristol Estate. These homes are part of the Hidden Homes programme. Not only are these homes incorporating low carbon eco features such as air source heat pumps, but the rents are regular social council rents and so affordable for all, which is a source of great pride. Thank you to Councillor Meadows as she started the Hidden Homes programme that delivers social rents.

It is vital that we strive to increase the number of additional council houses at social or at living rents (otherwise known as 27.5% Living Wage Rents and at levels similar to the Government's latest formula social rents) I have long argued that some of the rents on new council homes are too high and we are committed in our joint programme to achieving more truly affordable rents within our additional council homes programme.

Elsewhere on the agenda, the expansion of the Warm Safe Homes scheme detailed in the Carbon Reduction report could be a potential game changer for those in private accommodation suffering fuel poverty. This could also be a way of starting to develop a local supply chain for this work, given the sector has been stunted by the failure of the government's Green Homes Grant scheme. We will also be looking at working with the community and voluntary sector to raise awareness of this scheme across the city.

The Housing Repairs report is there to keep members updated. As members will be aware from previous committee reports, we have been keeping up with emergency and essential repairs. However, a backlog of routine repairs has built up. The report sets out the recruitment being undertaken to address this, as well as the anticipated time line for eradicating the backlog. Given the high demand for social housing, a key focus has been to reduce the number of empty properties known as voids. Following the worst of the pandemic in March there were 311 voids this has now reduced to 266 but we need to bring this number down as fast as possible to the pre pandemic average of around 200.

The leaseholder report provides detail to the proposals outlined in the September report. The intention is to provide flexibility for leaseholders who own a single property and who can struggle to pay their share for large major works bills.

Overall, I hope it is clear we are beginning to bounce back from the pandemic, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank staff for all their hard work getting us to where we are now.

35 CALL OVER

35.1 All agenda items were called for discussion by the committee.

36 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions – None

(b) Written Questions – Six Questions have been submitted:

36.1 Ellen Musgrove of Acorn (Sam Skelt to speak on behalf of Ellen Musgrove)

Question:

"After several meetings with ACORN over the past year, councillors and officers said they were committed to landlord licensing. Then before September's housing committee meeting the Private Sector Housing Update Report did not recommend pursuing

landlord licensing schemes without anyone contacting ACORN to say the strategy had changed. Then bizarrely the administration voted to amend its own report to say the council was still committed to landlord licensing. Can the committee explain why this happened, who is responsible for this failure, and how can renters trust the council when they backtrack on commitments like this?"

Response: Thank you for your question.

Improving the quality and management of homes in the private rented sector is a key area of focus in the Housing Committee Work Plan. This includes the pledge in our joint programme with Labour to implement landlord licensing. This commitment has not changed. However, officers in September advised that we did not have sufficient evidence to recommend we proceed to the next stage.

Our commitment to landlord licensing has never wavered - we believe it works and this has been backed up by independent research carried out for the government back in 2019 and more recent research carried out by the Centre for Public Data. To be clear, the recommendation in the report in September was referring to not being able to move on to the next stage of the process i.e., going out for consultation, and it was never an intention to stop working towards a licensing scheme. So, the amendment to the report was just clarifying this rather than reversing a previous decision we had made.

With regard to selective licensing of private rented homes, our current legal advice is that there is a large deficit in evidence required to demonstrate that there is a significant problem which can only be addressed by way of a selective licensing scheme.

In the absence of robust evidence to support the need for a scheme Legal advice does not currently support any recommendation to proceed with consultation on any proposed scheme. The council would also be at significant risk of Judicial Review by landlords or agents should any scheme proceed without robust evidence.

Housing Committee was updated on this issue on 22 September and agreed to request resources for a review of the national position with regard to selective licensing designations to better understand the circumstances in which any approvals are currently being given.

Resources have been identified to fund this research which is currently being commissioned to enable a report back to Housing Committee.

The council currently license over 4,000 houses in multiple occupation and has invested an additional £195,000 to support our Private Sector Housing enforcement work.

There were no supplementary questions.

36.2 Daniel Harris

Question:

How much revenue in rent do you get from the government for Housing Benefit payments for those listed in emergency and Temporary Accommodation? of that

payment how much does the council keep? & how much goes to other sources? can you let us know were: private sector etc. (All sources of income).

Finally, can you list all of the Grants and funding bids the council has received in the last 5 years including a figure for each year? (All sources of income).

Response: Thank you for your question.

I am really sorry, but officers do not have the resources to research, collate information, complete and sign off a response to this detailed two-part question within the four full working days between receipt (10 November) and Housing Committee (17 November).

A written response will be prepared to the first part and circulated to committee and yourself as soon as possible senior Housing officers will contact you to clarify exactly what information is being requested in the more time consuming 2nd part of the question and depending what is wanted will then agree a reasonable period to complete a response which we will also share with members of Housing Committee.

Supplementary question: Following the items in the local press relating to empty homes and the cut in Universal Credit many are at risk. Please review the allocations policy.

The speaker was informed that the numbers on the housing register have decreased due to more restrictions. The allocations policy will be reviewed in the future, as well as Home Move.

36.3 David Thomas (Charles Harrison will ask this question at committee)

Question:

SWEP. Emergency should never be a secret. Please advise how SWEP is meant to work this year now there is no public involved and no public notifications.

Response: Thank you for your question.

In addition to referring Mr Thomas to our responses to previous public questions and supplementary questions on 'secret' SWEP at Housing Committee on 18 November 2020, 20th January 2021 and 17 March 2021, I can advise as follows:

Following the pandemic, we, along with other councils have had to change the way SWEP is delivered as we have moved away from shared space type of provision, due to measures required to control infections and outbreak.

Our commissioned Outreach Street Service who will be working on the streets 7 days a week is aware of people who are sleeping rough and direct them to the provision we have available. In addition, we ensure our other providers, including First Base Day Centre are aware when SWEP triggers and can link people to SWEP.

If members of the public see people rough sleeping, we would ask them to report to 'Streetlink' to ensure that they can be found and offered shelter.

As advised in previous reports to Housing Committee, the council will continue to offer accommodation to all verified rough sleepers where this is permissible within the Council's powers. In line with the Homeless Bill of Rights, our aim is to offer accommodation to all verified rough sleepers whatever the weather where this is permissible within the council's powers. Our approach has been successful so far with Brighton achieving the greatest reduction in rough sleeper numbers of any council outside London last year. Partly in recognition of our achievement we have been awarded additional funds to expand our no second night out and off the street offer, to accommodate 80 verified rough sleepers which we hope will help us to sustain our progress despite the ending of everyone in funding from September last year.

Supplementary question: Rough sleepers increased from 16 to 39 in September 2021 – what actions are being taken?

The speaker was informed that spotlight counts show seasonal variations. Months in different years should be compared. The council are seeking to be inline with the Homeless Bill of Rights. In November a comprehensive count will be undertaken, and this will show if progress has been achieved. 'No second night out' and 'Streetlink' are still in action, as are the Homeless Reduction Board.

36.4 Charles Harrison

Question:

"The recent Kerslake report highlighted that poor housing has wide-ranging impacts, making significant demands on many Council Departments and Support Organisations. It also called for an increase in the supply of Social Housing.

However, the national supply of suitable social housing falls well short of the 90,000 new homes at social rent needed every year, as called for in the UK Government "Building More Social Housing" Report.

What progress has the Council made in achieving its target to build more new Council homes and in reducing the unit build cost towards the £167k average cost per unit for the SE region, as identified in the UK Government Consultation "Use of receipts from Right to Buy sales?"

Response: Thank you for your question.

There have been 271 additional council homes delivered through the New Homes for Neighbourhoods, Hidden Homes and Home Purchase programme since May 2019. There are a further 246 new council homes currently on site and targeted through the Home Purchase programme to be delivered by May 2023.

A number of additional homes are currently being progressed including Homes for Brighton & Hove projects which are on site in Portslade and Coldean with 346 affordable homes (over half of which will be council rented), and the proposals for 211 new homes in Moulsecoomb that are being considered by committee today. Taken together this represents another 387 council homes to add to the 246 suggesting that another 633 additional council homes on site and hopefully completed over the next 2 and a half years. This is an impressive prospect considering the previous administration averaged 51 additional council homes a year

The council ensures that all new build costs are reviewed by independent specialist to ensure value for money. There are a number of issues that affect costs including:

- General issues with the supply of materials and labour creating volatility in the construction market
- A high specification for new council homes to ensure they are robust and of high quality
- High sustainability standards including low carbon and bio-diversity measures. Whilst these measures add to upfront cost it is much cheaper to install them in the new home rather than wait until we are faced with expensive retrofitting bills to comply with higher environmental standards in the future
- The inclusion of high quality public space in many schemes
- The constrained nature of sites within the city resulting in high enabling and abnormal costs
- Higher construction costs within the city than the wider area.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging period for the council's new build programme, with a particular impact on the pipeline of new projects. Officers are working to ensure all housing supply programmes effectively recover from this difficult period.

In order to meaningfully compare build costs a whole life assessment is needed.

Supplementary question: It is appreciated that the city has made progress in costs and climate issues. What measures are BHCC looking at to modernise builds? What are the build costs per square metre for the Portslade development?

The speaker was informed that modern building methods are being explored and the build costs for Portslade are not available at this time.

36.5 Jim Deans

Question:

“Recent commissioned reports and guidance from government are showing the need for Social Housing, the lack of is featuring high as a cause of many physical and mental illness. Can the Health and Well-being Board support a plan to build Social Homes and reduce the burden on local services including the NHS?”

Response: Thank you for your question.

Thank you for your question which appears to have been addressed by the H&WB board on 2 November 2021, however I can respond.

The council is committed to providing additional affordable homes, both through our Corporate Plan and the Housing Committee Work Plan. The council's priority is delivery of additional council homes as well as other affordable homes, usually via Registered Providers (housing associations).

- We have a total of 466 additional council homes projected for delivery for 2019 to 2023. We will look to see if we can increase this number in this year's budget due to

committee in January 2022 144 additional council homes were provided last year (2020/21).

- We have a total of 1,100 additional affordable homes (usually via registered providers) projected for delivery between 2019 to 2023 (379 homes for rent and 721 for shared ownership). 48 additional affordable homes were delivered last year 2021/22 by registered providers.

Updates on progress with delivery of new council homes and other affordable homes are reported to resident Area Panels and Housing Committee on a quarterly basis.

We have also reported to Housing Committee on successful bids for Government funding for accommodation and support for rough sleepers, including significant expansion of Housing First homes offering accommodation and support to clients with multiple & complex needs. We have purchased 30 Housing First homes and have funding to purchase a further 30 homes for Housing Led Support. We also have funding for an additional 30 homes to be leased for a Rapid Re-Housing Scheme.

Your question mentions 'a plan to build Social Homes'.

We are approached with many such initiatives and would suggest you share any business case with Housing colleagues in order that we can assess the commissioning needs the proposal seeks to meet, alignment to City Plan in terms of any proposed sites and the proposed management and support arrangements for any homes. The Housing Committee is responsible not the HWB for increasing the supply of affordable housing in the city, but as a key corporate priority it is a policy supported by all corporate decision-making bodies including the HWB."

It is worth noting that the way government defines social rents has changed and the new social rent formula leads to considerably higher rents than traditional council social rents.

Supplementary question: Please line up to council policy with regard to social rents. Are rents at Moulsecoomb hub to be social?

The speaker was informed that the social rents are a commitment for the council and are reviewed at Housing committee. Moulsecoomb hub rents will be looked at by the Housing Supply Board, it is hoped they will be lower than other new developments.

36.6 Jackie Strube & Ian Macintyre (Hanover Action)

Question:

*Having just completed our B&H Carbon Reduction Fund supported **Hanover Action** project on Greening Hanover Homes, together with the Low Carbon Trust, see <https://hanover-action.org.uk/home/taking-action/greening-hanover-homes/> we would like to submit the following question for next week's Housing Committee please:*

"Hanover Action welcomed the budget amendment in 2020 to create a £2.6 million warmer homes budget and its subsequent doubling to an investment of £5.2 million in

2021/22 for support towards the councils' ambitious carbon neutral 2030 goal. We are concerned to read in the report "carbon reduction in housing" at housing committee that only "up to £400,000" of this budget is likely to be spent in 21/22. Given we are facing a climate emergency we believe that using this resource to help provide warmer homes with a lower carbon footprint should be a priority and we ask that the committee explain the delay and provide members of the public with a timetable setting the expected stages up to an estimated date by which the budget will be fully spent?"

Response: Thank you for your question.

Thank you for your question and the update on the 'Greening Hanover Homes' project. The recommended allocation of £400,000 of Warm Homes funding to support the Warm Safe Homes Grants is a direct and timely response to the current pressure on energy bills caused by rising wholesale energy prices and support for vulnerable households over the winter months.

This funding represents the first phase of the wider Warm Homes programme that will be planned over the coming months with external support to design the scheme and outline delivery options, as this capacity and expertise does not exist in the Council. Resources to buy in the expertise were provided in a previous budget and it is a priority to get on with this work. The timetable for delivery will be based on the recommendations of this advice, taking into account both policy decisions for Council and any required procurement of delivery partners. We recognise the urgent need to deliver on the warmer homes spend and we will provide a detailed timetable early next year.

Supplementary question: Have consultants been appointed or is this part of the procurement process?

The speaker was informed that consultants have not been appointed and funding is in place for Warm Safe Homes. The council has a priority to invest in carbon neutral.

(c) Deputations – One deputation has been received from Jim Deans and five signatories.

36.7 Deputation: Urgent Rent Review

Speaker: Jim Deans

With property rental costs soaring and rapidly growing Councils are forced to spend millions with private landlords to accommodate the growing population. Millions of people trapped in emergency and temporary accommodation this is set to hit 2 million people by 2030 if we do not act.

Malnutrition, drink and drug abuse, domestic abuse and violence, child poverty, and plain old trapped in debt these are all part of the same crisis. Council setting its own rents at Local Housing Allowance or near trap people in debt, it makes the transition from unemployment to work very difficult, people with disabilities have no option but to live their lives on benefits trapped by the high rents.

The Kerslake Commission report spells out the implications of privatisation, we are having to buy back previously sold council homes which were sold at a great loss (I have an example of a flat sold under the RTB for £15k and recently bought back for £250k). Under the RTB we still lose a social rent home and the people living there could either be students exploited, we have a lot of families living in overcrowded positions, essentially hidden homeless, living from one room. Because the standards in private sector housing is worse than the overcrowding. Include those stuck in high rents and benefit capped. Genuine working families are left with £70 to live off each month or a single working woman only £10 better off while working a 40 hour week due to high rents, 3rd child rule drives families and single parents further into debt. We are exploiting the most vulnerable when the system needs to be fairer to keep children above the poverty line.

There needs to be fairness in council rents, some people have rents set at Social Level yet are high earners. Some council homes have multiple people in the home working yet still paying one social rent, meanwhile some people are on minimum wage but paying Local Housing Allowance level of rent leaving them trapped in debt or having to use Discretionary Funds or Universal credit to live, they are trapped.

We need a rent review of the Council Owned and managed and even Council Owned but leased out to Private Landlords or Trusts/Charities. A fairness Rent Policy and scale to match people's earnings.

We the signed hereby formally request an Urgent Rent review we would also like transparency and a community involvement in this review.

Response: Thank you for your Deputation.

You raise a crucial question of providing truly affordable housing and rightly point out that so called affordable rents at Local Housing Allowance levels make work unattractive for low paid workers.

Part of the housing and homelessness joint programme pledges to maximise new rents at social and living rent levels and this approach seeking greater affordability will be considered as part of a review into how the additional council homes programme addresses need and is funded. This is a complex piece of work; it will take some time and will look at the points you raise. It is worth noting that we are heavily constrained by the governments subsidy system on making changes to existing rents. However, there is more scope for rent choices on the additional council homes achieved in the future. While we are waiting for this review to be done and reported to committee, we can, in the meantime, in the HRA capital budget for 2022/23 explore increasing the rent reserve provision which is used to maximise the numbers of additional social rented and 27.5% Living Wage Rented (i.e., at living rents) that are achieved under the existing rent policy.

Any reports back to a future Housing Committee will set out community involvement and I am personally happy to discuss approaches to maximising affordability with the Housing coalition.

The speaker requested that the council access the government funding and was informed that the council will be submitting requests and the Joint Venture Homes are doing a good job at reducing rents.

37 ITEMS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

37.1 There were none.

38 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

(a) Petitions: None

(b) Written Questions: None

(c) Letters: None

(d) Notices of Motion: One.

38.1 Labour Group: Notice of motion

It is recognised that the majority of private sector landlords in the city make a positive contribution to housing in our city and this is valued. However, a recent report revealed that almost half of private renters in South East were victims of illegal acts by landlords. We have provided much needed extra funding for the Private Rented Sector (PRS) enforcement team and have recruited more staff to tackle this problem in our city. We are now in a position to do more to deter rogue landlord activity.

The National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) chief executive states that rogue and criminal landlords puts tenants at risk and undermines the reputation of decent landlords. It is essential that Brighton and Hove send out a strong message that rogue landlords will not be tolerated in our city. Many council across the country have adopted a zero tolerance approach to rogue and criminal landlords. It is high time we do the same.

This motion moves that:

1. This housing committee declares an intention to adopt a zero tolerance approach to rogue landlords
2. This housing committee agrees that a database of rogue landlords where action has been successfully taken should be made available on Brighton & Hove council website in accordance with s 4.5 of Rogue Landlord Enforcement Guidance for Local Authorities

Proposer Councillor Gill Williams, Seconder Councillor Theresa Fowler

Sources:

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/homes/property/news/19582869.almost-half-private-renters-south-east-victim-illegal-acts-landlords/>

<https://www.nrla.org.uk/news/chronic-failure-to-tackle-rogue-landlords-puts-tenants-at-risk>

- 38.2 Councillor Williams proposed the motion to the committee and asked for a data base of convicted landlords and noted that many are good and valued in the city. The NRLA have urged councils to use powers to stop rogue and criminal landlords and the council needs to send a strong message to landlords.
- 38.3 Councillor Fowler seconded the motion and stated that rogue and illegal landlords will not be tolerated, and the council needs to set a standard and support the request for a data base for rogue and criminal landlords.
- 38.4 Councillor Hugh-Jones thanked the Members for the motion and stated they had supported such actions before and the national package of reforms. There is zero tolerance of rogue and criminal landlords, a strong message followed by enforcement action is needed. Monitoring is ongoing; however, enforcement cannot reach everyone, and the council needs to be pro-active. It was hoped the committee would support the motion.
- 38.5 Councillor Mears requested that only rogue landlords be on the data base and noted that the enforcement officers 'on the beat' were the best way forward. The councillor requested that the data would be on the council website.
- 38.6 Councillor Gibson commented that only prosecuted landlords would be on the data base.
- 38.7 Councillor Williams noted that the national data base had been successful and that only prosecuted landlords were on that list. It was hoped that Brighton and Hove City Council would share a link to the national data base.
- 38.8 Councillor Mears thanked the councillor and stated they wanted assurance that the criteria was correct, and they did not want any good landlords to be put off.
- 38.9 Councillor Meadows commented that the word 'legal' could be added to the second recommendation: '...where *legal* action has been...'
- 38.10 Councillors Gibson, Williams and Fowler agreed the change to the wording.

Vote

- 38.11 A vote was taken, and the committee agreed unanimously to accept the notice of motion. (Councillor Phillips was not present at the vote).

39 CARBON REDUCTION IN HOUSING

- 39.1 The Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Manager introduced the report to the committee.

Answers to Questions from Committee Members

- 39.2 Councillor Mears raised a question relating to Outreach funding and was informed that there was no exact figure at this time, however, a figure below £10,000 is expected. The council are working with local partners on warm houses and outcomes will be reported back to the committee.
- 39.3 Councillor Hills raised a question relating to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and was informed that the lower rates are required by 2030. The previous energy strategy was set at a national standard. It is possible to increase a EPC from lower to higher, however, different properties have various challenges, and the council are looking at the best use of money. The data for EPC across housing stock is not good and the use of local people for repairs and maintenance has become a key priority.
- 39.4 Councillor Platts raised questions relating to communal blocks of flats and communications to residents and was informed that all leaseholders in a block would be contacted and agreements requested. It was noted that residents need to be onboard with the changes, some are very engaged, and communications is ongoing. On site talks and letter drops are in place and a return to face to face meetings is being assessed.
- 39.5 Councillor Meadows raised a question relating to EPC data and was informed that the homes at F rating were a priority and future committees will be updated on progress. Councillor Meadows asked if tenants would be moved out and was informed that some properties have challenges that prevent upgrading however, if tenants needed moving this would be looked at on a case by case basis.
- 39.6 Councillor Hugh-Jones proposed an amendment to the recommendations, which was seconded by Councillor Gibson.
- 39.7 Councillor Meadows raised a question relating to cost and was informed that the money was available, and the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) would be agreed by the committee.
- 39.8 Councillor Hugh-Jones noted that the Green Party had not proceeded with a roll out of solar panels as the government changed the data requirements for funding. An information hub for carbon reduction was suggested to give residents advice. An energy plan is key to moving forward and it was noted that any plan needs to dovetail with greater Brighton works. The feedback from the installation of air source heat pumps on the Bristol estate is awaited for indicators on the way forward.
- 39.9 Councillor Meadows raised a question relating to DFG and was informed that the grant followed the tax year, and the funding is constant, however the policy needs updating.
- 39.10 Councillor Hugh-Jones clarified that the DFG is supported by the Green Party.

Vote

- 39.11 A vote was taken, and the committee agreed the amendments by 7 to 3.

39.12 A vote was taken on the recommendations as amended and the committee agreed by 7 to 1 (2 Members did not vote).

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee note progress and planned action with regard to carbon reductions in housing.
- 2.2 Housing Committee is mindful of the need to give the sector confidence in the continued funding of this work.

Housing Committee agree that the Disabled Facilities Grant Housing Policy be brought back to Committee before the end of March 2022 to enable the extension of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Housing Policy (Appendix 1) beyond 31st March 2022.

That in the meantime the DFG be extended until 31st March 2022 and that Housing Committee agree the expansion of the Warm Safe Homes Grant as detailed in the report at 3.11.

40 PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACT FOR DOOR ENTRY SYSTEMS AND CCTV (HRA)

40.1 The Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Manager introduced the report to the committee.

Answers to Committee Member Questions

- 40.2 Councillor Mears stated they would support 2.1 (i) of the recommendations, however they would not support 2.1 (ii) as they did not want the committee to be bypassed.
- 40.3 Councillor Platts raised questions relating to anti-social behaviour, damaged doors, entry and access buttons and perceived unnecessary works and was informed that the only council approved works will take place by a dedicated engineer. All residents would be spoken to before any works are commenced. Those blocks most in need will be prioritised, with lighting being looked at the same time, however, lighting has a different funding stream. The state of doors will be looked at when entry systems are installed. CCTV can help to prevent anti-social behaviour and there have been many requests across the city for installations. In certain circumstances the trade button can be removed to prevent anti-social behaviour, however, some residents have preferred to keep the buttons.
- 40.4 Councillor Fowler raised a question relating to CCTV and was informed that the use of CCTV will be assessed for each location or site. There are a range of options available, and CCTV is not always the best, installations are taken on a case by case basis.
- 40.5 Councillor Williams raised a question relating consultations and was informed that ward councillors are being consulted on individual properties and this is ongoing.
- 40.6 Councillor Meadows raised questions relating to apprenticeships and diversity and was informed that the social value outcome was the target with apprenticeships and when

submitting under the procurement process, local businesses with apprentices score higher. Diversity is hard to measure when inviting businesses to tender, there is not a key performance indicator, however, businesses are required to indicate their approach to diversity.

- 40.7 Councillor Hugh-Jones requested that committee be updated more often than every 3 years. This was agreed by the Executive Director - Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities.
- 40.8 Councillor Mears commented that the committee should see documents and make decisions as delegated decisions could not be supported.

Vote

- 40.9 A vote was taken, and the committee agreed unanimously to accept recommendation 2.1 (i) and 2.1 (ii) by 7 to 3.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director for Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities to:
- (i) Procure and award contracts for Door Entry and CCTV systems services described below for a term of 3 years.
 - (ii) Approve an extension(s) to this contract for a period of up to two years following the initial three year term, subject to satisfactory performance by the provider.

41 LEASEHOLDER PAYMENT OPTIONS - UPDATE

- 41.1 The Assistant Director of Housing introduced the report to the committee.

Answers to Committee Member Questions

- 41.2 Councillor Fowler raised questions relating to costs to tenants and was informed that the costs are being looked at and will be agreed with the residents, following more information on the cost to each home. It was noted that the council need to keep properties in good condition and materials are costing more. The councillor expressed concerns relating to the replacement of the roof at Mimosa Court and was informed that the roof was being investigated.
- 41.3 Councillor Mears expressed concerns relating to leaseholders who don't live in properties and using the HRA was an issue, and they did not support the report.
- 41.4 Councillor Hugh-Jones stated that the aim of the report was to help leaseholders who are in genuine hardship. Leaseholders who do not live in the property may have moved to find work and rent at a below market rent to friends or family. Leaseholders will be supported on a case by case basis.

- 41.5 Councillor Meadows stated that the HRA is tenants' money and sub-letting is defrauding and they did not support the report.
- 41.6 Councillor Williams raised questions relating to selling properties whilst undergoing repair works, costs and lease extensions and was informed that the council has purchased 256 properties, the costs will be modelled to project total sum and the extension of leases is not covered by this report.
- 41.7 Councillor Gibson commented that loans, equity shares etc are not subsidised by the HRA and the offer is to extend residential leaseholders who have moved out.
- 41.8 Councillor Meadows considered that this was not accurate and the HRA is not a loan.
- 41.9 Councillor Gibson did not consider this to be the same.

Vote

- 41.10 A recorded vote was taken, and councillors Hugh-Jones, Hills, Williams, Fowler, Philips, Platts and Gibson voted for the recommendations and councillors Mears, Meadows and Barnett voted against.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee approve extension of payment options for non-resident leaseholders as set out in the report for whom this is the only property they own where it has been demonstrated that all other options to meet the cost of the works have failed.

42 HOUSING REPAIRS UPDATE

- 42.1 The Head of Housing Repairs & Maintenance introduced the report to the committee.

Answers to Committee Members Questions

- 42.2 Councillor Williams raised a question relating to progress and was informed that feedback will be given to the committee and updates were being given to residents via the Homing-In magazine along with talking to residents directly. Contact will be improved when the new IT system is installed next year.
- 42.3 Councillor Platts raised a question relating to dates for kitchen and bathroom improvement works and was informed that the council are working on dates, following delays from the pandemic, no dates can be given at the moment, however, officers are working together to move this forward.
- 42.4 Councillor Barnett raised questions relating to number of pre visits to properties prior to works being carried out and was informed that depending on the job, usually only one visit would be required, however, it may be more.
- 42.5 Councillor Mears raised questions relating to the number of additional services, increase in costs. The councillor stated they were concerned and was informed that less staff

transferred from 'Mears' than expected and the additional staff recruitment was the resource service and increase in costs.

- 42.6 Councillor Hugh-Jones stated that there were problems with 'Mears' before the contract was moved in-house and the back log was due to the pandemic.
- 42.7 Councillor Mears considered the management of the contract to be an issue and noted that the monitoring officer had support the councillor's previous comments and the TPC contract was not a light touch contract.
- 42.8 A vote was taken, and the committee unanimously agreed the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee note progress and next steps with regard to addressing the backlog of housing repairs.

43 MOULSECOOMB NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB & HOUSING SCHEMES: UPDATE REPORT

- 43.1 The Regeneration Programme Manager (Housing Supply) introduced the report to the committee.

Answers to Questions from Committee Members

- 43.2 Councillor Williams raised concerns regarding social housing rents and was informed by Sam Smith that the rents have not yet been decided and this was being currently being looked into.
- 43.3 Councillor Mears raised concerns regarding accessibility and was informed by Sam Smith that a programme was in place looking at mobility across the city and was looking at this site, which has a challenging topography. The councillor requested that the finances be carefully watched and not allowed to run away.
- 43.4 Councillor Platts raised concerns regarding carbon neutrality and was informed by Laura Webster that the air and ground heat source pumps were being investigated for the development, along with local materials and an increase in public realm elements of the site. A report on Carbon predictions is currently being awaited. It is noted that zero carbon emissions will not be possible, however all aspects are being looked at for the whole project including concrete mix. The councillor requested that residents be updated and was informed that the local action group were being constantly updated on the development and the communications team would be uploading information to the council website.

Debate

- 43.5 Councillor Hills commented that they felt the development was a good use of the site and would be an asset to the wider community. It was considered that a model of the design would be good for public engagement.

43.6 Councillor Gibson stated that they were excited about this big housing regeneration scheme, which was complex. It was noted that the council would need to be mindful of the finances.

Part Two

43.7 The committee discussed appendix two in the confidential section of the meeting.

Vote

43.8 A vote was taken, and the committee unanimously agreed the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

2.1 That the Housing Committee recommends to Policy & Resource Committee that Policy & Resources Committee:

2.1.1 Authorises officers to progress the submission of a planning application for the Moulsecoomb Hub and Housing development.

2.1.2 Agrees the anticipated budget for this stage of £2.1m to be funded by HRA Borrowing and included as part of the 2021/22 HRA Capital Programme.

44 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

45 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

46 MOULSECOOMB NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB & HOUSING SCHEMES: UPDATE REPORT

Part Two minutes

46.1 The committee discussed appendix two in the confidential section of the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.49pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

Brighton & Hove City Council

Housing Committee

Agenda Item 52 (2)

Subject: Housing – Deputation referred from the Public Engagement meeting held on the 16 December 2021

Date of meeting: 19 January 2022

Report of: Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

Contact Officer: Name: Mark Wall
Tel: 01273 291006
Email: mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 To receive the following deputation which was presented at and referred from the public engagement meeting held on the 16 December 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee responds to the deputation either by noting it or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter which may give consideration to a range of options and writes to the deputation spokesperson setting out the committee's decision(s).

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 To receive the following deputation along with the extract from the public engagement meeting which is detailed in appendix 1:

Deputation concerning Housing Spokesperson Jim Deans

On 22nd October 2020 John Hadman's petition came before you, it has been supported by 4,519 signatures. (It now has over 6000) It was agreed by a majority of councillor members that a 24 x 7 shelter for the homeless would be put in place, yet here we are 13 months later with a more fragmented service than ever.

There is plenty council could be applauded for with an increase in many services at a huge cost we must add but genuine increases in service. Many more organisations including from the voluntary sector have committed to providing services in the city for the homeless, rough sleepers and now refugees. Many millions have been spent yet here we are still no shelter, the reason the shelter is so important is pretty straight forward we function as a hospital without an Accident & Emergency dept. there is no triage, people are left to wander the streets, the current answers just do not work. We have a "Secret SWEP" an emergency protocol that does not have a "turn up

location" when SWEP is called people cannot just turn up and get life-saving shelter, they need to go into a data system their details need to be recorded, locations should be found prior and then a small search party is sent out looking for them. Already the council has agreed a few may be missed, is there any justification in leaving people to freeze when a much simpler answer was in place.

SWEP was working the council claimed it was far too popular, is that not a success. The public was made aware at around 12noon voluntary groups went out, social media was used the community joined together and supported the Emergency.

John Hadman's petition which had councillors support this was months ago and would be a solution if only we take a more proactive and preventative approach. The shelter would be a triage, regardless of who, when or why, It would be there, a focus for the services to work from a secure area supported by "the city". In the City of Sanctuary" where we are welcoming refugees, men. women and children who have travelled thousands of miles to get safety are finding it in Brighton & Hove yet if you are a victim of domestic violence on a Friday night you have nowhere to run to, this is why so many victims return to the perpetrator or are picked up in a worse state by emergency services.

A few days on the street are all it takes to introduce you to cheap drugs or even cheaper alcohol anything to take the mental anguish away for a few hours. Make no mistake every professional I have ever spoken with understands the importance of early intervention, preventing one night is the solution and we must go further.

So Brighton and Hove City Council we urgently call upon you again to ask that you live up to those commitments made toward John Hadman's petition and to your agreement to open a 24 x 7 shelter of safety. As the founder of Sussex Homeless Support, and as a Founder Member of the Brighton & Hove Housing Coalition I will be taking your response back to these organisations and every other Professional & Voluntary groups to mobilise them and achieve what was promised all those months ago.....

Supported by:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Charles Harrison | 2. Dave Croydon |
| 3. David Thomas | 4. Jan Pawluk |
| 5. Barry Hughes | |

Ward affected: All

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETING

4.30pm 16 DECEMBER 2021

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Robins (Chair), Allcock, Appich, Atkinson, Bagaeen, Barnett, Brennan, Brown, Childs, Clare, Davis, Deane, Druitt, Evans, Gibson, Hamilton, Heley, Hills, Janio, John, Knight, Mac Cafferty, McNair, Meadows, Mears, Nemeth, Nield, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn, Pissaridou, Powell, O'Quinn, Shanks, Simson, C Theobald, Wilkinson and Williams.

4. DEPUTATIONS

- 4.1 The Mayor reported that four deputations had been received from members of the public and that he would invite the spokesperson to introduce their deputation and then the relevant Chair to respond. He noted that 15 minutes were set aside for the consideration of deputations.
- 4.2 The Mayor invited Jim Deans as the spokesperson for the deputation to join and address the meeting; noting that the deputation related to housing issues in the city.
- 4.3 Jim Deans spoke on the deputation relating to the provision of a homeless shelter in the city.
- 4.4 Councillor Gibson thanked Mr Deans for presenting the deputation and stated that since the pandemic things had changed, and the operation SWEP was no longer viable or recommended. The aim now was to house people as quickly as possible in line with government guidance and to seek to reduce the numbers of rough sleeper as much as possible. It was intended to provide additional rooms over the winter period, and he was happy to discuss matters further with Mr deans outside of the meeting.
- 4.5 The Mayor thanked Mr Deans for joining the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. He explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Housing Committee for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.

19 January 2022

Brighton and Hove City Council

Question to Housing Committee 19 January 2022

From: Councillor Pissaridou

As I understand it when a resident is made homeless, the Council has a housing responsible for them. The current practice seems to be that the homeless residents (and their children) are housed firstly in “emergency” accommodation and then into “temporary” accommodation.

I understand that the majority of both emergency and temporary accommodation are privately owned and leased to the Council. Is this correct? The council then “sub-lets” the accommodation to the resident/tenant. Can you tell me what the contractual arrangements are between the Council and their landlords and what the contractual arrangements are between the Council and the council resident?

I have also been informed that some of these properties do not meet the appropriate standards we would expect in our own council owned properties.

Some of my residents have experienced many issues with the condition of the “emergency” accommodation provided and have then had difficulties getting these problems addressed and are worried and confused as to whom they then need to ask that the necessary repairs are carried out.

Some residents have also expressed concerns that they will be moved out of the City if they complain about their housing conditions.

Please can the council confirm whose responsibility it is to ensure that these tenants do have decent living conditions and a safe home environment for themselves and their families to live.

Councillor Anne Pissaridou

19 January 2022

Brighton and Hove City Council

Member Question for 19 Jan 2022 Housing Committee

From: Councillor Platts

A recent presentation to Area Housing Panels outlined an investment of £4.457m to deliver on various priorities including addressing fuel poverty concerns for tenants. In light of the recent news reports that households can expect to see a severe increase in energy costs as the UK's energy price cap is reassessed, with suppliers due to increase prices in line with costs; can the Council confirm whether this figure needs to be increased? Will the Chair consider writing a joint letter to Government Ministers supporting the removal of VAT on fuel?

Councillor Platts

Brighton & Hove City Council

Housing Committee

Agenda Item 53 (d)

Subject: Council placement of Homeless People and Rough Sleepers

Notice of Motion from the Conservative Group

Date of meeting: 19 January 2022

Proposer: Councillor Mears
Seconded: Councillor Meadows

Ward(s) affected: All

This Council:

- a) Notes that Housing Committee has reported receiving Government funding totaling £21,272,376 million to address homelessness and rough sleeping (see link 1);
- b) Has placed homeless people and rough sleepers in accommodation without adequate support, including:
 - i. At Kendal Court, significant failings of the Council have been identified in an Independent Report titled 'Returning to Kendal Court', September 2021 (see link 2)
 - ii. At Eastbourne, there have sadly been a number of fatalities in out-of-area placements;
- c) Further notes, that a resident fleeing from unsafe accommodation provided by Brighton & Hove City Council in Eastbourne, pitched a tent at Old Steine Gardens for several weeks to escape the situation;
- d) Calls on Audit & Standards Committee to commission a report to audit all Government funding received to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping through the pandemic; and
- e) Calls on the Administration to send an urgent report to Housing Committee to take emergency action to ensure homeless people and rough-sleepers placed in accommodation by Brighton & Hove City Council have proper 24-hour support to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Supporting Information:

Link 1: Questions and answers – Housing Committee 22 September 2021

<https://www.brightonhoveconservativecouncillors.com/news/questions-and-answers-housing-committee-22-september-2021>

Link 2: Report – Returning to Kendal Court – September 2021

<https://www.brightonhoveconservativecouncillors.com/news/returning-kendal-court-independent-review>

HOUSING COMMITTEE	Agenda Item 54
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Committee workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 2 2021/22		
Date of Meeting:	19 January 2022		
Report of:	Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Ododo Dafé	Tel: 01273 293201
	Email:	ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report illustrates progress against Housing Committee work plan 2019-23 priorities and targets, as well as other Housing service targets. The report covers Quarter 2 of the 2021/22 financial year and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The Housing Committee workplan (Appendix 1) and joint programme (Appendix 2) were agreed at Housing Committee in September 2019. This report also reviews the progress against the goals of the joint programme (Appendix 2). The pandemic has disrupted progress in delivering the timetable approved in September 2019 and this needs to be updated to reflect the current position and resources. Rescheduling the timetable in a revised workplan presents an opportunity to review priorities and consider additions or subtractions to the plan for future years.
- 1.3 Information highlights from the quarter include:
 - **Customer feedback** – 59 compliments received from customers, and 85% of stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days.
 - **Private sector housing** – 53% of Houses in Multiple Occupation have met all special conditions (for licences issued over 12 months ago).
 - **Major adaptations** – waiting times for applications were 21.3 weeks for private sector homes.
 - **Housing needs** – there were 2,012 households in temporary accommodation at the end of September 2021. This includes rough sleeper and other Covid placements, which have reduced from 258 to 134.
 - **Housing supply** – 27 additional council homes delivered through buy backs.

- **Council housing management** – 103 council homes were re-let in an average of 66 days.
- **Council housing repairs and maintenance** – the proportion of ‘Decent Homes’ increased from 91.9% to 92.9%.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee notes the report and comments on the priorities for the work programme going forwards.
- 2.2 That a revised workplan is presented for consideration at Housing Committee in June 2022.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The report uses red, amber and green traffic light symbols to provide an indication of performance, and also trend arrows to provide an indication of movement from the previous quarter.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION:

- 4.1 This report went to Area Panels in December 2021 for residents to comment and enquire upon.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The financial implications are contained in the report. An area of performance with significant financial effect is the ability to collect rents from tenants as well as the impact of the length of time that properties are empty. Over the last two years the percentage of rent collected has fallen in the HRA, and although the performance still compares favourably when benchmarked against other stock holding councils around the country, this is of concern and a review is underway to identify actions that will help to improve this. The collection of rents at 15.1 in Appendix 1 show that in Quarter 2, there has been a 0.22% decrease in the collection of rents with collection now forecast at 96.16%. This will need addressing for the service to get back to anything like the 2018/19 collection rate of 97.8%. An improvement of 0.1% increase in collection equates to approximately £53,000 more rental income in 2021/22.
- 5.2 Indicator 15.9 shows that the average relet time (excluding those with major works required) has reduced from 88 last quarter to 66 days for Quarter 2 which is good news. However, there are currently 273 empty properties awaiting works and current forecasts suggest that this is causing an overspend of close to £1m for the HRA due to the loss of rent and extra council tax costs incurred. This forecast will be updated for month 9 Targeted Budget Management Report to P&R Committee in February. Having empty properties extends the time those on the Housing Register are waiting for council housing and increases the costs incurred on temporary accommodation in

the general fund. It is therefore crucial to reduce the numbers of empty properties and minimise re-let times so that the HRA can maximise its rental income, reduce waiting times and reduce the costs of temporary accommodation in the general fund. On average, one empty property costs the HRA an estimated £93 per week in lost rent and also further council tax costs are incurred. The service is working on the backlog of empty properties and extra staff have been recruited to assist in lettings. Recovery efforts to tackle the backlog of empty council homes include using approved procurement routes to increase contractor capacity and large-scale recruitment of new permanent staff who can carry out works directly. Therefore, this should improve this performance as the year progresses.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks Date: 10-01-22

Legal Implications:

- 5.2. There are no significant legal implications arising from this regular monitoring report to draw to the Committee's attention.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 13/12/2021

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The average energy efficiency rating of council homes stands at 68.1 (out of a maximum of 100) and efforts to increase this rating contribute towards the council's sustainability commitments and help to reduce fuel poverty.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Cases of anti-social behaviour involving criminal activity are worked on in partnership with the police and other agencies.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 Many services were stopped or significantly impacted in March 2020 in order to comply with Coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions and some impacts continue.

Corporate or Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 There are no direct corporate or citywide implications arising from this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Housing Committee Workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 2 2021/22.
2. Appendix 2 - Joint – Labour/Green 2019-2023 Housing Programme – progress aligned to Housing Committee priorities & work plan 2019-23.

Background Documents:

None.

Committee workplan progress update and Housing performance report

Quarter 2 2021/22

This report provides updates on the Housing Committee priorities and work plan for 2019 to 2023, as well as a range of performance indicators. Delivery of a complex housing service during the Covid-19 crisis had been a challenge, and gratitude is expressed to residents for the patience and understanding they have shown.

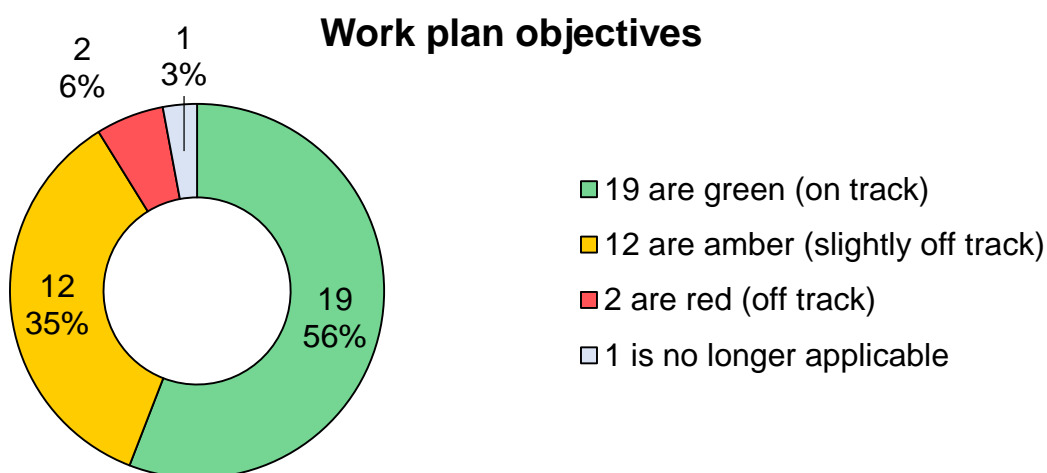
While there continue to be areas of strong performance, with 19 Housing Committee Work Plan objectives on track for delivery and 7 performance indicators on or above target, some delivery challenges remain. The report highlights actions being taken to improve services where performance has been adversely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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This housing performance report covers Quarter 2 (Q2) of the 2021/22 financial year. It uses red, amber and green ratings to provide an indication of performance.

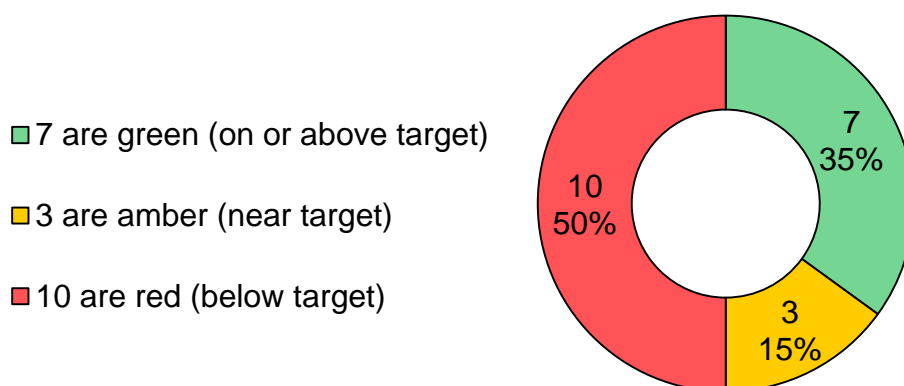
Part one provides an update of performance against the Housing Committee work plan objectives for 2019 - 2023:



Part two presents results for a range of performance indicators across Housing and similarly uses red, amber and green ratings, as well as trend arrows. Commentary has been included for indicators which are red. During Quarter 2, the ratings and trends were as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>G Green – on or above target
(7 indicators)</p> | <p>↑ Improved since last time
(10 indicators)</p> |
| <p>A Amber – near target
(3 indicators)</p> | <p>↔ Same as last time
(2 indicators)</p> |
| <p>R Red – below target
(10 indicators)</p> | <p>↓ Poorer than last time
(8 indicators)</p> |

Performance indicators



Part one: Housing Committee priorities and work plan 2019-23

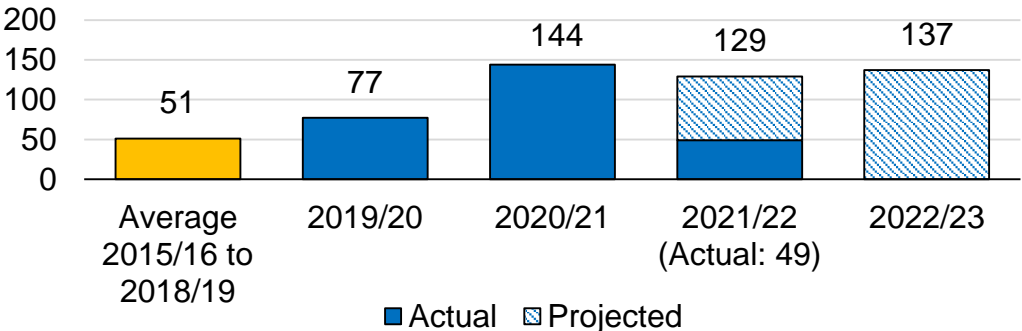
1. Provide additional affordable homes

1.1 Slightly off track: Achieve 800 additional council homes (including develop the existing Hidden Homes strategy)

Total of 518 homes projected for 2019 to 2023, including 270 already completed:

- 2021/22: 126 homes – buy backs (79 general needs and 26 Housing First), Hidden Homes (11) and Oxford Street (10)
- 2022/23: 171 homes – buy backs (75 general needs and 10 Housing First), Hidden Homes (13), Rotherfield Crescent (3), Victoria Road (42), Hollingbury Library (13) and Frederick Street (4), Palace Place (11)
- Completion dates for 408 homes have changed from 2022/23 to early 2023/24 (including 176 Homes for Brighton & Hove dwellings)
- Regular updates on progress are provided to Housing Supply Member Board

Additional council homes per year

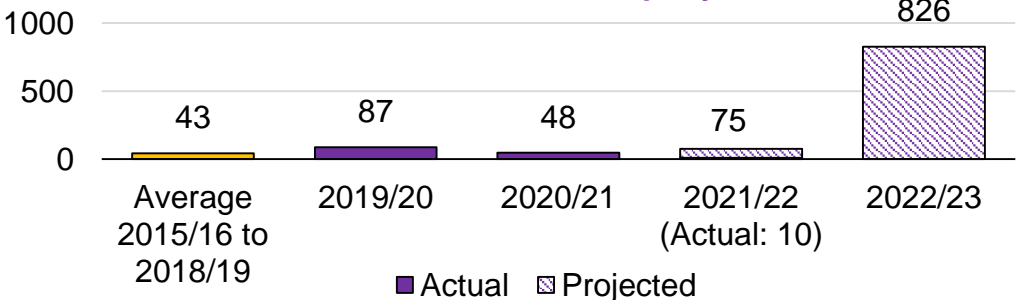


1.2 On track: Achieve 700 other additional homes (registered provider, affordable rented, shared ownership)

Total of 1,036 homes (323 rent and 713 shared ownership) projected for 2019 to 2023, including 145 already completed:

- 2021/22: 75 homes – Preston Barracks (19), Falmer Avenue (13), Hangleton Way (33) and Lions Gardens (10)
- 2022/23: 826 homes – Preston Barracks (226), Dunster Close (2), Graham Avenue (125), Lyon Close (154), Sackville Hotel (7), Sackville Estate (56) New Church Road (5), King’s House (92), Edward Street (33), School Road (104) and Longley (22)

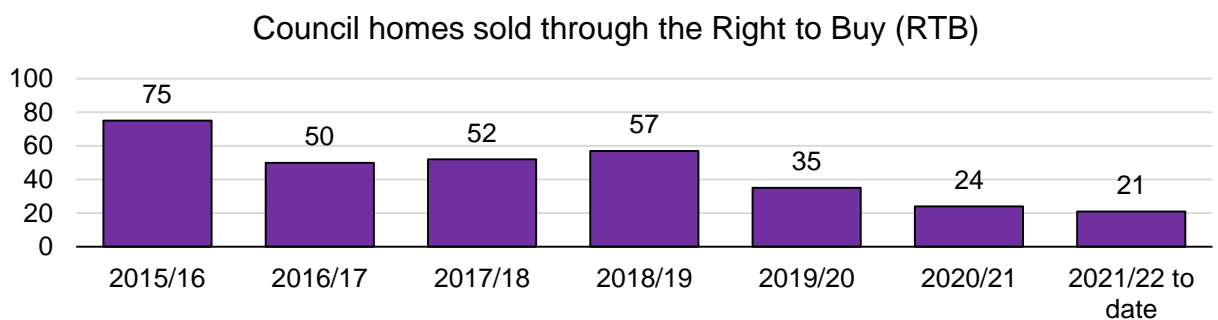
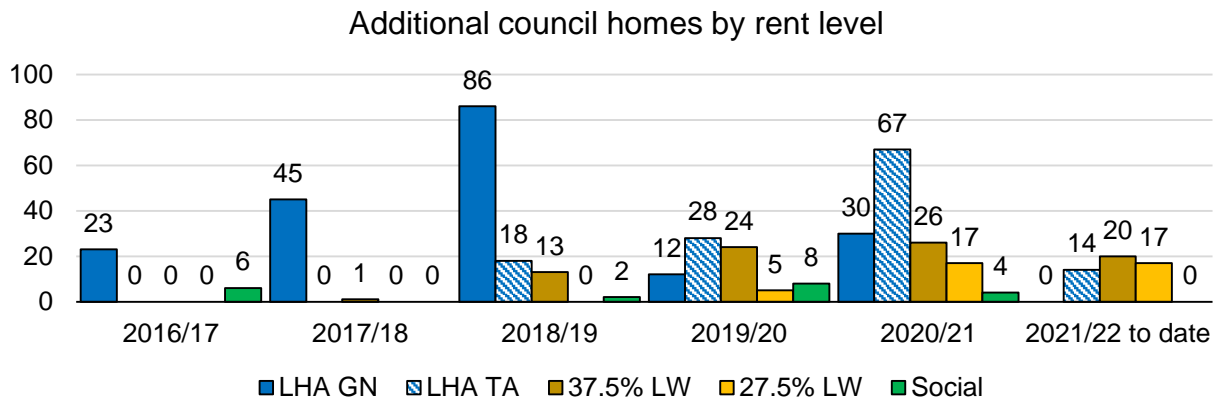
Other additional homes per year



1. Provide additional affordable homes

1.3 On track: Review the rent policy to maximise the number of council homes replaced at social or living wage rents (especially those at 27.5% Living Wage)

17 of the 37 (46%) of new general needs council homes delivered during 2021/22 are at 27.5% Living Wage rents, and the remaining 20 (54%) are at 37.5% Living Wage rents. The temporary accommodation (TA) council homes are at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

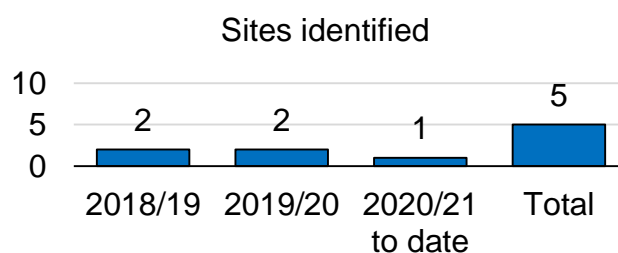


1.4 On track: Develop a policy for the council to take the role of developer on major sites

- Homes for Brighton & Hove Joint Venture is now a delivery company

1.5 Slightly off track: Bring a report to committee identifying suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust (CLT) for development

- 5 out of 10 sites so far identified for Community Land Trust development
- Planning applications are regularly reviewed to seek opportunities for self-build plots on large private development sites, but this has not yet yielded suitable plots



2. Improving private rented housing

2.1 Slightly off track: Review and resubmit selective licensing scheme proposal to improve the management and standards of private rented sector homes in the city

- Private Sector Housing Update reports went to Housing Committee in June and September 2021

2.2 Off track: Research and review an ethical loan scheme

- This work has been deferred due to Covid-19 priorities

2.3 Off track: Develop or commission an information or advice hub for private renters and consider options for a private tenants' forum

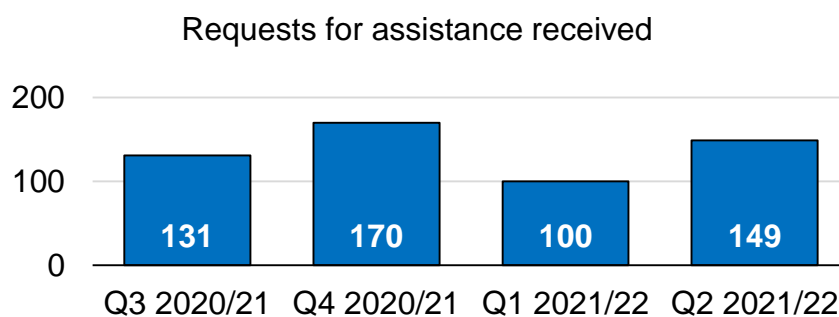
- This work has been deferred due to Covid-19 priorities

2.4 Slightly off track: Research and develop a social lettings agency

- Work was deferred due to Covid-19 response
- Private Sector Housing Update reports went to Housing Committee in June and September 2021

2.5 On track: Develop the enforcement approach to private sector housing to reflect the full range of potential options available to improve management and standards

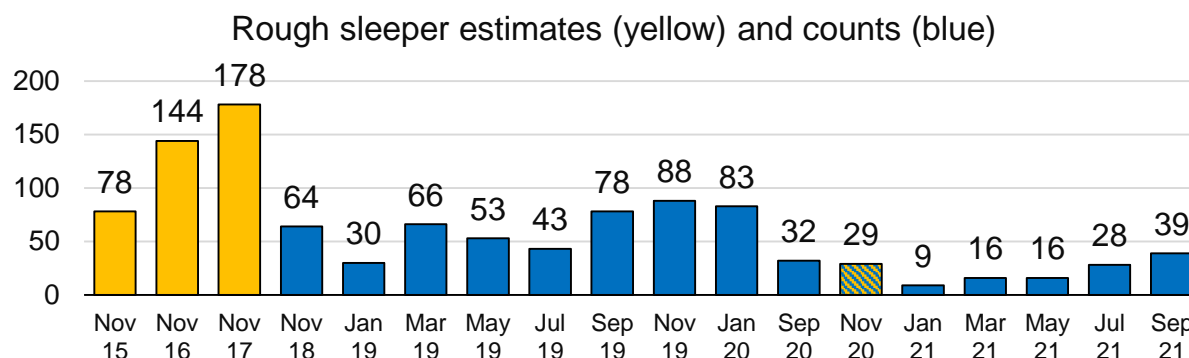
- Request for assistance top categories during Q2: 47 disrepair (32%), 18 other safety concerns (12%) and 10 nuisance from neighbour's disrepair (7%)



3. Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping

3.1 On track: Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects)

- Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy approved by Housing Cttee in June 2020
- Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP): number of rough sleeper and other Covid placements has reduced from 258 to 134 during Q2



The November 2020 figure used a blended methodology of an estimate with a spotlight count. Please note that estimates have only been carried out at times when counts have not been. While it would have been desirable to do both simultaneously and compare them, staff capacity has not allowed this over the last few years

3.2 On track: Review/consult/adopt the Homeless Bill of Rights

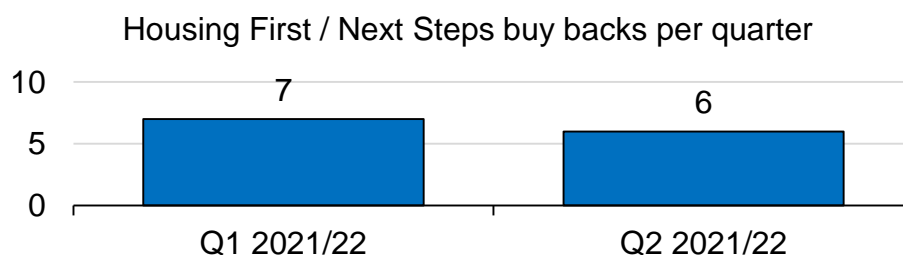
- Values of the Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy approved by Housing Committee in June 2020 align to the Homeless Bill of Rights. Strategy states that *'The Homeless Bill of Rights should be viewed as a standard against which the Council and its partners judge our policies and practices'*
- The Homeless Bill of Rights was adopted by full council in March 2021 and is an aspirational document against which to measure services and progress

3.3 No longer applicable: Provide a 365 day night shelter

- Night shelter was closed in early April 2020 on the advice of MHCLG and Public Health England due to Covid-19 restrictions, as it had congregate sleep sites

3.4 On track: Expand Housing First

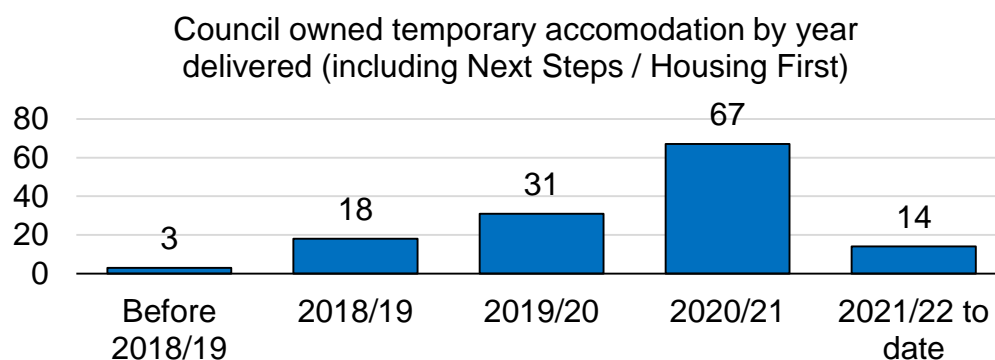
- 60 homes are currently used for Housing First, including buy backs
- 13 homes have been bought for Housing First during the first half of 2021/22



3. Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping

3.5 On track: Develop a strategy for the provision of council run temporary accommodation including Seaside Homes

- Hartington Road – 38 homes became ready in February 2021
- Oxford Street – completion of 10 homes expected January 2022
- Buy backs – 64 of 172 homes purchased are for temporary accommodation



3.6 On track: Develop a homeless strategy, ensuring homeless people are involved in the design and development of services which directly affect them

- Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy approved by Housing Cttee in June 2020
- Homeless Reduction Board has been meeting since September 2020 and its role includes monitoring progress of the aspirations contained in the Homeless Bill of Rights and making recommendations to Housing Committee
- Homeless Reduction Operational Board met for the first time in July 2021 and includes people with a lived experience of homelessness

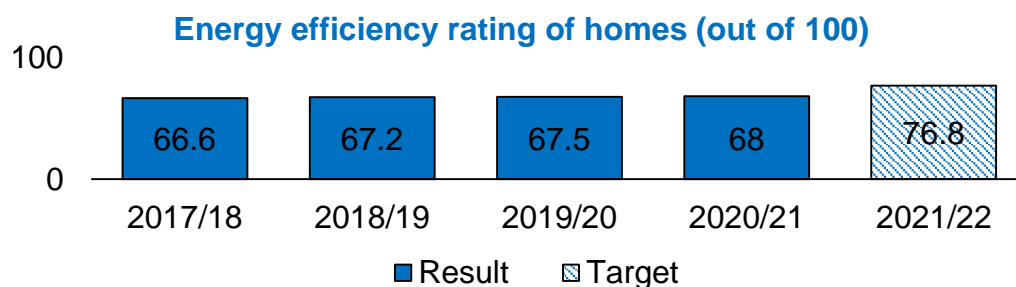
4. Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including address fuel poverty

4.1 On track: Develop an action plan to set out how we will work collaboratively to ensure housing contributes to making the city carbon neutral by 2030

- A report on 'Housing action towards carbon neutral 2030' was approved at Housing Committee in January 2021
- A further 'Carbon Reduction in Housing' report was considered at Housing Committee in November 2021, with a costed retrofit plan towards carbon neutral by 2030 to follow in 2022

4.2 Slightly off track: Develop a new PV and energy efficiency strategy for council homes to include standards for new homes

- Standards for new council homes are guided by the revised new build specification – minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of A
- Procurement of domestic solar PV programme on council homes (1,000 by 2023) expected to start in 2022 once additional project management support recruited



4.3 On track: Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments

- A report providing an 'Update on Sustainability Measures for New Homes and Housing Supply Sustainability Policy' went to Housing Committee in January 2021 and the committee endorsed a draft New Build Housing Sustainability Policy
- Victoria Road new build scheme will pilot a low energy 'microgrid' heating and electricity solution integrating ground source heat pumps and solar panels to reduce residents' bills

4.4 On track: Investigate and report the possibility of bulk buying PV panels and other energy saving resources

- Round 1 of the Solar Together Sussex (STS) scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, to date approximately 70 installs have been completed
- Round 2 of STS was launched in September 2021. Over 7,000 homes registered across Sussex and a local supplier has been appointed to begin installations in the new year

5. Improving council housing and community involvement

5.1 Slightly off track: Work with tenants to develop a 'decent environment' standard

- Delayed due to service pressures and other priorities due to Covid-19

5.2 On track: Develop a fire safety programme in conjunction with tenants and residents

- Sprinklers are now fitted as standard in all council new build homes
- Sprinkler systems at St James's House and Essex Place – currently reviewing following feedback from residents
- Council is working to consider the likely impacts of the proposed Building Safety legislation including proposed resident engagement strategy for building safety
- Fire Risk Assessments are carried out regularly to council housing buildings
- Currently engaging consultancy services to support a review of the new building safety guidance and implementation

5.3 On track: Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work

- New Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy was approved at Housing Committee in March 2021

5.4 On track: Extend participatory budgeting

- Report approved at March 2021 Housing Committee including development of a policy for extending participatory budgeting

5.5 Slightly off track: Develop the work undertaken with leaseholders to develop a new leasehold involvement policy, setting out how leaseholders can be supported to be more proactively involved in capital works and other leasehold matters

- Consultation with leaseholders on new planned maintenance and improvement programme contracts has concluded and contracts are now operating. Leaseholders are being consulted where the council has plans to undertake works under these contracts on a block-by-block basis
- Engagement with tenants and leaseholders is underway for proposed projects that will be tendered through the major works framework.
- The council is continuing to update tenants and leaseholders that sit on the 'task and finish' group that is working on the programme. Online sessions are now operating for this group
- The council has completed a survey of all leaseholders and will share the results of this with the Leaseholder Action Group shortly

6. Enabling more affordable home ownership

6.1 On track: Work with Community Land Trust (CLT) to develop self-build opportunities

- CLT focus is on affordable rented homes which are likely to be self-build

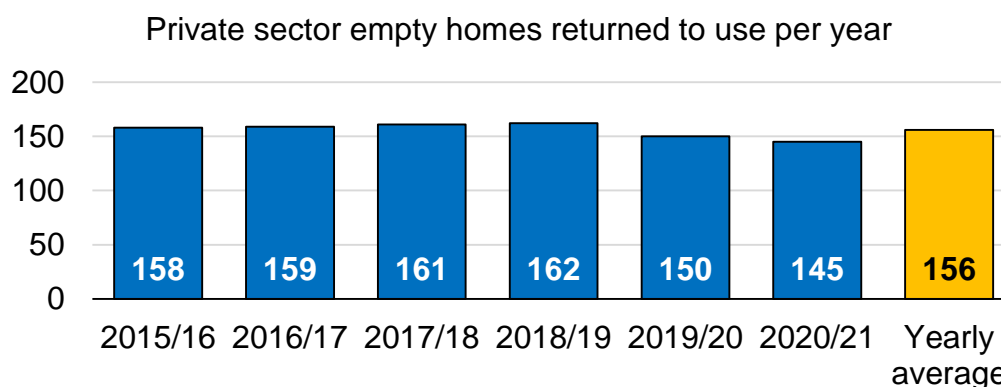
6.2 On track: Work with Homes for Brighton & Hove and registered providers in the city to develop 500 shared ownership properties for essential workers who live and work in the city

- 721 shared ownership homes are projected for development by March 2023
- The Living Wage Joint Venture, Homes for Brighton & Hove, has started construction on its first two sites totalling 346 homes
- Homes for Brighton & Hove is becoming a delivery company, with 168 Hyde shared ownership homes and 178 rented homes (176 council and 2 Hyde) expected for completion in 2023/24

7. Make fuller use of shared housing capacity

7.1 Slightly off track: Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty homes are brought back into use

- Progress restricted by Covid-19 restrictions – 58 homes brought back into use during 2021/22 to date



7.2 Slightly off track: Develop a policy to incentivise households to relinquish council tenancies as an alternative to right to buy

- Work on this will start in April 2022

7.3 Slightly off track: Investigate the possibility of supporting a 'lodger' scheme and report to Committee

- Committee report due for March 2021 – deferred due to Covid-19 priorities

7.4 On track: Undertake an impact assessment of short-term holiday lets and Air BnB in the city and consider options that may inform an approach to alleviate the most detrimental issues arising

- Report on Regulation of Short-Term Holiday Lets was agreed at Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture and Housing committees in March 2020. It included using existing powers to deal with complaints, ensuring coordinated approach to enforcement between services and lobbying central government for enhanced enforcement powers and a national registration scheme
- A new system is now in place for the public to report issues with short term holiday lets, so that relevant council teams can take appropriate enforcement action where possible

8. Alleviating poverty

8.1 Slightly off track: Ensure the in house repairs services include measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve

- Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the planned and major works procurement was paused as were other areas of the programme, including taking on apprentices
- Some existing apprentices were moved to empty property works so they could physically distance while working, but it has not yet been possible to recruit many additional apprentices
- However, the service is currently recruiting two electrical apprentices

8.2 Slightly off track: Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort

- Business Process Review of income collection, including arrears policies, has been delayed while resources have been diverted to the Covid-19 response
- Rent collection from council tenants during Q2 is to be confirmed (TBC)
- No tenants evicted during Q2

8.3 On track: Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation

- Policy is in place for long term temporary accommodation which matches that in council owned housing








Part two: Performance indicators







The council is responsible for managing 11,716 council owned homes and 2,316 leaseholder homes, as well as providing temporary accommodation for 2,012 households.

There are several indicators which are temporarily absent from this report while work is underway to develop new reporting systems following the switchover of our main housing management IT system since the start of July 2021. Once this work is complete, we intend to retrospectively provide the results in future versions of this report.




The areas are:

- Adaptations to council housing
- Anti-social behaviour
- Repairs to council housing




	Customer feedback – all Housing services	Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1
9.1	 Compliments received from customers	Info	73	59	n/a	n/a
9.2	 Stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days	80%	81% (83 of 102)	85% (84 of 99)		
9.3	Stage one complaints upheld	Info	58% (59 of 102)	46% (46 of 99)	n/a	n/a
9.4	Stage two complaints upheld	18%	9% (1 of 11)	47% (9 of 19)		
<p>There is an increased focus on how complaints are handled across the council, especially on improving the overall quality of complaint responses in the early stages of the complaints process, in order to reduce the need for cases to be escalated from stage one to stage two for further investigation.</p>						











  Private sector housing	Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1	
10.1	New licences issued for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)	Info	56	147	n/a	n/a
10.2	HMOs where all special conditions have been met (for licences issued over 12 months ago)	47%	52.38% (1,069 of 2,041)	53.05% (1,019 of 1,921)		
10.3	Private sector empty homes returned to use	32	32	26		




The Q1 figure above has increased from 28 to 32 since last reported. This is because Council Tax records have identified more homes brought back in use during this period, and there is a reporting lag between the date they were back in use and the date this could be confirmed.

 Housing adaptations	Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1	
11.1	Private housing – average weeks taken to approve Disabled Facilities Grant applications	10	23.6	21.3		

A high number of private sector clients have chosen to defer making the grant application and have works start due to Covid-19, and there have been restrictions on visits to clients' homes. Alongside remote working to progress applications, staff are reassuring clients of the health and safety measures put in place by staff and contractors, and rescheduling deferred applications.

 Housing Needs – Housing Options and allocations	Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1	
12.1	Households prevented from becoming homeless (by council and partner agencies)	424	408	448		
12.2	New households accepted as homeless	Info	49	77	n/a	n/a
12.3	Number of households on the social housing waiting list	Info	4,800	TBC	n/a	n/a

 Housing Needs – temporary accommodation	Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1	
13.1	Total households in temporary accommodation (homeless and through service level agreements)	Info	2,113	2,012	n/a	n/a
13.2	Rent collected for emergency accommodation (year to date including loss from empty homes)	89.21%	73.90% (£1.2m of £1.6m)	73.30% (£2.6m of £3.6m)		
This indicator includes rent loss from empty emergency accommodation dwellings, which is higher than usual while people who were placed in response to Covid-19 are moved on from 'block booked' accommodation such as hotels and hostels, ahead of handing some of them back. The collection rate excluding this type of rent loss is 94.89% which is above target.						
13.3	... as above but excluding rent loss from empty homes	For info	92.56% (£1.2m of £1.2m)	94.89% (£2.6m of £2.8m)	n/a	n/a
13.4	Rent collected for leased temporary accommodation properties (year to date)	96.10%	94.57% (£1.6m of £1.6m)	87.28% (£3.3m of £3.8m)		
A new reporting system has recently been developed for this indicator following the switchover of our main housing management IT system, and we will closely monitor trends into the second half of the current financial year.						
13.5	... as above but excluding rent loss from empty homes	For info	99.60% (£1.6m of £1.6m)	93.33% (£3.3m of £3.6m)	n/a	n/a
13.6	 Rent collected for Seaside Homes (year to date)	91.00%	90.31% (£1.1m of £1.3m)	90.74% (£2.6m of £2.7m)		
13.7	... as above but excluding rent loss from empty homes	For info	94.30% (£1.1m of £1.2m)	95.49% (£2.6m of £2.6m)	n/a	n/a
13.8	Empty temporary accommodation homes	For info	135	115	n/a	n/a
13.9	Seaside Homes with a valid Landlord's Gas Safety Record	100%	99.3% (423 of 426)	99.8% (425 of 426)		
13.10	Leased properties with a valid Landlord's Gas Safety Record	For info	91.4% (571 of 625)	89.1% (554 of 622)	n/a	n/a
The indicator above does not have a target given that the role of the council when it comes to leased properties is to monitor progress and remind landlords to arrange gas safety checks, whereas the council's gas contractor carries out checks in Seaside and council homes.						

 Council housing – supply		Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22
14.1	 Additional council homes	24	27
14.2	... at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rents	33% (8 of 24)	22% (6 of 27)
*All six homes at LHA rates from Q2 were buy backs for use as temporary housing			
14.3	... at 37.5% Living Wage rents	42% (10 of 24)	37% (10 of 27)
14.4	... at 27.5% Living Wage rents	25% (6 of 24)	41% (11 of 27)
14.5	...at social rents	0% (0 of 24)	0% (0 of 27)
14.6	Council homes sold through the Right to Buy	10	11
Of the 21 homes sold during 2021/22 to date, 10 were for leasehold (flats) and 11 were for freehold (houses)			
14.7	Net change in the number of council homes – all rent levels	+14	+16
14.8	Net change in the number of council homes – social and 27.5% Living Wage rent homes only	-4	0
14.9	 Total council owned homes	11,700	11,716
Total stock of 11,716 includes 10,706 general needs, 877 seniors housing and 133 temporary housing (including dwellings not yet handed over).			

14.10 Council housing – buy backs (Home Purchase and Next Steps / Housing First)

Buy backs by application date	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 to date	Total
Total applications	5	53	88	158	85	389
Of which, became purchases	2	32	53	78	7	172
Council declined	1	13	11	15	5	45
Owner declined offer	1	5	12	15	6	39
Owner withdrew	1	3	12	30	18	64
Outcome pending	0	0	0	20	49	69

Completed buy backs by rent level	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 to date	Total
Completed purchases	1	13	43	64	51	172
... general needs social rent	0	0	1	4	0	5
... general needs 27.5% Living Wage	0	0	5	17	17	39
... general needs 37.5% Living Wage	1	5	24	14	20	64
... temporary housing at LHA rates	0	8	13	29	14	64















Summary of all buy backs since start of programmes, September 2017


















Total purchases	Social rent	27.5% LWR	37.5% LWR	LHA rate	No. rent reserve applied	Total rent reserve applied	Net modelled subsidy (surplus) over all properties to date (£)
172*	5	39	64	64	26 **	£1.233m ***	£104,000

* Of which 154 are flats (4 studio, 58 one bed, 78 two bed, 14 three bed) and 18 are houses (3 two bed, 14 three bed, 1 four bed)


** Following Housing Committee decision to use rent reserve to keep rents as low as possible

*** Applied during 2019/20 – a further £827k is anticipated to be used during 2021/22

 Council housing – management		Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1
15.1	 Rent collected from council tenants	95.68%	96.38% (£51.3m of £53.2m)	96.16% (£51.2m of £53.2m)		
The Q2 result above is provisional following implementation of our new housing management IT system and will be verified in time for the next report.						
15.2	 Tenants known to claim Universal Credit (UC)	Info	25% (2,837 of 11,292)	24% (2,717 of 11,290)	n/a	n/a
15.3	UC tenants in arrears who have an alternative payment arrangement	Info	49% (775 of 1,593)	57% (848 of 1,496)	n/a	n/a
15.4	Arrears of UC tenants as a proportion of total arrears	Info	70% (£1.3m of £1.9m)	65% (£1.3m of £2.0m)	n/a	n/a
15.5	Tenants evicted due to rent arrears	Info	0	0	n/a	n/a
15.6	Tenants evicted due to anti-social behaviour (ASB)	Info	0	0	n/a	n/a
15.7	 Calls answered by Housing Customer Services	85%	87% (4,573 of 5,271)	82% (5,385 of 6,596)		
15.8	Tenancies sustained following difficulties	90%	92% (22 of 24)	97% (31 of 32)		
15.9	 Average re-let time (calendar days) excluding time spent in major works	21	88 (108 lets)	66 (103 lets)		
Recovery efforts are continuing to tackle the backlog of empty council homes, and many of those let during Q2 had been empty for long periods of time with 59% undergoing major works. This means that although the re-let time including major works has increased to 206 days, the re-let time excluding major works has decreased to 66 days. Three new members of staff are expected to start between November 2021 and January 2022 to boost capacity to let empty homes.						
15.10	Average 'key to key' empty period (calendar days) including time spent in major works	Info	122 (108 lets)	206 (103 lets)	n/a	n/a
15.11	 Empty general needs and seniors council homes (includes new homes)	274	268	273	n/a	n/a
15.12	Empty council owned temporary accommodation homes (includes new homes not yet handed over)	Info	27	15	n/a	n/a

 Council housing – repairs and maintenance		Target	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Status against target	Trend since Q1
16.1	 Calls answered by Repairs Helpdesk	85%	94% (19,144 of 20,277)	93% (19,888 of 21,410)		
16.2	 Dwellings meeting Decent Homes Standard	100%	91.9% (10,750 of 11,700)	92.9% (10,884 of 11,716)		
The stock condition survey identified many dwellings which did not meet the standard, and there was a lack of planned installations of new kitchens and bathrooms through 2020 due to Covid restrictions, shortages of supplies and components, and the mobilisation of new contractors. However, performance has increased since kitchen and bathroom replacements resumed under new contracts, focusing on empty homes (in order to reduce the backlog) then occupied homes.						
16.3	Energy efficiency rating of homes (out of 100)	76.8	68.0	68.1		
A very ambitious target was set in line with performance by other local authorities (the median for our HouseMark peer group was 76.8 at the end of March 2021). A retrofit plan is being prepared for Housing Committee to show how Housing can contribute to the Carbon Neutral 2030 objective, and a programme to install solar panels on 1,000 council homes is to begin in 2022.						
16.4	 Council homes with a valid Landlord's Gas Safety Record	100%	100% (10,043 of 10,043)	100% (10,017 of 10,017)		
16.5	 Lifts restored to service within 24 hours	95%	91% (215 of 236)	91% (292 of 321)		
There have been delays in repairing some lifts due to aging equipment and difficulty sourcing spare parts. Aging equipment is being modernised at Seniors schemes during 2021/22 and 2022/23; and the lift contractor will investigate potential to retain a greater stock of critical spares from European supply chains.						
16.6	Lifts – average time taken (days) to restore service when not within 24 hours	7	9	12		

New performance indicators relating to planned and major works are currently being developed and will accompany future versions of these performance reports.

 Leaseholder disputes		Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22
17.1	Stage one disputes opened	0	7
17.2	Stage one disputes closed	3	4
17.3	Active stage one disputes (end quarter)	19	22
17.4	Stage two disputes opened	3	0
17.5	Stage two disputes closed	1	0
17.6	Active stage two disputes (end quarter)	3	3
17.7	Stage three disputes opened	0	0
17.8	Stage three disputes closed	0	1
17.9	Active stage three disputes (end quarter)	2	1

• **Appendix 2 - Joint – Labour/Green 2019-2023 Housing Programme**

Theme	Combined Manifesto Actions	Progress – aligned to Housing Committee priorities & work plan 2019-23 – Appendix 1.
Innovatively providing additional affordable and truly affordable homes	Develop an emergency plan to expand housing supply within 100 days	Achieved
	Drive an accelerated programme to buy & build homes including a minimum of 800 additional council houses maximising the use of borrowing and Right to Buy receipts	Appendix 1. 1.1. Achieve 800 additional council homes. Slightly off track.
	Develop 700 other new homes that are as affordable as possible over 4 years on mostly brownfield sites (including above car parks and shopping centres)	Appendix 1. 1.2. Achieve 700 other additional homes. On track.
	Aim to buy back all homes put on the market that have been lost through the right to buy	Appendix 1. 1.1. Achieve 800 additional council homes. Slightly off track.
	Increased affordability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace council homes lost at social rents where money can be found • Greatly increase provision of council homes at living (27.5% LWR) & social rents 	Appendix 1. 1.3. Maximise the number of council homes replaced at social or living wage rents. On track.
	Innovative development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create innovations to drive development such as city-wide small site & hidden homes strategy, and mixed tenure developments to deliver mixed communities, enable intergenerational living and fund more truly affordable living and social rents through commercial income • Borrow to buy land for affordable housing and we will seek to buy the Brighton General Hospital site to avoid its privatisation* 	Appendix 1. 1.4. Develop a policy for the council to take on the role of developer on major sites. On track.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibility of the council itself being a developer on major developments. Over time, aim to develop the council's own capabilities and reduce costs by directly employing staff and building stable teams to work on council projects • Urgently explore a programme of quick build, e.g. modular homes to quickly alleviate housing • Increase social housing stock by buying off plan from developers at discount 	<p>Appendix 1. 1.4. Develop a policy for the council to take on the role of developer on major sites.</p> <p>On track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 1.4. Develop a policy for the council to take on the role of developer on major sites.</p> <p>On track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 1.4. Develop a policy for the council to take on the role of developer on major sites.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Community led housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 6 months identify 10 sites & work with community to develop them • Use public land for community led housing at a price to maximise social value (i.e. living rents for people in housing ne • Look at creating an ethical loan scheme where BHCC matches community investors* 	<p>Appendix 1. 1.5. Identify suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust for development.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 1.5. Identify suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust for development.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 1.5. Identify suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust for development.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>

Improving private rented housing	<p>Enforcement/licensing Work towards selective licensing of private rented driving up conditions</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 2.1. Review and resubmit selective licensing scheme proposal to improve the management & standards of private rented sector homes in the city.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Drive fire safety improvements in private sector properties across the city</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 2.5. Develop and enforcement approach to private sector housing to improve management and standards.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Create a dedicated private rented sector enforcement team to proactively enforce housing and energy efficiency standards, including fixed penalties and taking action against landlords guilty of criminal breaches of environmental health and safety regulations. Tackle hazardous housing conditions by increasing capacity for 'HHSRS' hazard inspection and taking the initiative in identifying properties for inspection</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 2.5. Develop and enforcement approach to private sector housing to improve management and standards.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Campaign alongside other councils on shared issues such as proper regulation of short-term lets and business rates for landlords of houses in multiple occupancy</p>	
	<p>Cost saving Set up a council run not for profit lettings agency</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 2.4. Research and develop a social lettings agency.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Support the expansion of good landlord schemes (where rents do not exceed LHA) model for more affordable private rented housing</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 2.4. Research and develop a social lettings agency.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>

	Expand existing schemes encouraging landlords to offer homes to those on benefits and low incomes, including establishing an ethical letting agency	Appendix 1. 2.4. Research and develop a social lettings agency. Slightly off track.
	Seek ways of stopping landlords refusing to let to people on benefits, issues with referencing and no-go lists	Appendix 1. 2.4. Research and develop a social lettings agency. Slightly off track.
	Private renters voice and support Set up an information/advice hub for private renters to tackle discrimination, ensure renters know their rights and enable better community involvement	Appendix 1. 2.3. Develop or commission an information or advice hub for private renters and consider options for a private tenants' forum. Off track.
	Set up a tenant's forum for private renters	
Alleviating Homelessness and Rough sleeping	Support for rough sleepers Work towards eliminating the need for rough sleeping	Appendix 1. 3.1. Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects). On track.
	Consult on how best to implement the bill of rights for homeless people	Appendix 1. 3.2. Review/consult/adopt the Homeless Bill of Rights On track.
	Provide a 365 day a year night shelter	Appendix 1. 3.3: Provide a 365 day night shelter No longer applicable.
	Expand Housing First by 300%	Appendix 1. 3.4. Expand Housing First

		On track.
	Support the development of homeless guardianship schemes	
	Strengthen coordinated partnership working with community homeless and faith projects	Appendix 1. 3.1. Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects). On track.
	Explore options for voluntary contribution to homeless support to be added to tourist amenity providers e.g. Restaurant and Hotels*	
	Seek opportunities for homeless enterprise with voluntary organisations and local businesses e.g. tour guide enterprise*	Appendix 1. 3.1. Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects). On track.
	Improving temporary and emergency homeless accommodation Involve homeless people in a wide-ranging review of all support offered to homeless people	Appendix 1. 3.6. Develop a homeless strategy, ensuring homeless people are involved in the design and development of services which directly affect them. On track.
	Buy and build homes to meet a range of housing needs, including temporary/emergency accommodation, supported housing, housing first and general needs housing.	Appendix 1. 1.1. Achieve 800 additional council homes. Slightly off track.

	Replace privately-run temporary and emergency accommodation with council-owned provision, thereby also saving money in the longer term and look at converting existing council commercial residential accommodation into homeless accommodation to maximise social value from council assets	Appendix 1. 3.5. Develop a strategy for the provision of council run temporary accommodation including Seaside Homes. On track.
	Negotiate a new Seaside homes agreement which ends the loss of funds for the council under the current deal, protects current tenants and enables Seaside Homes to develop new ways of supporting homeless people (such as providing properties for Housing First)	Appendix 1. 3.5. Develop a strategy for the provision of council run temporary accommodation including Seaside Homes. On track.
	Explore use of Community Infrastructure Levy CIL for an expansion of Homeless support.*	
	Ensure new developments are of benefit to the city by applying a Community Infrastructure Levy that represents a full share of the city's infrastructure needs*	
Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including fuel poverty	Achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 We will take all action required to make our city carbon neutral by 2030	Appendix 1. 4.1. Develop an action plan to set out how we will work collaboratively to ensure housing contributes to making the city carbon neutral by 2030. On track.
	Aim to build new council housing at sustainability levels that will significantly contribute towards our ambitions	Appendix 1. 4.3. Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments. On track.
	Develop low-carbon housing as a model in conjunction with the Community Land Trust	Appendix 1. 4.3. Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments. On track.

	Recycle building materials wherever possible as a first step towards a circular economy*	Appendix 1. 4.3. Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments. On track.
	Make (promote) community sustainable energy the first port of call for housing developments requiring sustainability installations	Appendix 1. 4.3. Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments. On track.
	Treble housing spending on PV and fuel efficiency measures for council homes and setting ambitious fuel poverty reduction targets– Consider distributing low cost biogas from food waste to council tenants/low income households	Appendix 1. 4.2. Develop a new PV and energy efficiency strategy for council homes to include standards for new homes. Slightly off track.
	Buy PV panels and other energy saving resources in bulk and supply at a mutually beneficial cost to residents, Brighton Energy co-op, 3 rd sector organisations and/or commercial installers in the Brighton and Hove area	Appendix 1. 4.4: Investigate and report the possibility of bulk buying PV panels and other energy saving resources. On track.
	Build well insulated carbon neutral Council housing with solar panels	Appendix 1. 4.3. Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments. On track.
	Improve council housing and community involvement	Improving council housing Develop and implement a “decent environment” standard for council estates to go alongside the decent home standard
Drive fire safety improvements in council owned properties across the city.		Appendix 1. 5.2. Develop a fire safety programme in conjunction with tenants and residents. On track.

	<p>Enhancing community involvement Review community involvement in housing</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 5.3. Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the ‘Involvement and Empowerment’ standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Extend participatory budgeting to environmental improvements to estates</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 5.4. Extend participatory budgeting.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Improve transparency and accountability in the housing department (taking the proposals of the housing coalition as the starting point)</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 3.1. Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects).</p> <p>On track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 5.3. Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the ‘Involvement and Empowerment’ standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work.</p> <p>On track.</p>

	Meet the regulator's Involvement and Empowerment standard	<p>Appendix 1. 5.3. Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	Establish more joint work with residents in decision making ('co-production') involvement in decision-making around housing policy and service delivery	<p>Appendix 1. 5.3. Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	Involve residents in fire safety	<p>Appendix 1. 5.3. Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work.</p> <p>On track.</p>

	<p>Leaseholder Services Continue to ensure that leaseholders voices are heard and financial support is offered where necessary</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 5.5. Develop the work undertaken with leaseholders to develop a new leasehold involvement policy, setting out how leaseholders can be supported to be more proactively involved in capital works and other leasehold matters.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Introduce greater transparency and earlier involvement with leaseholders over proposed capital works (an approach of negotiation rather than legal action)</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 5.5. Develop the work undertaken with leaseholders to develop a new leasehold involvement policy, setting out how leaseholders can be supported to be more proactively involved in capital works and other leasehold matters.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Reduce the high interest rates charged when providing a loan for residential leaseholders struggling with large bills for works</p>	
<p>Enabling more affordable home ownership</p>	<p>Home ownership Explore expansion of self-build opportunities</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 6.1. Work with Community Land Trust (CLT) to develop self-build opportunities.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Provide 500 + shared ownership homes (through the joint venture and other developments)</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 6.2. Work with Homes for Brighton & Hove and registered providers in the city to develop 500 shared ownership properties for essential workers who live and work in the city.</p> <p>On track.</p>

Making fuller use of spare housing capacity	<p>Empty Properties Use measures including Compulsory Purchase Orders to target unoccupied and underused properties.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 7.1. Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty homes are brought back into use.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Bring at least 650 empty housing properties back into use.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 7.1. Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty homes are brought back into use.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Provide grants for households relinquishing council tenancies.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 7.2: Develop a policy to incentivise households to relinquish council tenancies as an alternative to right to buy.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Pursue schemes to develop, expand and promote lodger provision to maximise use of spare rooms.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 7.3. Investigate the possibility of supporting a 'lodger' scheme and report to Committee.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Step up moves to pick up and prevent illegal sub-letting and fraudulent right to buy applications.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
	<p>Explore how to restrict conversion and spread of short-term holiday let homes or air BnB property development.*</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 7.4. Undertake an impact assessment of short-term holiday lets and Air BnB in the city and consider options that may inform an approach to alleviate the most detrimental issues arising.</p> <p>On track.</p>

Alleviating austerity	<p>Support Explore ways to increase council support for those struggling to afford the cost of housing</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.2. Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 8.3. Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Make full use of discretionary housing payments</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.2. Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 8.3. Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Protect from eviction anyone in arrears resulting solely from bedroom tax, universal or credit shortfalls.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.2. Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort.</p>

		<p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 8.3. Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Seek to protect tenants with new licences from Service Charge arrears evictions.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.2. Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 8.3. Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Ensure eviction is always a last resort. Provide any specific support required for women, BAME tenants, refugees, asylum seekers and other marginalised groups who often bear the brunt of welfare changes and face a higher risk of eviction.</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.2. Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p> <p>Appendix 1. 8.3. Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and</p>

		<p>assistance as those in permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On track.</p>
	<p>Local income opportunities Ensure local home building is providing opportunities for young people to develop skills, for example through apprenticeships</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.1: Ensure the in-house repairs services include measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
	<p>Use regeneration schemes to provide social and sustainability benefits e.g. Local energy suppliers and employment*</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.1: Ensure the in-house repairs services include measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>

	<p>Changing the way the council outsources its services so as to help small local suppliers win council contracts or by bringing services in house</p>	<p>Appendix 1. 8.1: Ensure the in-house repairs services include measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve.</p> <p>Slightly off track.</p>
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Subject:	Housing Revenue Account Budget & Capital Investment Programme 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Strategy		
Date of Meeting:	19 January 2022 10 February 2022 – Policy & Resources Committee 24 February 2022 – Budget Council		
Report of:	Chief Finance Officer Executive Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Craig Garoghan Martin Reid	Tel: 01273 29-1262 01273 29-3321
	Email:	craig.garoghan@brighton-hove.gov.uk Martin.Reid@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital budget for 2022/23 as required by the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. Members are required to consider the revenue budget proposals including investments and re-investments and changes to rents, fees and charges and the capital programme. This report also sets out the Medium Term Financial Strategy and a 30 year financial forecast.
- 1.2 The HRA contains the income and expenditure relating to the council's social landlord duties covering approximately 11,700 rented properties and 2,900 leasehold properties. The HRA is a ring-fenced account which covers the management and maintenance of council-owned housing stock. This must be in balance, meaning that the authority must show in its financial planning that HRA income meets expenditure and that the HRA is consequently viable.
- 1.3 Although the HRA is not subject to the same funding constraints as the General Fund, it is a ring-fenced account within the General Fund and still follows the principles of value for money and equally seeks to improve efficiency and achieve cost economies wherever possible. Benchmarking of both service quality and costs with comparator organisations is used to identify opportunities for better economy, efficiency and service delivery.
- 1.4 Investment continues within the HRA to ensure council homes are safe and maintained to the Brighton & Hove decent homes standard, to provide investment to reduce the carbon footprint of council housing, and to increase the number of affordable homes available across the city to help tackle the City's housing crisis.

The capital investment proposal for 2022/23 is a total of £85.077m covering the following areas:

- £56.128m on Delivery of New Council Homes
- £20.335m on Improving Housing Quality & Standards
- £4.457m on Sustainability & Carbon Reduction
- £2.915m on Tackling Inequality
- £1.242m on Supporting well-run services for the city

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Housing Committee:

- 2.1 Approves a rent increase of up to 4.1% in line with government legislation as detailed in paragraph 4.9 of the report.
- 2.2 Approves the service charges and fees as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.
- 2.3 Notes the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and 30-year financial projections shown in Appendix 4 to the report.

That Housing Committee approves and recommends to Policy & Resources Committee:

- 2.4 That the updated HRA Revenue Budget for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed and recommended to full Council for approval;
- 2.5 That an earmarked reserve of £1.500m for the Covid-19 recovery work required to clear the backlog of responsive repairs and voids be set up as per paragraph 5.1 of the main report.
- 2.6 That a contribution to the rent reduction reserve of £1.200m be made from the general reserves held by the HRA as per paragraph 5.1 of the main report.
- 2.7 That a contribution to the Sustainability and Retrofit reserve of £1.200m be made from the general reserves held by the HRA as per paragraph 5.1 of the main report.
- 2.8 That the Capital Programme Budget of £85.077m for 2022/23 be agreed and notes the 3-year programme as set out in Appendix 4 to the report and recommended to full Council for approval; and

That Full Council:

- 2.9 Approves the updated HRA Revenue Budget for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 2.10 Approves the Capital Programme Budget of £85.077m for 2022/23 and notes the 3-year programme as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

3 HRA BUDGET STRATEGY

- 3.1 The HRA Budget aims to balance the priorities of both the council and council housing residents within the context of the council's Housing Strategy, HRA Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Committee's priorities and work plan 2019-23 which set out the overall direction for Housing in the city over the 4-year period. As well as these commitments, the budget strategy anticipates the significant legal and regulatory changes we expect to follow from the post Grenfell review of

building safety through the Building Safety Bill and the proposals that will change how social landlords operate encompassed in the Social Housing White Paper. The investment required on these items is still evolving, and as a result the revenue and capital budgets as well as the reserves position outlined in the paper may require adjustment in 2022/23 and/or later years.

- 3.2 The Budget Strategy also reflects the council's decisions, following extensive consultation, concerning the delivery of customer service, quality assurance, responsive repairs, and empty property refurbishments, planned maintenance and improvement programmes, and major capital projects to council housing stock following the expiry of the previous contractual arrangements in March 2020. Most significantly, this included the insourcing of the Housing Repairs & Maintenance service.

Housing Committee Priorities and Work Plan – 2019-2023

- 3.3 The priorities and work plan for the Housing Committee and Housing service for the four years between 2019-2023 were agreed in September 2019 in order to inform future reporting to Committee on: key areas of officer focus and delivery; budget strategy, asset review, investment plans and resource allocation; resident engagement and formal consultation; engagement and consultation with partners and key stakeholders.
- 3.4 Key priorities of the Work Plan in relation to the Housing Revenue Account Budget & Capital Investment Programme 2022/23 are:

Priority 1: Improving Housing Supply

To respond to the opportunities to increase housing supply following the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap and deliver new council homes utilising the cross-directorate housing delivery team to drive projects forward. Since May 2019 there have been 270 additional council homes delivered through the New Homes for Neighbourhoods, Hidden Homes, and the Home Purchase programme. There are a further 276 new council homes currently on target to be delivered by May 2023, this will be achieved by:

1. Continuing to deliver new build projects under the 'New Homes for Neighbourhoods' programme.
2. Maintaining the Hidden Homes programme to refurbish and convert under used or unused spaces within existing council stock into new homes.
3. Where needs are assessed, creating a supply of council owned temporary accommodation allowing the council to achieve savings against the costs of procuring more expensive accommodation from the private market either through existing frameworks or spot purchase.
4. Purchasing homes under the 'Home Purchase Policy' and seeking opportunities to purchase homes supplied as part of new housing developments in the city, typically known as 'S106 sites'.
5. Commissioning new, adapted homes and ensuring best use of existing adapted / accessible housing in order to promote independent living, which has been demonstrated to deliver significant cost benefits.
6. Supporting households wanting to downsize to increase the supply of available family housing.

Priority 2: Improving Housing Quality

7. Continue to meet the council's landlord obligations with regards to health and safety, including continuing to review and enhance fire safety measures for residents.
8. Review and plan for future investment by utilising the results of the Stock Condition Survey of housing stock which was undertaken in early 2020. The council will continue to undertake a rolling 20% of surveys each year over the next five years to ensure all the council housing stock is surveyed.
9. Continue to respond to emerging guidance around building safety standards and the draft Building Safety Bill following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
10. Anticipate emerging guidance arising from Social Housing White paper, including a review of the Decent Homes Standard, which sets the minimum quality that social homes should meet, and more consistency in safety measures across social and private rented housing.
11. To work in consultation with tenants and leaseholders to agree planned maintenance, improvement programmes and major capital projects based on updated information on our stock.
12. Continue to promote the highest possible building, space and environmental standards in all new council homes being built to high sustainability levels.
13. Continue to improve council housing sustainability standards and seek to maintain 100% achievement of the council's housing stock meeting the Decent Homes Standard whilst investing in other priorities that promote the health and wellbeing of residents.
14. Continue to improve the energy efficiency performance of both the council's housing stock, and from our own activities (e.g. Transport). To support the city's objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
15. Support for improvements and initiatives to reduce fuel poverty will be maintained and enhanced where possible.
16. Support early actions to improve public areas of the council's housing estates through the environmental improvements budget to enable the council to respond with greater speed to issues impacting upon tenants' satisfaction levels with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

Priority 3: Improving Housing Support

17. Ensure that as services are reviewed, they are accessible and safe for all.
18. Continue investment in specialist tenancy management and support services to support vulnerable council housing residents and work with Community Safety to resolve housing issues and harassment in a timely manner.
19. Early intervention for families struggling with accommodation, including money advice and tenancy support.
20. Ensure that adaptations are carried out at the right time to support people to stay in their homes when they want to.
21. Support people to 'downsize' when they choose and provide a range of options for them, including accessible tools to support decision making.
22. Promote better links between seniors housing schemes and surrounding communities.

- 23. Ensure new housing development includes community spaces, where need is identified, and resources allow.
- 24. Ensure the new repairs and maintenance service meets the needs of tenants and leaseholders.
- 25. Ensure tenants continue to be supported during and after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4 HRA REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2022/23

- 4.1 The proposed HRA budget for 2022/23 is shown in Appendix 1 alongside the main budget variations, areas for investment and other changes in resources.
- 4.2 The 2022/23 budget provides for a range of inflationary costs, investments and income.
- 4.3 Inflation of 2% has been applied to Direct Employees, and 1% to Premises, Transport and Supplies & Services. Adjustments are made to specific areas based on known data, which can be above or below the standard 1% applied. Most income budgets are zero-based (that is they are recalculated each year rather than changing incrementally) and therefore budgets are estimated based on known increases in costs or inflation. Total expenditure inflation provided for is £0.998m and income inflation of £2.496m.

Investments

- 4.4 The budget provides new investment of £3.465m for priority areas identified, these are detailed in table 1 below.

Table 1 - Identified priority areas for investment	£'000
A review for the cost of repairs & maintenance was undertaken. This identified that there is a potential pressure coming from external sources i.e. inflation and cost of sub-contractors resulting in a requirement to increase costs associated with the new contractor's framework for repairs and maintenance.	1,218
A review for the cost of voids was undertaken. This identified that there is a potential pressure coming from external sources i.e. inflation and cost of sub-contractors resulting in a requirement to increase costs associated with the new contractor's framework for voids.	754
The cost of harmonisation of staff contracts was met from reserves during 2021/22 due to uncertainty around the final costs. The cost has been reviewed and is now recognised as part of the main budget for repairs & maintenance with this amount relating to staff transferred from Mears.	520
Additional investment required for the vacancies held by Mears upon transfer these are being recruited in order to deliver the repairs & maintenance service following the decision to bring the service back in house. These are costs linked to the harmonisation of contracts for those vacant posts at the time of transfer.	263
Net increase in salary costs to reflect the new agreed structure within the HRA to meet the latest key priorities.	217
Investment for an additional year for the Transition team including a	230

Table 1 - Identified priority areas for investment	£'000
key procurement role to continue to assist with the continued implementation of the in house Repairs and Maintenance Service.	
Increased investment in staffing costs to ensure statutory Health & Safety works are carried out on tenants' homes.	178
The Housing service entered into a twenty-year lease agreement with Aviva Investors for the Housing Centre on 2 July 2010, expiring on 1 July 2030. The lease allows for rent reviews every five years, the latest of which was undertaken in July 2020. Based on current market conditions a negotiated figure of £85k increase was agreed bringing the total rent payable up to £270k and was seen a reasonable increase to accept from the council's corporate Estates Team.	85
Total investments	3,465

Other Key Changes

- 4.5 The 2021/22 budget also provides for a range of other changes in expenditure and income. These are outlined in the table below and in Appendix 1 to this report.

Table 2 - Other Changes to resources	£'000
Increase in Employers National Insurance contributions of 1.25%.	171
Increase in the capitalisation of Salaries following a review of the capital projects being undertaken during 2022/23.	(440)
Estimated increase in the cost of Responsive Repairs and Voids works in relation to the Temporary Accommodation units held within the HRA. This is a result of the number of HRA Temporary Accommodation units increasing during 2021/22.	103
Net increase in other minor budget changes.	64
Net decrease in Revenue Contribution to Capital.	(1,774)
Net decrease in financing costs.	(182)
Net increase in rental income from the new homes' rents.	(461)
Net increase in Service charge income from council tenants to recover costs.	(344)
Change in the treatment of Leaseholder Major Work income. Historically this has formed part of the revenue budget figures and results in adjustments year-on-year to reflect major works completed on leasehold properties. This change will see this income treated as capital funding and will be reported in the capital programme tables instead. This income will be managed on the HRA Balance Sheet.	896
Total Other Changes	(1,967)

- 4.6 The net revenue budget results in a 'surplus' of £19.867m which is then used to provide the Revenue Contribution to Capital (shown within expenditure at Appendix 1) in support of the capital programme.
- 4.7 This surplus is not sufficient to meet the capital investment in existing homes during 2022/23 as outlined in Appendix 3 to this report. The impact of this means that borrowing will be required to meet this level of investment. The resources available

to fund the capital programme will be kept under review during the financial year and any borrowing decision will be made in line with treasury experts' advice. A review of the HRA's reserves and borrowing position will be carried out on a regular basis and reported in accordance with the council's financial regulations and procedures.

Rents and Service Charges

- 4.8 Social rents for council homes are calculated in accordance with government guidelines. Rent restructuring rules still apply and Target Rents for each property are calculated based on the relative property values, bedroom size and local earnings, the Target Rents will apply to the granting of all new tenancies.
- 4.9 The rent policy allows for up to Consumer Price Index (CPI) at the previous September rate +1% to be applied to rents over a 5 year period, 2022/23 is the third year where this is allowable. Therefore the proposal is to uplift the rents by a maximum of 4.1%, CPI at September 2021 was 3.1%. The table below provides the breakdown of the average rent increase across the 4 rent levels included within the HRA's rent policy.

Rent Type	21/22 Average weekly rent £	22/23 Average weekly rent £	% Increase
Social	86.65	90.20	4.1%
27.5% LW	129.30	134.60	4.1%
37.5% LW	174.83	182.00	4.1%
LHA	174.24	174.24	0.0%

- 4.10 When setting the Affordable rents and Living Wage rents for individual properties, consideration is given to the prevailing rates for Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the national living wage for the new financial year. This is compared against the 4.1% increase to ensure they do not exceed the permitted uplift.
- 4.11 Rents are not calculated to include any service charges and only include charges associated with the occupation of a dwelling, such as maintenance of the building and general housing management services. Service charges are therefore calculated to reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant or which may relate to communal facilities rather than to a specific occupation of a house or flat. Different tenants may receive different types of services reflecting their housing circumstances. All current service charges are reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery and to identify any service efficiencies which can be offset against inflationary increases, to keep increases to a minimum. The proposed fees and service charges for 2022/23 are set out in Appendix 2.

5 HRA RESERVES and one-off funding 2022/23

- 5.1 The projected level of HRA reserves at 1st April 2022 and 31 March 2023 are shown in Appendix 2 (note 5). A minimum reserve of £3.000m is recommended to meet general legal and financial risks including higher than expected inflationary pressures, cost overruns, legal challenges and other contingencies. After taking this into account, current estimates mean that the level of usable reserves are estimated to be £4.347m at 1st April 2022. From this, the proposal is to earmark

£3.900m for specific purposes (see points 1 to 3 below) and the remaining £0.447m will be available for general use and its potential use to fund uncertainties the HRA is currently facing (see points 3 and 4 below).

1. Financial risk relating to the post pandemic backlog of responsive repairs works is a significant financial issue for 2022/23. Whilst revenue budgets have been increased to reflect an increase in the contract and material costs for business as usual in 2022/23, there is still a need to clear the Covid-19 related backlog of responsive repairs works, this requires funding from reserves. Following a review of the service needs and other financial management measures, an estimate for the cost of the backlog of works is £1.500m; this needs to be earmarked within the reserves to ensure one-off funding is available during the year to cope with this pressure.
2. It is anticipated that the reserves set aside to assist with delivering new homes at either social rent or at 27.5% Living Wage rent levels will be exhausted by April 2022. In order to continue this programme under current policies it is considered prudent to earmark £1.200m from general reserves for this use. This will need to be kept under review in line with the work required around assessing the strategic housing needs across Brighton & Hove during 2022. This piece of work will determine the approach required for the delivery of new affordable housing in the city and the extent to which this reserve is required.
3. In the 2020/21 budget an earmarked reserve £4.010m was set up used to contribute to funding the cost of delivering sustainability initiatives in the HRA in relation to the city's target of achieving zero carbon status by 2030 and retrofit work required on existing housing stock. A new retrofit task force in partnership with neighbouring authorities, linked to the Greater Brighton Economic Board, is underway to review the investment required for sustainability measures as well as the funding that may become available from Central Government. To further contribute to the funding of future sustainability and retrofit works an additional £1.200m has been earmarked from general reserves, this reserve will be kept under review based on the outcome of the work resulting from the retrofit task force.
4. Additional investment is highly likely to be required as a result of the outcome of the draft Building Safety Bill and the recommendations of the "Building a Safer Future" programme delivered by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) to improve safety and minimise the risk of fire in high rise buildings. The nature and cost of this investment remains unknown, and officers will review the financial position as this becomes clearer and assess all financing options available.
5. There are also risks associated with the general stock condition which could give rise to a short term financial impact. The Social Housing White Paper "The charter for social housing residents" indicates government will review the Decent Homes standard to consider if it should be updated. Future changes may impact on the required investment levels in order to maintain 100% compliance with the standard. The Social Housing White paper and related consultation also considers other health & safety improvements. The nature and cost of this investment is also unknown, officers will review the financial position as this becomes clearer and assess all financing options available.

- 5.2 Other reserves are in place to support specific areas of spend within the HRA, a list of all reserves can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 5.3 General reserves are kept under review by officers and monitored in line with the increasing demands on the HRA resources to meet statutory requirements and other key priorities. The remaining £0.447m of general reserves is considered to be low in relation to identified risks but because of the nature of the reserves if funding were required urgently for health & safety works then officers can recommend that reserves are reviewed and their use switched subject to availability or, if the works required are capital in nature, works could be funded by borrowing or DRF depending on the in-year capital programme position. Changes to reserves require Policy & Resources committee approval and so would be presented accordingly if officers deemed this necessary.
- 5.4 The council's Section 151 Chief Finance Officer has reviewed the level of reserves and provisions in accordance with the requirements of Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and considers them to be adequate and reasonable for their purpose.
- 5.5 The Housing Committee Work Plan priorities include consultation with tenants and residents to develop the following: a 'decent environment' standard; a policy for extending participatory budgeting; and a fire safety programme. These priorities, as well as ongoing service reviews, will continue to be undertaken in 2022/23 to ensure that resources accounted for in the HRA budget are set correctly, that Value for Money is being provided and that we are meeting the needs of our residents. Where it is deemed that additional resources are required to further improve a service, an individual business case will need to be approved. Within the current resources there is the flexibility to switch resources where necessary whilst keeping core services running. Any major changes in budget resources during the year will be reported to Committee.

6 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23

- 6.1 The Housing Capital Programme seeks to provide substantial investment in the council's housing stock and improve the quality of homes. The implementation of the proposed programme will take account of all relevant best practice guidelines and has been informed by the priorities agreed in the current HRA Asset Management Strategy and the Asset Strategy Review. The service is finalising the draft HRA Asset Management Strategy 2022-27 ahead of resident consultation. The Programme also reflects the delivery of planned maintenance, improvement programmes and major capital projects to council housing stock.
- 6.2 The council has continued to face significant challenges this financial year in the delivery of its repairs and maintenance service and planned maintenance and improvement programmes, not only managing a new in-house repairs and maintenance service but also dealing with the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present. The capital investment programme reflects the level of investment to maintain stock to the required standard whilst providing a programme that is deliverable during the next financial year.
- 6.3 This report recommends that for 2022/23, a new capital budget of £27.707m is approved for investment in existing housing stock, £53.128m for the supply of new affordable housing and a further £1.242m supporting well-run services for the city.

- 6.4 The total proposed programme for 2022/23 and the funding arrangements totalling £85.077m are shown in Appendix 3. This programme includes budget of £36.766m that has already been approved, for example, where individual scheme approval has been sought for new build schemes or where budgets for existing schemes have been reprofiled, as approved by Policy & Resources Committee where necessary.

Improving Housing Quality

- 6.5 The 2022/23 programme continues to prioritise the council's landlord obligations with regards to health and safety, including continuing to review and enhance fire safety measures for residents and those visiting or working on council homes. This is a key responsibility and, as such, through the capital programme proposals, it is ensured that the investment required is maintained and made available ahead of other investment decisions. This includes good practice procedures and resources to support the management of asbestos, fire risk, legionella, gas and electrical equipment, amongst others. This budget continues to support funding for enhanced works to reduce fire risk.
- 6.6 The Capital Programme is a key part of implementing the main aims of the long-term asset management approach, which aims to maximise investment in homes and support reductions in responsive repairs needs whilst providing safe, good quality housing and support services, and also supporting new housing supply and financial viability for the HRA. Other assets, such as car parks and garages, receive investment to ensure both health and safety compliance and best use of these assets.
- 6.7 Housing Fire, Health & Safety and our continued joint work with East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) in response to housing fire health & safety matters arising following the Grenfell Tower tragedy remains a priority. In particular, concerning fire doors and sprinklers but also including other measures. In light of this, the programme continues to provide investment for potential additional works arising from the government's review of the Grenfell fire tragedy and forthcoming Building Safety Bill. However, the response is still evolving, and these investments may require adjustment in 2022/23 and/or later years.
- 6.8 The Capital Programme targets investments that will ensure that the HRA maintains and improves, where possible, the quality of housing. The programme will support the delivery of the following commitments:
1. To ensure that homes are compliant with health and safety standards and emerging building safety legislation.
 2. To maintain 100% achievement of properties meeting the government's Decent Homes Standard and the local Brighton & Hove Standard over the medium term.
 3. To ensure that all homes are as suitable as practicable for the needs of their occupants, in line with council policy. For example, there is a substantial investment commitment to providing adaptations and to reducing overcrowding in the programme.
 4. To ensure homes are energy efficient and that there is continued improvement in the energy performance of the housing stock, including through modern heating systems to reduce carbon emissions and resident's fuel costs.

5. To continue working closely with residents to help increase levels of resident satisfaction with the quality of their home and neighbourhood and to support proactive investment in and maintenance of the council housing stock to enable a preventative approach that allows for the ongoing reduction in the level of responsive repair needs.
- 6.9 Additionally, based on feedback from residents on their priorities, the programme continues the commitment to invest in environmental improvements to estates, external and common way repairs and decorations across the city subject to resident consultation and analysis of information to establish if replacement works are necessary.

Sustainability and Carbon reduction

- 6.10 Helping residents to live in well-insulated, efficiently heated, healthy homes addressing fuel poverty issues remains a key long-term objective, which is supported through the capital programme. A dedicated team is being put in place to focus on delivering on the council's commitment to improving the energy efficiency of homes by 2030.
- 6.11 Past progress on achieving this has been consistently good, with national Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) energy rating performance monitoring being used to benchmark these. Key investments that contribute to these include installing high efficiency boilers, heating controls, efficient doors, windows, insulation and renewable or community energy schemes, where appropriate. In line with the Housing Committee Work Plan, Housing will work collaboratively to ensure contributions toward making the city carbon neutral by 2030 are made.
- 6.12 Housing Committee noted a report presented to the committee on 17th November 2021 that outlined the plans going forward for making the city carbon neutral by 2030. This reported listed the following as key areas of work to consider:
 1. Delivery of up to 1,500 solar PV panels; this investment is included within the capital investment programme for the next 3 years.
 2. Identifying opportunities to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities, including with local partners on a 'Retrofit Taskforce' within the Greater Brighton region led by Lewes and Eastbourne authorities and the University of Brighton.
 3. Scoping out a new heating and hot water contract to offer low/zero carbon options from 2023 onwards.
 4. An options appraisal for low/zero heating and hot water at communal blocks in north Whitehawk currently served by gas has been completed, this could lead to 265 flats moving from gas to air source heat pumps over the next 2-3 years.

Delivery of new Council Housing

- 6.13 Delivering new affordable housing remains a key investment priority for the HRA and is supported in the capital programme during 2022/23. Dedicated staffing resources to continue to deliver on this priority are included in the revenue budgets.
- 6.14 Delivering new council homes under the Home Purchase Policy scheme remains a key source of delivery for the HRA. The capital programme provides budget of £23.375m for the purchase of up to 95 properties. The use of these properties will continue to be reviewed in line with the strategic housing need across the city and will see the properties used for either General Needs or Temporary

Accommodation purposes. Keeping the flexibility in the programme for the use of properties allows officers to react to any changes in circumstances across the city.

- 6.15 In addition to the Home Purchase Policy, the delivery of 10 properties under the Housing First programme is provided for. These are the final 10 properties under the current programme for which capital and revenue funding is available. Currently there is no indication at this time that there will be any further capital or revenue funding made available from Government to increase this provision. Officers will continue to monitor the situation and if this changes then it will be reported back to members through the Housing Supply Member Board and Housing Committee where necessary.
- 6.16 The provision of £3.000m has been set aside in the capital programme for opportunities which may arise for the general acquisition of properties in the HRA, supplementing the £3.000m approved as part of the 2021/22 budget report. This augmented budget of £6.000m can be used for purchases of homes outside of the Home Purchase Policy to be used for General Needs or Temporary Accommodation but will be dependent on the individual business case, which will be subject to review by the Housing Supply Member Board and subsequent approval by Housing Committee.
- 6.17 Other delivery routes included in the capital programme include the continuation of the Hidden Homes programme, where work continues on utilising under-used spaces. As well as this, work continues at pace on the two sites at Portslade and Coldean that are being purchased from Homes for the City of Brighton & Hove LLP and on various projects under the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme.
- 6.18 Only projects that have received scheme and budget approval have been included in the capital programme, this is a result of the need for an individual business case for each project to be signed off. The inclusion of any further budget would not be considered prudential or sufficiently robust to support its inclusion without concrete plans, with the detailed business cases needing full sign off from Committee.

7 HRA MEDIUM TERM & 30 YEAR FINANCIAL FORECASTS

- 7.1 The introduction of self-financing in 2012 provided additional resources from the retention of all rental income and, through greater control locally, enabled longer term planning to improve the management and maintenance of council homes.
- 7.2 The medium term and 30 year financial forecasts are provided in Appendix 4 along with the assumptions and risks identified for income and expenditure.
- 7.3 Since the Government removed the restrictions on borrowing in the HRA in October 2018, the council has developed plans to build and purchase additional council homes in the City. Those programmes which have been approved at Committee are included in the plan and these total a further 400 homes.
- 7.4 Revenue reserves have been maintained as per the reserves balances at April 2022, but this will be revised annually. This is to ensure that there are sufficient reserves in place to help fund the cost of complying with the risks outline in paragraph 5.1. For forecasting purposes, a working balance of £3.000m is assumed to be maintained as a minimum during the course of the 30 year forecast but this is subject to annual review and recommendation by the Chief Finance Officer.

- 7.5 The government announced an increase to social housing rents limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for 5 years from 2020/21. Therefore, the 30 year business plan shown at Appendix 4 assumes rent increases of CPI plus 1% for 3 years from 2022/23 and increases at CPI thereafter. Assuming other factors remain stable, this will help to sustain the HRA in the medium term.

8 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1 The budget process allows all parties to engage in the scrutiny of budget proposals and put forward viable alternative budget proposals to Budget Council on 24 February 2022. Budget Council has the opportunity to debate both the proposals recommended by Policy & Resources Committee at the same time as any viable alternative proposals.

The government annually sets a limit rent, currently set to include CPI plus 1% increase, which is used to determine how much Housing Benefit subsidy is received from the Department for Work and Pensions. Rises above the limit rent would reduce the amount of subsidy receivable by the council.

9 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Housing Revenue Account Budget Proposals for 2022/23 were shared at Housing Area Panels week commencing 13th December 2021.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires each local authority to formulate proposals relating to income from rent and charges, expenditure on repairs, maintenance, supervision and management, capital expenditure and any other prescribed matters in respect of the HRA. In formulating these proposals using best estimates and assumptions, the Authority must set a balanced account. This budget report provides a capital programme, break-even revenue budget and recommends rent proposals in line with current government guidance.
- 10.2 This report also provides the latest medium and long term forecasts for the HRA. However, there are a number of uncertainties due to impending government legislation, which mean that the current forecasts should be treated with caution.

11 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 11.1 The financial implications are contained within the main body of the report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Craig Garoghan

Date: 10/01/2021

Legal Implications:

- 11.2 In its landlord role, the council has contractual obligations to its tenants and leaseholders to maintain the structure of its housing stock. These obligations are complemented by statutory duties in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended. The council must comply with other statutory regimes, including those relating to health and safety, legionella and fire safety. It is likely that further statutory requirements will be imposed when the Building Safety Bill currently

making its way through Parliament is enacted. The measures outlined in the report will assist the council in discharging those duties.

- 11.3 The Housing and Local Government Act 1989 regulates the HRA. The requirement in the Act to set a balanced budget is noted in section 10 of the report.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 16/12/21

Equalities Implications:

- 11.4 The HRA budget funds services for people with a range of needs including those related to age, vulnerability or health. All capital programme projects undertaken include full consideration of various equality issues and specifically the implications of the Equality Act. To ensure that the equality impact of budget proposals are fully considered as part of the decision making process, equality impact assessments have been developed on specific areas where required.

Sustainability Implications:

- 11.5 The HRA budget will fund a range of measures that will benefit and sustain the local environment. This capital programme supports the affordable warmth and fuel poverty strategy brought forward from Public Health. Improving housing energy efficiency is a key contributor to the Carbon Emissions reduction commitment and will help to reduce the number of residents affected by fuel poverty and rising energy costs.
- 11.6 Project briefs are issued on all capital projects and require due consideration of sustainability issues, including energy conservation and procurement of materials from managed and sustainable sources.

Any other Significant Implications:

- 11.7 Financial risks have been assessed throughout the development of the council's HRA annual budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and 30 year financial forecast. A number of key sensitivities and scenarios continue to be reviewed to ensure that the service understands the business impact of decision making and include areas such as:
- Impacts of the government's Housing & Planning Act and Welfare Reform legislation;
 - Potential impact of the post Grenfell tragedy review of building regulations and / or standards;
 - Potential impact of the Social Housing White Paper;
 - Inflationary risk where expenditure inflation is greater than income, particularly the risks around build cost inflation and future governments' social rent policies;
 - Managing interest rate fluctuations and the debt portfolio;
 - Long term capital and maintenance responsibilities compared with available resources; and;
 - Balancing regeneration and redevelopment needs with tenants' priorities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1 Appendix 1: HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23
- 2 Appendix 2: Fees and Service Charges 2022/23
- 3 Appendix 3: Capital Programme and Funding 2022/23 – 2024/25
- 4 Appendix 4: HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy & 30 Year Financial Forecast

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

The table below details the movement from the adjusted budget for 2021/22 to the proposed budget for 2022/23. This is presented in line with the prescribed CIPFA subjective analysis. The detail for the changes are listed below this and referenced in the table below.

Table 1 – Revenue Budget	2021-22	Budget Changes			2022-23
	Adjusted budget	Inflation	Investment & Re-investments	Other Changes	Original Budget
Note		1	3	4	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS					
Expenditure					
Employees (data a)	17,745	354	1,408	(327)	19,180
Premises - Repairs	4,425	201	1,456	120	6,202
Other Premises related costs	2,850	180	85	(17)	3,098
Transport related	960	9	0	0	969
Bad Debt Provision	614	3	0	0	617
Supplies & Services	3,682	184	516	(23)	4,359
Support Services (data b)	3,396	63	0	135	3,594
Third Party Payments	162	4	0	0	166
Revenue Contribution to Capital	21,641	0	0	(1,774)	19,867
Capital Financing Costs	6,025	0	0	(182)	5,843
Total Expenditure	61,500	998	3,465	(2,068)	63,895
Income					
Rents Dwellings	(53,299)	(2,194)	0	(461)	(55,954)
Rents Car Parking / Garages	(973)	(27)	0	0	(1,000)
Commercial Rents	(620)	0	0	20	(600)
Service Charges	(6,203)	(273)	0	552	(5,924)
Other Income	(405)	(2)	0	(10)	(417)
Total Income	(61,500)	(2,496)	0	101	(63,895)
DEFICIT / (SURPLUS)	0	(1,498)	3,465	(1,967)	(0)

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Note 1 Inflation:

Inflation of 2% has been applied to Direct Employees, and 1% to Premises, Transport and Supplies & Services. Adjustments are made to specific areas based on known inflation above or below the standard 1% applied. Most notably this applies to the utility's, repairs and maintenance and voids expenditure budgets considered a reasonable increase from April 2022 having assessed the current market conditions.

Note 2 Savings:

There are no savings in the budget for 2022/23 due to the nature of the new Repairs & Maintenance Service and the level of uncertainty over costs further investment is required to ensure all priorities are met accordingly in 2022/23.

Note 3 Service Pressures and Priority Areas for Investment:

Table 2 - Identified priority areas for investment	£'000
The result of a review for the cost of repairs & maintenance was undertaken. This identified that there is a potential pressure coming from external sources i.e. inflation and cost of sub-contractors resulting in a requirement to increase costs associated with the new contractor's framework for repairs and maintenance.	1,218
The result of a review for the cost of voids was undertaken. This identified that there is a potential pressure coming from external sources i.e. inflation and cost of sub-contractors resulting in a requirement to increase costs associated with the new contractor's framework for voids.	754
The cost of harmonisation of staff contracts was met from reserves during 2021/22 due to uncertainty around the final costs. The cost is now recognised as part of the main budget for repairs & maintenance with this amount relating to staff transferred from Mears.	520
Additional investment in existing council staffing costs required for the vacancies held by Mears upon transfer these are being recruited in order to deliver the repairs &	263

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Table 2 - Identified priority areas for investment	£'000
maintenance service following the decision to bring the service back in house. These are costs linked to the harmonisation of contracts for those vacant posts at the time of transfer.	
Net increase in salary costs reflect the new structure in the HRA to meet the latest key priorities.	217
Investment for an additional year for the Transition team to continue to assist with the continued implementation of the in house Repairs and Maintenance Service.	230
Increased investment in staffing costs to ensure statutory Health & Safety works are carried out on tenants' homes.	178
The Housing service entered into a twenty-year lease agreement with Aviva Investors for the Housing Centre on 2 July 2010, expiring on 1 July 2030. The lease allows for rent reviews every five years, the latest of which was undertaken in July 2020. Based on current market conditions a negotiated figure of £85k increase was agreed bringing the total rent payable up to £270k and was seen a reasonable increase to accept from the council's corporate Estates Team.	85
Total investments	3,465

Note 4 Other Changes:

Other Changes to resources	£'000
Increase in Employers National Insurance contributions of 1.25%.	171
Increase in the capitalisation of Salaries following a review of the capital projects being undertaken during 2022/23.	(440)

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Other Changes to resources	£'000
Estimated increase in the cost of Responsive Repairs and Voids works in relation to the Temporary Accommodation units held within the HRA. This is a result of an increase in the number of HRA Temporary Accommodation units increasing during 2021/22.	103
Net increase in budgets to reflect the current requirements in the HRA.	64
Net decrease in Revenue Contribution to Capital.	(1,774)
Net decrease in financing costs.	(182)
Net increase in rental income from the new home's rents.	(461)
Net increase in Service charge income from council tenants to recover costs.	(344)
Change in the treatment of Leaseholder Major Work income. Historically this has formed part of the revenue budget figures and results in adjustments year on year to reflect major works completed on leasehold properties. This change will see this income treated as capital funding and will be reported in the capital programme tables instead. This income will be managed on the HRA Balance Sheet.	896
Total Other Changes	(1,967)

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Note 5 Projected Reserves:

Item	Estimated Balance as at 31/03/2022 £'000	Contribution (to) / from Reserves in 2022/23 £'000	Forecast use of Reserves in 2022/23 £'000	Estimated Balance as at 31/03/2023 £'000	Conclusion
HRA Reserves					
HRA Working Balance	(3,000)	0	0	(3,000)	A minimum working balance of £3m is recommended by the Chief Finance Officer in accordance with the requirements of Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.
HRA General Reserves	(4,347)	3,900	0	(447)	£720k earmarked against cost of harmonisation during 2021/22. Remaining set aside for general use against costs following the Building Safety Bill.
Repairs & Maintenance	0	(1,500)	1,500	0	Earmarked to clear the backlog of responsive repairs and voids works.
Rent Reduction Reserve	0	(1,200)	830	(370)	Earmarked £1.200 to fund acquisitions in order to reduce the rents on eligible properties during 2022/23, current estimates are £0.830m will be used during 2022/23.
EDB Reserves	(240)	0	0	(240)	Earmarked to support the revenue budget of £0.247m bringing the total available for EDB to £0.487m.
HRA - Renewable Energy Projects	(150)	0	0	(150)	
Sustainability and retrofit reserve	(4,010)	(1,200)	410	(4,800)	Earmarked for cost of sustainability work at Palace Place of £0.410m and earmarking £1.200m from general reserves for future years relating to sustainability measures and retrofit works required on Housing stock.
	(11,747)	0	2,740	(9,007)	

Appendix 1 – HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Data Table A - Employee Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Reconciliation

The table below includes FTE numbers in the HRA following the proposed increased investments.

Original FTE 2021/22	495.77
Changes for 2021/22	
Tenancy Fraud	1.00
Adjusted FTE	496.77
Increase in New Supply posts	1.95
Increase in Health & Safety posts	4.00
Increase in AD	1.03
P&I restructure	(7.00)
R&M Structure adjustments	0.75
Increase in Housing Sustainability posts	3.60
2022/23 FTE	501.10

Data Table B - Support Service and Other Charges Analysis

The table below provides a breakdown of the support service charges for 2022/23 and compares this to 2021/22. This table outlines the costs related to the back office support functions that are to be charged to the HRA during 2022/23.

Charging Service	Budget 2021/22 £'000*	Budget 2022/23 £'000
Support Functions:		
Insurance Costs	963	1,056
ICT	921	863
Finance	308	267
Legal	324	459
Democratic	243	227
Human Resources	320	333
Property	158	154
Procurement	130	131
Business Operations	57	78
Communications	25	26
Support Functions Total	3,449	3,594

* These figures are based on the approved 2021/22 budget paper.

Appendix 2 - Tenant Service Charges

All fees and service charges are reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery (where appropriate) and also to identify any service efficiencies that can be offset against inflationary increases to keep increases to a minimum. Proposed fees and service charges for 2022/23 are detailed below. Please note that for the comparable 2021/22 figures, the average weekly charge may differ from the previous year's budget report as a result of stock changes (for example new builds and Right to Buy Sales).

Service Charges Eligible for Housing Benefit	Tenants Charged (No.)	Approx. not eligible for Housing Benefit (No.)	2021/22 Average Weekly Charge £	2022/23 Average Weekly Charge £	Average Increase/Decrease £	Average Increase/Decrease %	Comments
Communal Cleaning	5,403	2,556	£3.12	£3.22	£0.10	3.1%	The increase reflects pay and price inflation and extra infection control cleaning to touch points.
Door Entry Servicing and Maintenance	4,341	2,016	£0.53	£0.55	£0.02	3.1%	The increase reflects annual contract inflation.
Electricity - Communal Ways	5,514	2,577	£0.96	£1.01	£0.05	4.8%	The change is as a result of higher electricity prices.
Grounds Maintenance	5,733	2,502	£0.74	£0.86	£0.12	15.7%	The increase reflects the increased costs of the service due to recent revisions to the City Parks costings and charges to reflect actual costs. Increase ranges from 1p to £37p per week.
Lift Servicing and Maintenance	2,575	931	£1.04	£1.07	£0.03	3.1%	The increase reflects annual contract inflation and reflects reactive repair costs.
Seniors Housing - Common Ways	876	169	£9.66	£11.46	£1.80	18.6%	The increase reflects pay and price inflation and enhanced infection control cleaning in schemes. Increase ranges from 15p to £2.98 per week.

Service Charges Eligible for Housing Benefit	Tenants Charged (No.)	Approx. not eligible for Housing Benefit (No.)	2021/22 Average Weekly Charge £	2022/23 Average Weekly Charge £	Average Increase/Decrease £	Average Increase/Decrease %	Comments
TV Aerials	5,786	2,530	£0.81	£0.84	£0.03	3.1%	The increase reflects annual servicing contract inflation and reactive repairs.
Video Entry Servicing and Maintenance	190	71	£1.06	£1.09	£0.03	3.1%	The increase reflects annual contract inflation.

Service Charges NOT Eligible for Housing Benefit:	Tenants Charged (No.)	Approx. not eligible for Housing Benefit (No.)	2020/21/ Average Weekly Charge £	2021/22 Average Weekly Charge £	Average Increase/ Decrease £	Average Increase/ Decrease %	Comments
Communal Heating – Electricity	82	N/A	£11.13	£12.01.	£0.88	7.9%	The change reflects changes in consumption and forecast higher electricity prices.
Brooke Mead Electric heating	45	N/A	£11.46	£11.70	£0.24	2.1%	The change reflects changes in consumption and forecast higher electricity prices.
Communal Heating – Gas	1,193	N/A	£6.87	£8.31	£1.44	21%	The change is the result of higher gas prices in 21/22 and 22/23. The increases range from 82p to £2.68 per week. Some new build properties will see reductions as original charges were estimated prior to any data being available. Increases have been smoothed over the next 2 -3 years to avoid large increases and to await more actual data on prices.
Garages and Car Parking	2,629	N/A	£9.58	£9.88	£0.30	3.1%	The increase reflects pay and price inflation.
Mobility Scooter and Cycle Storage	35	N/A	£2.50	£2.60	£0.10	4.0%	Inflationary Increase.
Seniors Housing - Guest Rooms	N/A	N/A	£15.50	£15.50	£0.00	0.0%	No change is proposed for 2022/23 in order to encourage social connectivity. However, see new covid related cleaning charge for this service below
Senior Housing – Guest room Cleaning charge PER STAY	N/A	N/A	N/A	£27 per stay	N/A	N/A	Charge for ‘Covid Secure’ cleaning of room and laundry after each stay.

Service Charges NOT Eligible for Housing Benefit:	Tenants Charged (No.)	Approx. not eligible for Housing Benefit (No.)	2020/21/ Average Weekly Charge £	2021/22 Average Weekly Charge £	Average Increase/ Decrease £	Average Increase/ Decrease %	Comments
Water Charges	242	N/A	£4.83	£4.98	£0.15	3.0%	The increase is due to forecast inflation increase of 3% for water charges.

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
Programme Expenditure							
Delivery of New Council Homes							
Home Purchase Policy	21,857	21,375	2,000	23,375	9,000	6,750	Continued delivery of the Home Purchase Policy. 2022/23 budget would allow up to 95 properties. 40 properties in 2023/24 and 30 properties 2024/25.
Housing First			2,553	2,553			Remaining 10 properties to be purchased under the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme.
General Acquisitions	3,000	3,000		3,000			Budget for the purchase of properties outside of the Home Purchase Policy, where opportunities and business cases present themselves.
Feasibility	150	200		200			Feasibility budget required to bring forward the new supply pipeline.
Converting spaces in existing buildings	1,172	1,316		1,316			Continued delivery of the Hidden Homes scheme where underutilised spaces are converted into new council homes.
New Homes Budget	3,310						This budget was varied to the Windlesham Close project as per the committee paper approved by P&R on 1st July 2021.
Victoria Road	8,730		3,773	3,773			Previous budget approved for Victoria Road profiled in the financial years to match the latest delivery programme.
Design Competition	2,000		2,060	2,060			Previous budget approved for Frederick Street and Rotherfield Crescent profiled in

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
							the financial years to match the latest deliver programme.
Moulsecoomb Hub land	4,320						The appropriation is expected to be completed by March 2022. The November committee report requested further budget to bring the project up to the planning with final scheme and budget approval to be taken back to committee during 2022.
Windlesham Close			773	773	4,482		Approval given for this scheme at the 1st July 2022, the budget has been profiled to match the latest estimates of the cashflow.
Palace Place			1,670	1,670			Approval given for this scheme at the 1st July 2022, the budget has been profiled to match the latest estimates of the cashflow.
Belgrave Day Centre, Portslade			5,387	5,387	1,103	331	Purchase of 49 homes from HBH LLP at the Portslade site.
Coldean Lane, North of Varley Halls			12,021	12,021	5,348	857	Purchase of 127 homes from HBH LLP at the Coldean site.
Total Delivery of New Council Homes	44,539	25,891	30,237	56,128	19,933	7,938	

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
Improving Housing Quality							
Main Door Entry Systems & CCTV	820	855		855	847	720	Repair and replacement of Main Entrance Doors. Long term programme of door entry system replacements, as systems fail or reach the end of their serviceable life, with spare parts unable to be sourced. These two programmes are reviewed alongside each other and works coordinated where feasible to ensure value for money. Installation and upgrade of CCTV systems to increase security of blocks.
Water Tanks, Ventilation, Lighting & Lightning Protection & Fire Alarms	620	1,130		1,130	1,680	1,680	Projects help meet statutory requirements and ensure safety and welfare for residents through replacement and improvements.
Lifts	390	410		410	410	410	The lift replacement and upgrade programme is a long-term commitment to council residents. The majority of lifts have now been replaced since its inception, and the programme is under ongoing review to ensure it continues to provide good value for money.
Fire Safety & Asbestos Management	1,610	610		610	610	610	Effectively managing the risks of both fire and asbestos materials is an ongoing need. Includes both statutory requirements and provision for enhanced fire safety measures. In particular, including provision for a programme of

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
							retro-fitting of sprinklers, subject to consultation with residents.
Minor Capital Works	320	670		670	670	670	Investment in smaller capital repairs across the HRA stock as well as investing in car parks and garages.
Roofing	1,500	1,320	220	1,540	1,540	1,760	Helps to extend the life of assets, improves insulation and reduces responsive repairs.
Condensation & Damp Works	280	280		280	280	280	Health and welfare of council residents is assisted by tackling issues arising from condensation and damp in properties.
Major Structural works	4,300	1,800	4,160	5,960	5,700	6,000	Meeting our landlord obligations through maintaining the structural and general external integrity of properties.
Major Empty Property works	110	110		110	110	110	Extensive refurbishment of empty homes prior to re-letting.
Cyclical Repairs & Decorations	1,580	1,600		1,600	3,310	3,470	External and common way repairs and decorations across the city help reduce ongoing costs and keep properties well maintained. Property & Investment team work closely with residents to ensure internal decorations in blocks are consistently delivered across the city.
Future capital projects	420	280		280	280	280	Specialist and other surveys to support future programmes.

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
Dwelling Doors	1,250	1,270		1,270	990	990	Replacing doors to properties with secure and efficient design helps residents feel safer. This programme includes the provision of fire-rated doors to dwellings where required.
Kitchens & Bathrooms	2,040	2,430		2,430	2,445	2,590	This budget helps to ensure homes comply with the Brighton & Hove Standard.
Rewiring - Domestic/ Communal	1,290	1,210		1,210	1,210	1,210	Safe and reliable and compliant electrical installations and efficient lighting are supported from this budget.
Windows	1,410	1,980		1,980	2,150	2,260	Window replacement programmes meet the council's landlord obligations, improve energy efficiency, warmth and reduce ongoing repair costs.
Sustainability & Carbon Reduction							
Domestic/Communal Heating Improvements	2,240	2,200		2,200	2,200	2,200	Efficient and modern replacement heating systems improve thermal comfort, reduce carbon emissions and resident fuel costs.
Energy Efficiency & Low Carbon Heating	1,400	1,200	157	1,357	1,500	3,000	This programme will help take up a range of opportunities to further improve the energy rating of our homes and to identify projects that will help move towards zero carbon from our service delivery activities by 2030.

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000	Total Budget 2022/23 £'000	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
New Solar Panels Programme	750	200	700	900	1,500	1,200	Policy & Resources Committee approved a budget of £1.750m for the delivery of 500 solar panels split evenly over 2021/22 and 2022/23. The delivery has been profiled to deliver the original 500 by 2023/24 as well as making provision for a further 500 solar panels at a cost of £1.750m to be delivered as part of this programme between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the additional investment will require further committee approval.. A project manager has also been included as part of this at an estimated cost of £0.050m per annum.
Tackling Inequality							
Environmental Improvements	400	505		505	675	390	This budget funds environmental and communal area improvement work based on resident priorities. It also includes provision for the refurbishment of 10 out of the 15 housing owned playgrounds (as reported to ETS Committee in January 2021) over the next 3 years, totalling investment of £0.510m; broken down as 2021/22 £0.120m, 2022/23 £0.125m and 2023/24 £0.265m.
Disabled Aids & Adaptations	1,470	1,600		1,600	1,600	1,600	Enabling vulnerable residents to continue to live independently in their homes through investment in housing adaptations.

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
Conversions & Extensions	610	610	200	810	610	610	Tackling overcrowding across the city is of key importance to ensure good quality housing.
Total Investment in existing Housing Stock	24,810	22,270	5,437	27,707	30,317	32,040	
Other Projects							
Housing ICT Systems	150	150	1,092	1,242	80	80	ICT requirements across the HRA continue to be reviewed to ensure the systems in place are fit for purpose and provide VFM. The investment shown here is for the replacement asset management and works management systems.
Total Other Projects	150	150	1,092	1,242	80	80	
Total Programme	69,499	48,311	36,766	85,077	50,330	40,058	
Programme Funding							
Revenue Contribution to investment in existing housing stock		19,886		19,867	21,485	23,450	
Borrowing		20,635	32,471	53,125	25,295	14,403	Borrowing required mainly for new build development.
HRA reserves		410		410			Useable revenue and capital reserves.
Capital Receipts		1,000	345	1,345	675	675	Capital receipts for use against new housing delivery.
RTB Receipts		3,375	1,917	5,292	2,695	1,350	Retained RTB receipts for New Build.
Energy Grants/FITs		180		180	180	180	Funding received to support sustainability and carbon projects.
Grant Funding			1,147	1,147			LRF grant received and Homes England grant for the purchase of HBH LLP Properties.

Appendix 3 - HRA Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

		For Approval	For info				
	<i>P&R Original Budget 2021/22 £'000</i>	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	<i>Profiled Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	<i>Total Budget 2022/23 £'000</i>	Provisional Budget 2023/24 £'000	Provisional Budget 2024/25 £'000	Description
Commuted Sums		2,025	886	2,911			Funding to support the purchase of properties through the Home Purchase Policy.
Leaseholder Income		800		800			Leaseholder Major Works income.
Earmarked rent reserve							
Total Funding	73,509	48,311	36,766	85,077	50,330	40,058	
Excess Funding available	4,010						

Appendix 4 - HRA MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND 30 YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 to 2024/25

The Medium Term Financial revenue position provides a cumulative surplus of £64.802m that can be used to support the delivery of the Capital Programme during this period. The MTFS includes further provision for bringing the repairs and maintenance service back in house and is reflected in the increased management costs to account for the increase in staff requirements and also the increase in revenue repairs costs. The rental income includes increases of CPI+1%, outlined in the central government announcement in 2018. The assumption here is that no further additional investment is made beyond the current levels in the HRA.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Expenditure			
Management & Service Costs	20,035	20,709	21,179
Repairs and Maintenance	16,031	16,953	17,589
Other Costs	1,200	1,239	1,266
Borrowing costs	5,877	6,602	6,904
Total Expenditure	43,143	45,503	46,938
Income			
Rental Income	(55,339)	(59,055)	(62,273)
Service Charges (Tenants)	(5,873)	(6,074)	(6,216)
Other Income	(1,798)	(1,859)	(1,899)
Total Income	(63,010)	(66,988)	(70,388)
Net Revenue Income	(19,867)	(21,485)	(23,450)

30 Year financial forecast

The introduction of self-financing provided local authorities with the opportunity to develop longer term planning to improve the management and maintenance of council homes. From April 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 required that rents should be reduced by 1% per annum for four years commencing in 2016/17, the final year of this decrease was 2019/20. The government then announced in 2018 that social rents could be increased by a maximum of CPI+1% over a 5 year period commencing in 2020/21.

The current financial plan projections shown below continue to provide a viable business plan over 30 years. This is a snapshot based on the 2022/23 budget proposals and is subject to change year-on-year. The overriding assumption is that a projection of costs and income are only included where projects and programmes have received formal Budget Council or Policy & Resources Committee approval.

The plan is designed to give an overview of the financial health of the HRA based on broad assumptions for the long term and current approvals. It is not a detailed plan and therefore surpluses or deficits indicated by the 30 year plan cannot be relied and only provide a guide as to overall financial sustainability. Many factors can change including the funding and financing regime of the HRA itself. However, the movement in the 30 Year Plan year-on-year can provide a guide as to the direction of travel of HRA finances, particularly when looked at over a period of years.

	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Years 11-20	Years 21-30	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Management & Service Costs	106,218	118,404	277,314	343,014	844,950
Repairs and Maintenance	86,700	99,841	244,867	322,574	753,982
Other Costs	6,313	6,993	16,244	19,802	49,352
Borrowing costs	33,631	36,460	71,784	70,335	212,210
Total Expenditure	232,862	261,698	610,209	755,725	1,860,494
Income					
Rental Income	(307,057)	(344,328)	(783,307)	(937,916)	(2,372,608)
Service Charges (Tenants)	(22,752)	(24,978)	(57,242)	(69,088)	(174,060)
Other Income	(17,836)	(20,186)	(48,095)	(60,133)	(146,250)
Total Income	(347,645)	(389,492)	(888,644)	(1,067,137)	(2,692,918)
Net Revenue Income	(114,783)	(127,794)	(278,435)	(311,412)	(832,424)
Capital Expenditure					
Capital Investment programme	149,409	123,208	261,822	314,750	849,189
Development	86,055	-	-	-	86,055
Total Expenditure	235,464	123,208	261,822	314,750	935,244
Funded By:					
Other Capital Income	(18,043)	-	-	-	(18,043)
Borrowing	(102,228)	-	-	-	(102,228)
HRA Reserves	(410)	(38,192)	(42,817)	(45,461)	(126,880)
Direct Revenue Funding	(114,783)	(85,016)	(219,005)	(269,289)	(688,093)
Total Funding	(235,464)	(123,208)	(261,822)	(314,750)	(935,244)
Opening HRA reserves	(3,000)	(3,000)	(7,586)	(24,199)	(3,000)
(To) / From Reserves	-	(4,586)	(16,613)	3,338	(17,861)
HRA resources	(3,000)	(7,586)	(24,199)	(20,861)	(20,861)

30 Year Forecast – Assumptions

The 30 year financial forecast has been developed based on the following assumptions:

- General inflation (CPI) is assumed at an average of 2.1% for years 1 to 30. This is applied to the majority of costs and income in the HRA, with the only exceptions being the repairs and maintenance costs and capital investment programme which are assumed to increase by the RPI rate.
- Rents are assumed to increase by CPI+1% for two further years and revert to CPI thereafter.
- General inflation (RPI) is assumed at an average of 3.1% for years 1 to 30 and is applied to other items of expenditure.
- The forecast includes the council's commitment to a further 416 homes over a 3-year period; this is in addition to the 270 homes that have been delivered since 2019 up to April 2022. The policies around these homes have received formal committee approval, regarding the budget and rent to be set for the new homes. These include the following programmes:
 1. Home Purchase Policy
 2. Housing First
 3. Hidden Homes
 4. Palace Place
 5. Belgrave Day Centre, Portslade
 6. Coldean Lane
 7. Victoria Road
- No assumptions beyond formally approved programmes have been made.

Items not included

There are a number of items which have not been included in the financial plan, this is due to the risks and uncertainties around the costs and income associated with them. At this stage the financial landscape is changing significantly for the HRA and so careful consideration of what can be reasonably included has been taken.

- Any **new supply of homes** that is yet to receive full committee approval is not included. Over the last 12 months the construction landscape has changed significantly, creating a high degree of uncertainty around the cost of investment. As well as this, there is uncertainty with the associated rent levels that can be included in the plan as these have not yet been approved. This could result in a significant difference in the long term financial forecast depending on the rents assumed. The overriding assumption is, normally, that new projects would be self-funding but until this is analysed alongside a strategic housing needs assessment the financial projections remain uncertain. Even small differences between assumptions and final costs can substantially skew long term forecasts. Therefore, at this stage the most prudent approach is to recognise there is a pipeline to deliver new homes but there is insufficient financial certainty for them to be included in the long term forecast. As budgets and rent levels are approved, schemes will be included within the financial forecast.
- **Sustainability and retrofit works:** currently, over the 30 years there is investment included of £199m within the capital investment programme line. This is based on the information provided by the Asset Management System which is subject to review and change following the development of the Asset Management Plan. However, over the first 10 years of the plan there is uncertainty over the level of investment required to reach the council's priority of being a carbon neutral city by 2030. A new retrofit task force, linked to Greater Brighton, is underway to review the investment required and the funding that may become available from Central Government. There are too many uncertainties currently to be able to include this investment and funding in the current iteration of the financial plan. As this becomes clearer, the financial forecast can be updated.
- The current **investment in existing stock** is based on the latest information provided by the council's Asset Management System and informs the cyclical programmes over the 30 years. This is though, subject to review and change based on the outcomes from the Building Safety Bill, Social Housing White Paper and the further development of the Asset Management Plan. These are considered high risk and high cost items of which the outcome will be included in future iterations of the financial forecast.

Subject:	Procurement of contract for Heating and Hot Water Servicing, Maintenance, Repair and Installation in Council Housing		
Date of Meeting:	19 January 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Miles Davidson	Tel: 01273 293150
	Email:	Miles.davidson@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The existing contract with K&T Heating Services Ltd for the supply, installation, maintenance, and servicing of gas boilers is due to expire at the end of March 2023. The current contract is limited to gas heating and hot water systems, and communal solar thermal installations.
- 1.2 The report seeks delegated authority to procure and award a new contract for the existing services above in addition to the installation, servicing and maintenance of low carbon heating and hot water services that support Housing's contribution to the city-wide Carbon Neutral 2030 objective.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director for Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities to procure and award a contract for the services described below for a term of 5 years with the option to extend for a period of up to two further periods of two years following the initial five year term (5+2+2), subject to satisfactory performance by the contractor and further approval described below.
- 2.2 That Housing Committee note that a report will be presented to Housing Committee updating on the performance of the contract, including its contribution towards our Carbon Neutral ambition, prior to the end of the initial 5 years, seeking authority to extend the contract beyond the initial term.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The existing contract with K&T Heating Services Ltd for the supply, installation, maintenance, and servicing of gas boilers is due to expire at the end of March 2023. The current contract is limited to gas heating and hot water systems, and communal solar thermal installations.

3.2 The current contract covers the following current services that will need to be provided from 2023 onwards.

- 10,000 domestic properties requiring annual Landlords Gas Safety Records (LGSR)
- Upgrade/replacement programme for domestic properties (technology to be mixed/confirmed)
- 32 commercial gas plant rooms requiring annual Landlords Gas Safety Records (LGSR)
- Upgrade/replacement programme for commercial gas plant rooms (technology to be mixed/confirmed)
- 1213 properties served via communal boiler internal services i.e. Heat Interface Units, distribution networks etc. requiring maintenance and replacement/upgrade
- Repair and maintenance of all the above with 24/7 call out in line with Government Right to Repair

3.3 There are a number of new considerations that will inform how heating and hot water services are delivered in the future.

- City wide Carbon Neutral 2030 ambition
- No new gas connections from 2025 (tbc) and the possible ban on sale of gas boilers in the 2030's (although our Carbon Neutral ambition would lead to action before these national target dates)
- The need to provide low/zero carbon alternative solutions for heat and hot water delivery aligned with pending HRA Energy Plans
- The opportunity to provide more efficient and affordable forms of heating and hot water provision for properties currently off gas (i.e. Air Source Heat Pumps)
- The need for technical specifications to be structured in such a way as to allow flexibility for the Council and residents to benefit from new technology development and innovation across the term of the contract

3.4 Officers have reviewed options for the future delivery of the above services, including early discussions with resident groups, and believe that the best outcomes would be achieved through procuring one contract for the provision of all heating and hot water services for the reasons below.

- Based on previous experience with multiple contractors providing gas servicing and installation, prior to the current contract, using one contractor has provided cost savings over previous contracts
- Based on previous experience with multiple contractors providing gas servicing and installation and the current contract we have seen improved customer service through having one contractor responsible for all the assets. This will become more vital across a range of technologies/heating sources i.e. one contractor responsible for servicing and maintaining current gas assets and for surveying, installing and maintaining new low carbon technologies as alternatives. There is potential for greater continuity of project delivery and compliance across different work streams. For example, decommissioning of a gas boiler before installation of an air source heat pump can be managed by one contractor reducing the impact on residents through coordination of the work.

- The potential, based on current experience for one contractor liaising with residents creating a 'one stop shop' for works and communications creating robust practices to ensure 'the end product' meets residents needs and expectations
- The potential for one contractor to work alongside the Council to create robust processes to identify fuel poverty and any other potential tenancy issues
- The potential for one contractor providing all services to provide better buying power increasing rebates and lowering material and capital costs and negotiating better extended warranties. This is backed up by our experience with the current contract where warranty periods have increased from 5 to 10 years and the cost of an average boiler is around 40% below market rates
- The wider scope of a new heating and hot water contract will allow for greater opportunities to access government funding for low carbon heating in the future

3.5 A market engagement event took place on the 18 November at which the Council tested the market's appetite for the Council's proposed Heating and Hot Water Servicing, Maintenance, Repair and Installation requirement as described within this report. The event also gave the Council the opportunity to test the market's view on the proposed route to market for which there was general agreement from suppliers. We received feedback from suppliers on the possible social value and sustainability outcomes that could be achieved through the contract, this will be considered through and inform the procurement process.

3.6 The recommendations and details contained within this report were considered at Procurement Advisory Board on 29 November 2021. The Board supported the recommendations and approach outlined but requested a clearer link between the future Committee approval to extend the contract and the performance of the contract specifically in relation to its role in delivering our Carbon Neutral ambition. There was also discussion regarding the need to ensure that the Council's local ambition is more clearly reflected in the report regarding the future installation of gas boilers and when these will be phased out. We recognise that our ambitions are in advance of national targets for gas boiler phasing out and these will be reflected through future Energy Plans, the delivery of which will be supported by this proposed contract.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Servicing, maintenance, repairs and installation of gas fired and renewable heating and hot waters systems is a highly technical and specialist area of work for which we do not have the skills and experience, beyond the contract management function, to deliver in-house.

4.2 The in-house service does not hold the required accreditations to carry out and commission much of the work, such as; Gas Safe, Microgeneration Certification Scheme, PAS2035.

4.3 Repairs and maintenance of these systems requires specialist supply chains that the Council does not have access to and may not have the resource and buying power of a specialist contractor. This presents significant risks to the ability to

complete repairs quickly and therefore provide a good value for money service to residents.

- 4.4 The current contract model has provided value for money and has delivered consistently regarding performance across all elements of the contract.
- 4.5 When it was agreed that the Housing Repairs and Maintenance service would be 'brought in-house' at the end of the contract with Mears Limited, it was noted at that time that some specialist works would continue to be delivered by specialist contractors, such as the case here.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The proposed contract scope and services have been discussed with tenants and leaseholders through the Home Service Improvement group and as part of the Carbon Neutral focused City-Wide Conference in September. Residents have been engaged in discussion about future delivery of heating and hot water services and how these will need to align to the city-wide Carbon Neutral 2030 ambition.
- 5.2 Further consultation with leaseholders will take place as required through the procurement process in 2022, if approval to proceed is given.
- 5.3 Engagement with residents will continue with the development and delivery of the HRA Energy Plan over the coming years, including the delivery of these services. Residents are extensively consulted where works such as communal boiler replacement schemes are planned, this engagement will take on even greater significance with the introduction of new technologies and systems.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 We have a statutory responsibility to service and maintain existing gas fired systems, including the completion of annual Landlord Gas Safety Records. The provision of reliable heating and hot water services is a key element of our landlord duties to all residents, in particular vulnerable residents whose health and wellbeing is at risk if living in a cold home.
- 6.2 The proposed contract scope allows us to continue to deliver the above services whilst working alongside the supplier and residents to develop and deliver heating and hot water services that align with our Carbon Neutral ambitions.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The existing contract with K&T Heating Services Ltd has the following budget resources allocated within the HRA; capital funding of £2.240m (covering supply and installation) and revenue funding of £1.440m (covering maintenance and servicing). Average spend against Seaside Homes of approximately £0.145m per annum is charged against the relevant General Fund budget.

- 7.2 The new contract value is hard to define precisely but our best estimate is that it will be similar levels to the current K&T contract but with the spend across different technologies moving away from gas over time. Any change in spending levels will be reflected in the budget setting for 2023/24 onwards.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley

Date: 05/01/2022

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The council's Contract Standing Orders require that authority to enter a contract valued at £500,000 or more be obtained from the relevant service committee prior to commencing any procurement activity. The proposed contract will assist the council in discharging its statutory obligations to keep in repair and proper working order any installations in dwelling-houses for space heating and hot water.

Lawyer Consulted:

Name Liz Woodley

Date: 16/12/21

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been drafted to guide the procurement and delivery of this new contract (Appendix 1). Project specific Equalities Impact Assessments are drawn up for all communal modernisation and installation projects. The recommendations from these form part of project planning with the contractor both in terms of resident engagement, planning and delivery of works.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 This new contract will significantly support Housing's contribution to the city being Carbon Neutral by 2030, this will be established through the scope of the specification used through procurement and impacts evaluated through the tenders.
- 7.5 Bidders will also be expected to identify additional sustainability benefits through the delivery of the contract including identification of improvements to the thermal efficiency of our buildings, advice and support to residents to effectively use heating systems that could reduce bills and carbon emissions. Bidders will also be assessed on their own operations carbon impacts and plans to reduce these, reuse and recycling of materials to support our Circular Economy ambition.
- 7.6 Sustainability outcomes will form part of the evaluation of bids for the contract, forming 10% of the total quality score. This will include how contractors intend to reduce their own carbon emissions and what support they can provide to the council in its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. Sustainability outcomes will be incorporated into the contract as a Key Performance Indicator.
- 7.7 Social value and community wealth benefits are a priority and therefore require significant consideration when being incorporated into the tender requirements. These will form part of the evaluation of bids for the contract in line with the council's Social Value Framework and will form at least 10% of the total quality score.

- 7.8 These could include seeking the use of apprenticeships for local residents through the contract or encouraging the use of local labour and/or supply chains. The expectation is that the contract as a minimum will support 3-5 plumbing apprenticeships within the councils Repairs and Maintenance service each year by providing the final year 'gas' element of the apprenticeship. There will also be an expectation that the contract supports specific apprenticeships linked to low and zero carbon heating and hot water services to support the need to develop the local supply chain and skills base.
- 7.9 It is likely that the contractor will continue to employ local staff as part of this contract, creating significant social benefit - as would keeping as much of the supply chain local as is reasonably practical.
- 7.10 The Council would encourage and work with the contractor who is selected to deliver the contract to employ a workforce who is representative of Brighton and Hove's diverse community.
- 7.11 During the tender stage of the procurement process, potential bidders will be evaluated on how they will incorporate the Council's social value and community wealth objectives into delivering this contract. They will also be asked to demonstrate how they have delivered social value and community wealth benefits on previous projects to demonstrate their ability to deliver the commitments to the Council.
- 7.12 Furthermore, as part of the tender process, potential bidders will be given the opportunity to propose how they will demonstrate additional innovation in terms of contributing to social value and community wealth.

Brexit Implications:

- 7.13 There are no known specific direct impacts from Brexit.

8. Any Other Significant Implications:

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 8.1 None identified

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 8.2 The main risk associated with the procurement activity is that we are unable to mobilise a new contract within the time set aside for the activity however based on the current timeline sufficient time is available. If there are unexpected delays, we would review options of a waiver for a short-term extension to the current contract to maintain servicing and repair of existing heating and hot water services.
- 8.3 Risks associated with the delivery of the contract post procurement will be tested through the procurement exercise with contractors' experience and management of risk being evaluated as part of the tender process.
- 8.4 We are unable to predict possible savings due to the different nature of services proposed in the new contract from 2023 onwards. Currently the cost of installing an individual Air Source Heat Pump into a home is approximately three times that of a gas boiler (including pipework and radiators), although we expect the price to reduce as the market develops.

There are a number of possible additional benefits we would look to explore through the procurement of a new contract;

- Text ahead for servicing and repairs. Possibly through the new Housing Management System
- Live engineer tracking for resident portal
- Book a repair or service appointment through resident portal
- Stronger commitment and ambition of contractor on reducing CO2 of own activities, in particular fleet

Public Health Implications:

- 8.5 Through improvements to homes energy efficiency and heating and hot water provision there is the potential to address cold homes and fuel poverty in vulnerable groups. This can contribute to the prevention of ill health and excess winter deaths, reduce health and social inequalities, and improve wellbeing and quality of life. Supporting and enabling residents to pay less for their energy can contribute to tackling fuel poverty and cold homes, this will play a key part of low carbon programmes and projects in the future, transitioning away from natural gas based on current prices needs to be carefully managed to not inadvertently increase people's energy bills.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 8.6 Housings plans to reduce carbon in both its own housing stock and across private sector housing will be a significant contributor to the city's objective to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 and to become a 'more sustainable city'.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment

Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA) Template - 2019

EIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisions³.

See end notes for full guidance. Either hover the mouse over the end note link (eg: Age¹³) or use the hyperlinks ('Ctrl' key and left click).

For further support or advice please contact:

- **BHCC: Communities, Equality and Third Sector Team on ext 2301**
- **CCG: Engagement and Equalities team (Jane Lodge/Debbie Ludlam)**

1. Equality Impact and Outcomes Assessment (EIA) Template

First, consider whether you need to complete an EIA, or if there is another way to evidence assessment of impacts, or that an EIA is not needed⁴.

Title of EIA⁵	New Heating and Hot Water Services Contract (HRA)	ID No.⁶ HNC57	
Team/Department⁷	Mechanical & Electrical Team Miles Davidson Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Manager, Interim Manager M&E Team		
Focus of EIA⁸	<p>The focus of this EIA is on the procurement of a new contract for heating and hot water Servicing, Maintenance, Repair and Installation in Council Housing</p> <p>The existing contract with K&T Heating for the supply, installation, maintenance, and servicing of gas boilers is due to expire at the end of March 2023. The current contract is limited to gas heating and hot water systems, and communal solar thermal installations.</p> <p>The current contract covers the following services that will need to be provided from 2023 onwards;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,000 domestic properties requiring annual Landlords Gas Safety Records (LGSR) 		

- Upgrade/replacement programme for domestic properties (technology to be mixed/confirmed)
- 32 commercial gas plant rooms requiring annual Landlords Gas Safety Records (LGSR)
- Upgrade/replacement programme for commercial gas plant rooms (technology to be mixed/confirmed)
- 1213 properties served via communal boiler internal services i.e. HIU, distribution networks etc. requiring maintenance and replacement/upgrade
- Repair and maintenance of all the above 24/7 call out in line with Government Right to Repair

In addition to the above there are a number of new considerations that will inform how these services are delivered in the future;

- City wide Carbon Neutral 2030 ambition
- No new gas connections from 2025 (tbc)
- Possible ban on sale of gas boilers in the 2030's
- The need to provide low/zero carbon alternative solutions for heat and hot water delivery
- The opportunity to provide more efficient and affordable forms of heating and hot water provision for properties currently off gas (i.e. Air Source Heat Pumps)
- The need for technical specifications to be structured in such a way as to allow flexibility for the Council and residents to benefit from new technology development and innovation across the term of the contract

2. Update on previous EIA and outcomes of previous actions⁹

What actions did you plan last time? (List them from the previous EIA)	What improved as a result? What outcomes have these actions achieved?	What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take? (add these to the Action plan below)
No previous EIA to refer to		

3. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Age¹⁴	<p>Older people although less likely to be in fuel poverty are likely to experience on average higher fuel poverty gap, in particular the 60-74 age group.</p> <p>Older residents are more likely to have a long-term disability or condition so may be doubly affected.</p> <p>Excess winter deaths (EWD) are higher among people aged 65+. In 2013/14 51% of cold related deaths were among people aged 85 and older; 27% were among those aged between 75 and 84; 22% were among people under 75. ('Statistical bulletin: excess winter mortality in England and Wales, 2013/14'). In Brighton & Hove (for the three years of 2010/11 to 2012/13) 50% EWD of were in people aged 85 or over.</p>	<p>Some concerns have been raised during discussions with residents re. the introduction of new technologies and the potential impact on energy bills.</p>	<p>If not assessed and installed correctly we could inadvertently increase energy bills of older residents and make it more difficult for them to control the heat in their home.</p>	<p>Continued engagement with residents on new technologies</p> <p>Consider the impact on energy bills of new technologies generally and assess for specific projects (in particular communal systems) where planned</p> <p>Carry out fabric improvements to buildings (i.e. insulation) where feasible and required to increase energy efficiency of properties alongside the introduction of new heating systems</p> <p>Ensure new manufacturer controls are easy to understand and use, where necessary provide additional 'easy read' guidance</p> <p>Provide additional energy saving and bill saving advice through usual channels and referrals to support from other agencies</p>

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Disability¹⁵	<p>Historically people in England who have a long-term illness or disability are more likely to be fuel poor than those who do not. In Brighton & Hove, Health Counts Survey respondents who had a limiting long-term illness or disability were significantly more likely to be unable to keep their home warm in winter. 16.3% of people living in Brighton & Hove have their daily activities limited a little or a lot by a long-term health problem or disability (Census 2011). Nationally, disabled people are more likely to live on low incomes and experience poverty than non-disabled people.</p> <p>Disabled people are more likely to need a warmer home environment to maintain their health; some disabled people may need to use benefits intended to support their independence to ensure their home is warm enough. NICE guidelines identify people with disability and long term health conditions as being more likely to</p>	<p>Experience through fuel poverty and warm homes projects, through feedback from partner agencies and individual residents, has identified a significant need where individuals have a disability or long term health condition.</p>	<p>If not assessed and installed correctly we could inadvertently increase energy bills of residents and make it more difficult for them to control the heat in their home.</p> <p>For some residents new technologies have a significant potential to reduce energy bills and/or provide a warmer home i.e. replacing inefficient night storage heaters, we will be prioritising the most inefficient homes for improvements with an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)</p>	<p>Continued engagement with residents on new technologies</p> <p>Consider the impact on energy bills of new technologies generally and assess for specific projects (in particular communal systems) where planned</p> <p>Carry out fabric improvements to buildings (i.e. insulation) where feasible and required to increase energy efficiency of properties alongside the introduction of new heating systems.</p> <p>Ensure new manufacturer controls are easy to understand and use, where necessary provide additional 'easy read' guidance</p> <p>Provide additional energy saving and bill saving advice through usual channels and referrals to support from other agencies, such as in house tenancy sustainment energy specialist and support</p>

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	suffer ill health impacts of living in a cold home.			networks in the city; LEAP and Warmth for Wellbeing
Gender reassignment¹⁶	The Brighton & Hove Trans Needs Assessment found that the trans community have more people with a disability or long-term health need than the general population. 44% of respondents reported that they have a limiting long-term illness or disability, compared with 26% of all respondents to the Health Counts Survey.	See above	See above	See above
Pregnancy and maternity¹⁷	No known impacts			
Race/ethnicity¹⁸ Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	In 2019, the median income for ethnic minority households was, on average, lower than the income for white households which partly explains their higher likelihood of fuel poverty 17.7% compared to 9.3% Households whose first language is not English may have greater difficulty understanding heating controls and the energy supply market to ensure they are on the	Anecdotal feedback from support services suggests it is more difficult for recent migrants or households whose first language is not English to understand heating controls and navigate the energy market	Potential to struggle to pay fuel bills, heat the home adequately	Continued engagement with residents on new technologies, using existing support networks such as friends and family and community groups. Access to translation services if required. Consider the impact on energy bills of new technologies generally and

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	<p>best available tariffs</p> <p>Recent migrants may not have experience of heating controls and general energy saving measures households can take</p>			<p>assess for specific projects (in particular communal systems) where planned</p> <p>Carry out fabric improvements to buildings (i.e. insulation) where feasible and required to increase energy efficiency of properties alongside the introduction of new heating systems</p> <p>Provide additional energy saving and bill saving advice through usual channels and referrals to support from other agencies accessing translation and interpreting services and other support networks as required</p> <p>Ensure new manufacturer controls are easy to understand and use, where necessary provide translated additional 'easy read' guidance.</p>

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Religion or belief¹⁹	No specific impacts identified			
Sex/Gender²⁰	No specific impacts identified			
Sexual orientation²¹	No specific impacts identified			
Marriage and civil partnership²²	No specific impacts identified			
Community Cohesion²³	No specific impacts identified from procurement activity, future projects to replace communal systems and associated works may need to be carried out at a community level. Potential to create wider social value impacts from contract delivery, local jobs, apprentices, community projects etc.			Ensure levels of engagement are targeted and include relevant community groups, residents associations etc. The procurement activity will ask suppliers to demonstrate social value benefits these will be evaluated and form part of 10% of the overall 'quality' score
Other relevant groups²⁴	No specific impacts identified			

Groups to assess	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Cumulative impact²⁵	None identified.			
Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations²⁶				
<i>None</i>				

4. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EIA

Title (of data, research or engagement)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
Fuel Poverty Annual Statistics report	March 2021		
All other reports referenced throughout EIA			
Discussion held at Home Service Improvement Group throughout 2021 and ongoing	2021		
Presented and discussed at part of City Wide Conference September 2021	September 2021		

5. Prioritised Action Plan²⁷

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.				
Greater risk of fuel poverty and impacts of cold homes Age, Disability Race & Ethnicity	Experience, skills and processes of suppliers in supporting these groups and issues will be tested through the procurement exercise	Selection of supplier able to offer advice, supplementary measures and technical excellent installations to reduce risk	Customer satisfaction, measured through KPIs, complaints and compliments – And post installation surveys	Throughout the terms of the contract, and ensuring equalities is a standing agenda item on Core group meetings

EIA sign-off: (for the EIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

Staff member completing Equality Impact Assessment: Miles Davidson

Date: 10/11/2021

CCG or BHCC Equality lead:

Janice Markey

Date: 10/12/2021

Guidance end-notes

¹ The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately in their work.
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services which provide services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** to show that we have fulfilled our duties we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled or the EIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. Properly used, an EIA can be a tool to help us comply with our equality duty and as a record that to demonstrate that we have done so.

² Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

As a public sector organisation, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people in relation to their 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on what you are assessing, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and how serious any potential impacts might be. We use this EIA template to complete this process and evidence our consideration.

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **advance equality of opportunity.** This means the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
 - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** This means:
 - Tackle prejudice
 - Promote understanding

³ EIAs are always proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected within the context

The greater the impacts, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.

⁴ **When to complete an EIA:**

- When planning or developing a new service, policy or strategy
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy
- When ending or substantially changing a service, policy or strategy
- When there is an important change in the service, policy or strategy, or in the city (eg: a change in population), or at a national level (eg: a change of legislation)

Assessment of equality impact can be evidenced as part of the process of reviewing or needs assessment or strategy development or consultation or planning. It does not have to be on this template, but must be documented. Wherever possible, build the EIA into your usual planning/review processes.

Do you need to complete an EIA? Consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to a specific group or groups (eg: older people)?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people (potentially) affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EIA it is usually sensible to document why.

⁵ **Title of EIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing

⁶ **ID no:** The unique reference for this EIA. If in doubt contact your CCG or BHCC equality lead (see page 1)

⁷ **Team/Department:** Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed

⁸ **Focus of EIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?
- Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function tell you?
- What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

⁹ **Previous actions:** If there is no previous EIA or this assessment if of a new service, then simply write 'not applicable'.

¹⁰ **Data:** Make sure you have enough data to inform your EIA.

- What data relevant to the impact on specific groups of the policy/decision/service is available?¹⁰
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the groups identified above in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities?
- Use local sources of data (eg: JSNA: <http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/content/needs-assessments> and Community Insight: <http://brighton-hove.communityinsight.org/#>) and national ones where they are relevant.

¹¹ **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.

- What do people tell you about the services?
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
 - (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
 - (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
 - (c) allow enough time for consultation;
 - (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.

-
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all perspectives can be considered.
 - Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.

¹² Your EIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.

- The equality duty does not stop decisions or changes, but means we must conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
 - Are one or more groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
 - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan must be modified.
 - Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

¹³ Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions we can take.

- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to improve the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EIA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EIA that is vulnerable to challenge.

¹⁴ **Age:** People of all ages

¹⁵ **Disability:** A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes: sensory impairments, impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects, progressive, organ specific, developmental, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and mental illnesses, produced by injury to the body or brain. Persons with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection are all now deemed to be disabled persons from the point of diagnosis.

¹⁶ **Gender Reassignment:** A transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected

¹⁷ **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled.

¹⁸ **Race/Ethnicity:** This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants, and Gypsies and Travellers. Refugees and migrants means people whose intention is to stay in the UK for at least twelve months (excluding visitors, short term students or tourists). This definition includes asylum seekers; voluntary and involuntary migrants; people who are undocumented; and the children of migrants, even if they were born in the UK.

¹⁹ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

²⁰ **Sex/Gender:** Both men and women are covered under the Act.

²¹ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

²² **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

²³ **Community Cohesion:** What must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together.

²⁴ **Other relevant groups:** eg: Carers, people experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, ex-armed forces personnel, people on the Autistic spectrum etc

²⁵ **Cumulative Impact:** This is an impact that appears when you consider services or activities together. A change or activity in one area may create an impact somewhere else

²⁶ **Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Countervailing considerations: These may include the reasons behind the formulation of the policy, the benefits it is expected to deliver, budget reductions, the need to avert a graver crisis by introducing a policy now and not later, and so on. The weight of these factors in favour of implementing the policy must then be measured against the weight of any evidence as to the potential negative equality impacts of the policy.
- Are there any further recommendations? Is further engagement needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?

²⁷ **Action Planning:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.