

**COUNCIL**  
**1 FEBRUARY 2022**

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**OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

**Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee – 15 December 2021**

2. The Health and Housing Scrutiny meeting scheduled for 15 December 2021 was postponed in order to offer immediate support to NHS and local government organisations in light of the latest situation regarding Omicron and other variants.

**Medium Term Financial Plan**

3. As with all Scrutiny Committees, we have had the opportunity to respond to Cabinet, via the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, on the proposals in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23.
4. We were provided with an update on the finance settlement which had been received subsequent to the draft MTFP. We were advised that the Council Tax and Precept levels remained as expected at 2 per cent and 1 per cent respectively; that the £1.5B additional funding announced in the Autumn Statement had been split into £822M Services Grant and £636M Social Care Grant and the Council would be receiving £1.579M from the Services Grant and £1.162M from the Social Care Grant, which was higher than the estimate included within the draft MTFP. We also noted that the Services Grant was a one-off payment whilst a further review of Local Government funding was conducted.
5. Members were also advised that the New Homes Bonus had been extended for a further year, and that this would net a further £1.4M above anticipated levels. We noted that there were also a number of deductions from initial draft figures, however overall there would be an additional £1.073M funding for 2022/23.
6. The Group Director of Operations advised Members that the Public Health and Housing Revenue Account were the two main funding streams within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee and that whilst the 2022/23 Public Health Grant allocation had not yet been announced, there was no anticipated reduction. Overall Members were advised that there were no specific pressures for Housing or Public Health in 2022/23.

**Housing Revenue Account**

7. The Assistant Director Housing and Revenue provided Members with an update on the key decisions within the HRA for 2022-23 which included a proposed revenue expenditure of £25.448M, a proposed Capital Programme of £32.98M and a proposed rent increase. These proposals are subject to consultation with our tenants, which is currently ongoing.

8. In relation to the proposed rent increase, Members noted that Councils had the discretion to inflate rents by CPI plus 1 per cent, which would mean a rent increase of 4.1 per cent for 2022-23.
9. We were informed of a number of options that were considered at the Cabinet meeting held on 7 December 2021, taking into account the current economic pressures faced by tenants and balancing this with the need to deliver the Councils ambitious capital and energy efficiency programmes, and that an increase of 2 per cent was recommended which equated to an average £1.64 increase in weekly rents. We also noted Cabinet recommendation that service charges be increased by an appropriate inflationary amount.
10. Particular discussion ensued regarding the delivery of improvements to external wall insulation and Members were advised that all improvement work would be delivered as part of a programme and the Council were preparing to tender for a stock condition survey which would include insulation.

**Councillor Ian Bell**  
**Chair of the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee**