

**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 JANUARY 2023**

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – MTFP 2023-24 TO 2026-27

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Housing Revenue Account – MTFP for 2023-24 to 2026-27.

Summary

2. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Housing Revenue Account - MTFP 2023-24 to 2026-27 report which has been approved by Cabinet as a basis for consultation.

Recommendation

3. Members are requested to consider the Housing Revenue Account – MTFP for 2023-24 to 2026-27 and make any recommendations to Cabinet, specifically in relation to the following recommendations:-
 - (a) To implement a weekly rent increase of 5% for 2023-24, giving an average social rent of £78.70 and affordable rent of £88.38.
 - (b) To increase Garage rents and service charges as shown in Appendix 1.
 - (c) To approve the revenue budget at Appendix 1.
 - (d) To agree the Housing Business Plan at Appendix 1.
 - (e) To approve the capital programme at Appendix 1.

Anthony Sandys
Assistant Director – Housing and Revenues

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific crime and disorder implications in this report.
Health and Wellbeing	By ensuring our housing stock is in good condition we are making a positive contribution to the health and well-being of our tenants
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are a range of energy efficiency measures included in the business plan which will have a positive carbon impact
Diversity	The report does not contain any proposals that impact on diversity issues.
Wards Affected	This will have an effect on all Wards in the Borough with Council Housing
Groups Affected	All Council tenants and Lifeline service users
Budget and Policy Framework	The issues contained within this report require Council approval and the report will be presented to Council in February 2023
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an executive decision
Council Plan	This report contributes to the Council Plan by involving Members in the plans to build new Council houses and ensuring the existing Council housing stock is maintained to a high standard and is environmentally friendly by maximising rental and service charge income
Efficiency	As the HRA is a ring fenced budget every effort is made to maximise income and identify savings in order to maintain a high quality service
Impact of Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

4. Cabinet, at its meeting held on 6 December 2022, considered and approved the attached Housing Revenue Account as a basis for consultation.
5. Members are asked to consider the recommendations agreed by Cabinet in relation to the revenue budget, rent level and service charges for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2023-24 in the context of the HRA Medium term Financial Plan to 2026-27 and the 30 year business plan.

Consultation

6. The Tenants Panel has been consulted about the proposals and a wider consultation with all Council tenants is currently taking place.

Outcome of Consultation

7. A consultation exercise was carried out with the Tenants Panel in December 2022 with the Panel fully supporting the proposed increase of 5% on the annual rent charge. They appreciated that the increase was less than the maximum rent cap allowance and commenting that it was an acceptable level to increase the rent by. The Panel supports the spending priorities and that energy efficiency work to help reduce tenant's energy bills. The Panel's comments included the following:
 - (a) "The rent increase is understandable; things have to go up and always will. DBC always explains why the prices are increasing and what the money will be spent on, but I particularly like that the money will be spent on warming people's home this year"
 - (b) "In general, I am happy with the percentage... It seems in line with everything and although it is more than previously, I have no issues with this"
 - (c) "I did think that the increase would be somewhere between 5 and 7% so this increase is acceptable. Darlington has a few services, so an increase needs to be factored in at some point."
 - (d) "Although the rent increase is larger than in previous years, it is still a lot smaller and more affordable than private renting. We all knew that it was going to go up but that is in line with cost of living, you are seeing it everywhere. It looks like next year is going to be a lot better... and it looks like the money is being spent wisely."