

## **CABINET – 16TH NOVEMBER 2023**

### **Report of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### HRA BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2053 AND CAPACITY UPDATE

##### Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the HRA Business Plan 2023-2053 and Capacity Update.

##### Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission welcomes and supports the recommendations set out in the report of the Director of Housing and Wellbeing.

##### Reason

The Commission, having carefully considered and asked questions on the report felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.

##### Meeting Discussion

- i. The Director of Housing and Wellbeing explained some of the information contained within the graphs included in the report.
- ii. The HRA Business Plan and Capacity Update programme would vary in expenditure over the course of the 30 year period. This was related to the Asset Management Strategy which required updates to properties at a specific time. Updates to properties were required sooner than the report suggested due to the desire to maintain the 'Charnwood Standard'. There was an action in the Asset Management Strategy to review the position in respect of the Charnwood Standard as it may be components were being replaced before the end of their life cycle. Decent homes guidance was being updated and that may have an impact on this approach.
- iii. The Director of Housing and Wellbeing agreed to provide information on the intended pattern of borrowing and review processes associated with this, follow the meeting.
- iv. The borrowing forecast outlined in the report was relatively up to date, although it was difficult to predict future interest rates, which would affect borrowing capacity. It was anticipated that an annual review of the HRA Business Plan and Capacity Update would be undertaken to account for inflationary changes and because there were several current budget pressures. The existing level of borrowing of the Council was usual across many other Local Authorities.

- v. The Director of Housing and Wellbeing agreed to provide information on the reduction in bad debt value after 2022/23, following the meeting.
- vi. The sudden decrease in the Major Repairs Reserve was due to the funds being used for a capital programme.
- vii. It was highlighted that there were budgets within the HRA Business Plan to support work undertaken by the Council's anti-social behaviour team and communal door entry systems. This would have a continued positive affect on crime and disorder in the Borough. Reasonable action associated with crime and disorder was decided by the Council and there was a Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy which outlined this.
- viii. There was a Sheltered Housing Review in progress which was considering updates to existing schemes. It was anticipated that the outcome of the review would reduce the voids rate of sheltered housing properties.
- ix. It was likely that a capital sum would be made available for new Council properties. Some of the funds generated through the Right to Buy scheme could be used towards purchasing homes.
- x. It was suggested that an executive summary would have been useful to draw attention to the key details within the report and the graphs. However, it was acknowledged that the explanation provided by the Director of Housing and Wellbeing had been useful.

#### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Scrutiny Commission Procedure Rule 11.12 sets out the procedure by which a report of a Scrutiny Committee should be considered by Cabinet.

#### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The information on this in the Cabinet report is not affected by the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

#### Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

#### *Financial Implications*

There are no further financial implications associated with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

#### *Risk Management*

There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission.

Key Decision: Yes

Background Paper: Scrutiny Commission Minute 62 2023/24, 13th November 2023.

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