



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Date: Thursday, 15 July 2021

Time: 18:30

Venue: Assembly Room

Address: Town Hall, Hall Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 2QF

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

You have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be discussed if it relates to something on your Register of Interests form. You must declare the interest and leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

You have a Personal Interest in a matter to be discussed if it affects

- your well being or financial position
- that of your family or close friends
- that of a club or society in which you have a management role
- that of another public body of which you are a member to a greater extent than others in your ward.

You must declare a personal interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

Whenever you declare an interest you must say why the interest

arises, so that it can be included in the minutes.

3 MINUTES 4 - 11

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2021.

4 MATTERS ARISING

To consider any matters arising from the above minutes.

5 FORWARD PLAN 12 - 13

The Committee is asked to consider and agree the Forward Plan.

6 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN 2020/21 14 - 25

Report attached.

7 SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW 26 - 29

Report attached.

8 GYBC TENANCY POLICY 2021 30 - 46

Report attached.

9 USE OF RETAINED RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS UPDATE 47 - 54

Report attached.

10 COUNCIL HOUSING COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE 2020-21 55 - 76

Report attached.

11 COUNCIL HOMES PROGRAMME JULY

77 - 82

Report attached.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To consider any other business as may be determined by the Chairman of the meeting as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

13 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

In the event of the Committee wishing to exclude the public from the meeting, the following resolution will be moved:-

"That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act."

14 COUNCIL HOMES PROGRAMME CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX

Details



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 10 June 2021 at 18:30

PRESENT:

Councillor Grant (in the Chair); Councillors Cameron, Candon, Flaxman-Taylor, Galer, D Hammond, Jeal, Martin, Price, Smith-Clare, Wainwright & Williamson.

Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mrs N Turner (Housing Director), Mrs V George (Independent Living Service Manager), Ms S Bolan (Enabling & Empty Homes Officer), Ms Claire Wilkins (Housing Delivery Manager), Ms C Spooner (Housing Strategy Policy & Performance Officer), Mr T Chaplin (Housing Transformation Manager), Ms S Robinson (Early Help Hub Manager), Mr D Wilson (Neighbourhood Manager), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager) & Ms R Frosdick (Executive Services Officer).

Ms Judy Dow (Head of Philanthropy, Norfolk Community Foundation)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carrie Talbot.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Grant declared a pecuniary interest in item 7 - Community Housing Fund due to being a member of 3 Community Land Trusts in the Borough.

Councillor Martin declared a pecuniary interest in item 7 - Community Housing Fund due to being a Trustee on a Community Land Trust in the Borough.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2021 were confirmed.

With regard to item 7 (page 9), Councillor Williamson advised that up-to-date data could be sourced from the Cambridge Public Health Observatory and not the Cambridge Health Authority.

4 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee receive and note the Forward Plan.

8 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS - COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT

The Committee received the considered the report from the Strategic Director.

Judy Dow from the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) was in attendance to answer questions from the committee on the choice of operators.

In January 2021, the Council was successfully applied for a grant to deliver the Community Champions Programme. This was made available by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), working jointly with National Health Services (NHS) England. One strand of the Community Champion project is to support the establishment of a sustainable and accessible VCSE-operated food offer, via a community supermarket. One strand of the project is to support the establishment of a sustainable and accessible VCSE-operated food offer, via a community supermarket.

There is only one other of these projects in Norfolk based in Thetford, so their business model has been utilised. Establishing these successful community stores will contribute to all four Locality Strategy priorities:

1. Health and Wellbeing
2. Low Educational Attainment, Skills and Aspirations
3. Vulnerability and Exploitation and
4. Loneliness, Isolation and Social Exclusion

The Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) was identified as a key strategic partner to help the Council establish this project. As a part of the project scoping Phase 1, NCF has compiled an Interim Options Report. The findings of the report were based on NCF's investigative work to identify the most suitable and relevant community-based organisation to take the lead on the Community Supermarket project. After considering all key features, NCF is recommending that the Council invites the Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) and The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps (TSAGYC) to work with the NCF and the Council, to prepare business plans and submit grant applications to set-up community food stores.

As part of the £465,000 MHCLG grant awarded, £120,000 has been allowed for the community food project across the borough to ideally establish two stores. It is anticipated that further external funders/supporters will come onboard making the project self sustainable going forward. All funding for this project needs to be spent by the 30th September but projects can continue beyond this date.

There is only one other project such as this in Norfolk which is based in Thetford

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Noted the research and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the Borough Council, and statutory partners including representatives from the CCG and Primary Care Networks.
2. Supports the recommendation that Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) and The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps (TSAGYC) are the most suitable Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) operators for the proposed Community Food Stores located on the Shrublands site in Gorleston and in Great Yarmouth respectively.
3. Invites the SYACCT and TSAGYC to submit grant applications to the Council accompanied by sustainable business plans developed in association with the NCF, as preferred lead VCSE organisations to establish sustainable VCSE-operated community- based food stores.
4. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director to award grants, subject to

satisfactory proposals from the applicants, to run the two food stores on a community supermarket operating model, provided also that necessary permissions, consents and operational business plans are in place.

Councillor Jeal requested it be noted that he abstained from voting.

5 HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing Strategy Policy & Performance Officer

The Housing Strategy Policy & Performance Officer gave an update overview of the delivery of the 2018-2023 Housing Strategy. It was noted that the pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges, however progress has continued to be made against the measures and the Housing Strategy priorities and has acted as a catalyst for new initiatives and approaches in reducing rough sleeping and tackling homelessness.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the progress to date and request a further update report in 12 months time.

6 COUNCIL ADAPTATION POLICY

The Committee received and considered the report from the Independent Living Service Manager.

The Housing Director gave an overview of the current policy and the revisions they would like to see made.

Councillor Williamson, regarding 11.2 of the policy, asked whether we had received any Right to Buy applications on adapted properties in the past 5 years. The Housing Director confirmed that we had only one in the past 18 months where a significant amount had been spent on the property, so this request was declined.

Councillor Martin requested an update on the recruitment of a Technical Officer and Occupational Therapist which had been discussed at a previous meeting. The Independent Living Service Manager confirmed that we recruited a Technical Officer in September 2020 and a Housing Occupational Therapist in December 2020 and that they are now working their way through the waiting list, although this has been impacted by COVID19. Early indications are showing that both posts are having a positive impact and a report will be provided later in the year as agreed.

Councillor Wainwright asked how many people are currently in accommodation which is unable to be adapted and are waiting to be moved. The Housing Director advised she didn't have this information to hand and will

bring this information back to the Committee.

Councillor Williamson explained that he has a number of tenants in his ward who require adaptations but live in housing association owned homes, and he struggles to get a response from the relevant person at the housing associations when concerns are raised. He would like to know how we work with housing associations to get a transfer when needed. The Housing Director advised it wouldn't be a direct transfer and the individuals would be assessed in accordance with our Housing Allocations Scheme and the appropriate priority is given. So if a property is deemed not able to be adapted to meet these needs we provide a level 4 priority which is high priority for a transfer. The difficulty we have is finding the right types of property to meet the needs, especially when there are particular needs such as large families needing large properties which can be adapted as this can be challenging within our existing housing stock. We work closely with the housing associations, look at interim adaptations which can be made whilst waiting for a transfer and possibly the use of equipment, but sometimes this isn't always possible. Having an in-house Occupational Therapist is helpful with these particular cases as she is able to help with assessments for this. Councillor Williamson asked whether ward councillors are able to send any such requests through to the housing team to help with communication between GYBC and the housing associations. The Housing Director confirmed that her team are happy to help with these.

The Chairman queried whether housing associations are able to apply for Disabled Facilities Grants or whether they have to provide their own funding. The Independent Living Service Manager confirmed that housing associations are allowed to apply for DFG, so the tenant applies. Housing associations in the past have contributed to the cost of adaptations but this doesn't happen so much now. There are some that will make a nominal payment but the majority will be met via the DFG.

Councillor Candon queried appendix 2 - parking, and whether this includes (if we have any), designated parking areas for first floor flats or houses within our portfolio as we sometimes have numbered bays relating to particular properties. The Housing Director confirmed that appendix 2 relates to acquiring a property that will be suitable for adaption or is already adapted to meet the needs to someone using a wheelchair, so we wouldn't be looking to acquire above ground properties due to issues surrounding access. In terms of our existing flat estates, there are a number of wheelchair parking spaces but they are not designated to a particular property.

Councillor Smith-Clare regarding point 10 - tenants installing their own adaptations, queried what number does that entail and what is the cost, if any, of adaptations that have taken place and need repairing after, and whether they are all minor adaptations? The Independent Living Service Manager isn't aware of any recent adaptations but she will check and bring this back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee approved the Adaptation Policy for Council Tenants.

7 COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND

The Committee received and considered the update report from the Enabling & Empty Homes Officer.

The Chair advised that it is likely that Hopton CLT will merge with Lothingland CLT as expansion isn't possible and due to being landlocked. Lothingland are currently looking at a potential site and engaging with the land agent. Flegg CLT has this week provisionally agreed a significant sized plot in one of the parishes and an application will be submitted soon, along with a further one in the northern parishes very soon.

Councillor Williamson queried how much technical/administrative support the CLT's get from the Council. The Chair advised it is dependant on the project. Technical support is provided through Locality and some assistance is sought from Strategic Planning and Property & Asset Management teams when needed.

Councillor Williamson queried how fast the response is a request for a loan is received. The Housing Director advised there hasn't been a formal request received yet so she cannot say for certain. Councillor Williamson asked if we have a timetable for these to be processed. The Housing Director confirmed that a timescale couldn't be given but consideration would be given to any time constraints on the land, also the application and information would need to be sufficient for it to be considered, but an answer would be given as soon as it possibly could.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the update report.

9 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing Transformation Manager.

It was noted that going forward the Asset Team is now back with GY Norse, so future performance is expected to improve in areas such as voids and repairs due to this.

In terms of housing rent collection HN01 - bearing in mind we have been through a pandemic, the performance in rent collections has been exceptional.

Councillor Williamson, in relation to HN05, queried what methodology we are

using to capture this information. The Housing Director advised that the methodology has not changed for this year and that GYN are still capturing this information via Survey Monkey. She will double check if they are still capturing feedback at the time of the repair is being done and a follow up survey as well. Councillor William advised that there has been concern for some time that the people collecting the information are those providing the service and that an independent service would be preferable. The Chair requested the Director of Housing contact the Head of Property & Asset Management regarding this issue and feedback at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the update report.

10 COUNCIL HOMES PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing Delivery Manager and the Housing Director.

The Housing Director provided an update on the work undertaken since October 2020 to identify an initial tranche of potential sites that could be utilised to bring forward the delivery of Council Housing under the Council Homes Programme. A further report will be provided in November.

Councillor Price queried whether the increasing cost of building materials has been factored into the calculations. The Housing Director confirmed that they are aware of this and some allowance has been made and we would like to get agreement today so the tender process could commence as soon as possible. If it proved unviable we would not proceed and this would come back to Committee to be discussed.

Councillor Williamson requested that when trying to identify infill plots, that ward Councillors for that area are consulted as they sometimes have a closer view. The Housing Director confirmed there is a report coming to this committee in July detailing the approach to infill sites. Part of this process is the development of the Development Standard by the task and finish group which will put in place our processes moving forwards and guidance/views from Members are always sought.

Councillor Galer queried whether bank/building societies requirements for brick and tile construction will cause an issue in Right to Buy situations in modular housing in the future. The Housing Director advised that if after the tender process we opt for modular built properties, the product we are looking at is a mortgageable product. They have to have a minimum of 60 year life to meet the requirements. Also we want our properties to be robust and be appropriate to meet our needs for that time.

Councillor Wainwright stated that infill sites are quite often contentious, but could we look at land that isn't on council estates but possibly look at our land

such as Beacon Park for phase 3. The Housing Director advised we can certainly look at other land owned by the council that isn't in the Housing Revenue Account to provide council homes on, but there is a cost for that, for example Beach Coach Station, the council is acquiring that land to the HRA from the General Fund and there is a cost to purchase that land, whereas if we are building on HRA land there is no land value, it is free because the council has already bought that land and owns it. We will certainly look at non HRA land but we would need to look at the overall cost effectiveness of this option. Our own HRA land will not be the only other land that is used to provide affordable homes for the council.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:-

1. Noted the report and progress to date
2. Approved the drawdown of the expenditure to be incurred in the development of the Beach Coach Station development as set out in the Confidential Appendix
3. Approved, subject to the Council's conditional offer set out in the Confidential Appendix being accepted, the drawdown of the expenditure required to acquire the three affordable homes at St Nicholas Drive, Caister via a Section 106 Agreement.
4. Delegated expenditure in relation to recommendations 2 and 3 above to the Housing Director

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the meeting.

13 CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX -COUNCIL HOME PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the confidential appendix.

The meeting ended at: 19:20

	URN	Matter for Decision	Report by	Pre Agenda Meeting (PAM)	Housing & Neighbourhoods	Policy & Resources	Council
1		GYN Board Minutes	Head of Property and Asset Management				
1	21-043	Sheltered Housing Review	Director of Housing	06/07/21	15/07/21		
2	21-082	Tenancy Policy	Director of Housing	06/07/21	15/07/21		
3	21-095	Use of Right to Buy receipts Update	Director of Housing	06/07/21	15/07/21		
4	21-034	Council Housing Compliance & Performance Position update	Director of Housing	06/07/21	15/07/21		
5	21-081	Council Homes Programme Update	Director of Housing	06/07/21	15/07/21		
6	21-124	2020/21 Outturn Report (period 12 Budget Monitoring HRA)	Finance Director	06/07/21	15/07/21		
7	21-038	Resident Engagement Strategy	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
8	21-015	Community Investment Fund	Strategic Director (PB) / (Neighbourhood Manager (DW)	14/09/21	23/09/21		
9	20-199	Empty Homes policy	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
10	20-200	Temp Accommodation Strategy Update	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
11	21-017	HMO Guesthouse Programme	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
12	21-083	Rent Income Policy	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
13	21-084	Leasehold policy	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
14	21-085	Right to Buy Policy	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
15	21-081	Council Homes Programme Update	Director of Housing	14/09/21	23/09/21		
16	21-134	Physical Activity Development Review	Strategic Director (KB)	14/09/21	23/09/21		
17	21-035	Council Housing Compliance & Performance Position update	Director of Housing	08/11/21	18/11/21		

URN: 21-124

Subject: Housing Revenue Account Outturn 2020/21

Report to: Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee – 15 July 2021

Report by: HRA Service Accountant

SUBJECT MATTER

This report presents the following:

- The draft outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account for the 2020/21 financial year, which has been used to inform the production of the statutory account for audit and subsequent approval
- Details of the more significant year-end variances compared to the current budget for 2020/21
- Details of 2020/21 budget underspends requested to be carried forward to 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee recommend to Council the following:

1. The outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2020/21 as included in the report and appendices
2. The updated 2021/22 HRA revenue and expenditure budget as detailed at Appendix C
3. The updated 2021/22 HRA capital programme and associated financing of the as detailed within the report and at Appendix D.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. There is a statutory requirement to maintain a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and that account must not show a deficit. The HRA is a separate (ring fenced) account of the Council covering income and expenditure relating to its role as landlord. Under the self-financing arrangements for local authorities, the HRA records the costs of management and maintenance of the Council's dwellings and the related income from rents and other charges. The Government provides guidance on what should be included in the HRA to protect Council tenants.

- 1.2. Although there is not a requirement for a similar separation of capital expenditure, the capital programme as it relates to the HRA is separately monitored. This report outlines the full 2020/21 financial year's outturn.
- 1.3. The position as reported has been used to inform the publication of the draft statement of account which are subject to external audit review ahead of approval by the Audit and Risk Committee by the statutory deadline.

2. HRA Outturn 2020/21

- 2.1. The Housing Revenue Accounts annual outturn was a deficit of £1.001m against a budget deficit of £1.446m, resulting in a variance of £445k.
- 2.2. The 2020/21 £445k outturn variance is largely due to savings on demand lead annual revenue repair workflows such as void repairs and gas servicing and maintenance. These revenue services have reflected a reduction in demand, as a result of increased capital improvements works in prior year, increase stock quality overall.
- 2.3. The Housing Revenue Account has been impacted by the 2020/21 COVID-19 pandemic. Reduced Right to buy sales in year, have resulted in reduced receipts available for financing programmes in 2020/21. To mitigate this reduction, the revenue financing capital contribution has been increased.
- 2.4. A summary of the outturn position for the HRA is included at Appendix A, table 1 below provides details of the year end variances of the income & expenditure account.

Table 1 – HRA Income and Expenditure Outturn Variances 2020/21

Table 1	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Comments
Dwelling Rents	(21,817)	(21,903)	(86)	Increased dwelling rent due to reduced Right to Buy sales in year, along with increased Affordable stock added.
Other non-dwelling rents - Garage & stores rentals	(275)	(240)	35	Garage & Stores rent income reduced due to the impact of COVID-19.
Charges for services and facilities	(1,442)	(1,193)	249	Income received from services and facilities impacted by COVID-19. Enhanced tenancy management charge revised to reflect reduction in staff costs included in charge.
Capital Grants & Contributions receivable	(50)	(28)	22	Reduced expenditure in year has resulted in a reduced reserves contribution.
Income Total	(23,584)	(23,364)	220	

Table 1	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Comments
Repairs & Maintenance	8,984	8,419	(565)	Revenue repair budgets such as responsive repairs and voids have reflected an underspend of £591k. Asbestos testing is underspent by £55k. This is partly due to asbestos works being included within other capital programmes, such as kitchen and bathroom completions. Revenue neighbourhood planned works is overspent by £157k. This captures the completion of canopy works. Revenue heating repair costs are underspent by £242k. This is due to reduced demand, following increased completion of capital heating works within the stock.
Supervision and Management	2,908	2,693	(215)	Reduced utility costs in year reflecting an underspend of £57k. Staff cost savings relating to car allowance (£23k) and mobile charges (£9k) are underspent in year. Revenue computer costs are reduced in year due to the system upgrade delays (£55k).
Supervision and Management (Direct Employee)	2,439	2,376	(63)	Underspend due to staff turnover and vacancies in year.
Rents Rates & Taxes - e.g. Council tax, utility charges	249	322	73	Increased empty dwelling rate charges and increased insurance premiums due to the impact of COVID-19.
Depreciation	3,780	3,678	(102)	Deprecation reduced against budget estimate.
HRA revenue contribution to capital expenditure	3,267	4,041	774	Reduced capital receipts available in year, due to reduced Right to Buy sales. Increased revenue contribution to fund the capital improvement programme completed.
HRA Interest Payable on Loans	2,874	2,691	(183)	Underspend due to reduced borrowing in year and lower interest rates received
Contribution to Pension Reserves	394	58	(336)	Budget based on estimates provided in year. Reduced costs in the year reflect vacancies held.

Table 1	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Comments
Earmarked Reserves (Middlegate)	0	(32)	(32)	Earmarked reserve to support Middlegate regeneration review spend.
Expenditure Total	24,895	24,246	(649)	

3. Capital Programme Financing 2020/21

3.1. Appendix B provides details of the outturn on the HRA capital programme 2020/21 along with the explanations for the variances. Table 2 below provides a summary of the outturn position, along with the corresponding impact on the 2020/21 capital financing within the HRA.

Table 2 – Current HRA Capital Programme Financing 2020/21

Table 2	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Kitchens & Bathrooms	3,050	3,376	326
Windows & Doors	650	592	(58)
Planned Maintenance	665	387	(278)
Energy Efficiency Improvements	1,185	1,270	85
Specific Planned Projects	620	418	(202)
Empty Properties	700	614	(86)
New Affordable Housing - Right to Buy receipts	3,280	3,289	9
Additional Housing	250	0	(250)
Neighbourhood Plans	2,090	1,895	(195)
Housing Transformation Budget	415	18	(397)
Keysafe Installation	0	47	47
Total Expenditure	12,905	11,906	(999)
Financing:			
Borrowing	3,520	3,293	(227)
Capital Receipts	2,288	895	(1,393)
Revenue	3,267	4,012	745
Depreciation	3,780	3,678	(102)
Leasehold Contribution	50	28	(22)
Total Financing	12,905	11,906	(999)

3.2. Capital improvements have been impacted by the currently COVID-19 pandemic, delaying some programmes due to access restrictions and reduced resource. Although many programmes have completed planned outturn numbers, some budgets are requested to be carried forward to support 2021/22 programmes. Underspends identified to be carried forward into 2021/22, total £1,267k. A summary of the changes can be found in the table 3 below.

3.3. The 2020/21 financial year has reflected a significant decline in Right to Buy completions in comparison to prior years. This decline appears to be an impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4. Reduced Right to Buy sales impact the availability of capital receipts to fund the capital programme. As a result of reduced receipts in year, the HRA is reliant on revenue contributions to fund the remaining capital programme and has increased the contribution by £745k.

3.5. Total receipts from sales in year equaled £395k. The remaining receipts have been drawn from the capital receipt reserve to support the service in 2020/21.

4. 2020/21 Budget to be carried forward into 2021/22

4.1. Appendix C and D provide the revised position of both the revenue and capital 2021/22 programmes incorporating the 2020/21 carried forward budgets detailed below.

4.2. Table 3 provides a summary of the 2020/21 budgets required to be carried forward to 2021/22.

Table 3 - Forecasted Requests to Carry forward capital budgets

Project	Current budget 2020/21	C/Fwd Budget Amendment	Reason for change:	Financing from:
Housing Transformation Budget	415	396	Transformation underspend	HRA Revenue
Additional Housing	250	250	Programmed works delayed due to COVID-19	HRA Borrowing
De-Carbonisation	400	240	External wall installation programme to follow roofing completions	HRA Revenue
Empty Properties	700	85	Major voids spend underspent	HRA Revenue
Improvement windows & doors	650	55	Window and doors programme delay due to fire door installations	HRA Revenue
Planned Maintenance	200	31	Major Adaptations restricted due to COVID-19	HRA Revenue
Specific Planned Projects	600	210	Long term void underspend	HRA Revenue
	3,215	1,267		

5. Right To Buy (RTB) Summary 2020/21

- 5.1. Overall 2020/21 reflected a decline in the number of RTB sales in comparison to previous years (2017/18 – 47, 2018/29 – 50, 2019/20 - 27). The Council have completed 9 Right to Buy Sales during 2020/21 against an estimated figure of 37.
- 5.2. Reduced RTB sales in year, along with increased acquisitions and new build dwelling additions being added, means the overall lettable stock total has increased in year to 5,787.
- 5.3. The Council is responsible for managing stock of 5,787 dwellings as at the 31 March 2021 (5,766 in 2019/20). Table 4 shows a summary on the movement and breakdown of the Housing Stock during 2020/21.

Table 4 – HRA Housing Stock summary 2020/21

	2019/20	2020/21
Stock as at 1 April	5,783	5,774
Less:		
Sales	-27	-9
Conversions	0	0
Demolished	0	0
Add		
New dwellings	0	0
Repurchase/Purchase	10	22
Stock as at 31 March	5,766	5,787

Summary of Housing Stock		
Houses	2,244	2,249
Flats and Maisonettes	2,633	2,639
Bungalows	897	899
	5,774	5,787

6. HRA Reserve balances

- 6.1. As a result of the 2020/21 reduced deficit in year, the HRA is holding a higher balance moving into 2020/21 than originally anticipated, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 – HRA Reserves Summary 2020/21

Housing Revenue Account Balances – Movement 2020/21	£000
Opening Balance - 1 April 2020	9,559
Add Expected forecast Surplus/ (Deficit)	(1,446)
Forecast Balance	8,113
Actual Surplus/ (Deficit)	(1,001)
Balance Carried forward – 1 April 2021 (subject to Audit)	8,558

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The Housing Revenue Accounts annual outturn was a deficit of £1.001m, against a budget deficit of £1.446m, resulting in a variance of £445k. The impact of the 2020/21 deficit, means that the HRA will carry forward £8.558m of reserves into 2021/22.
- 7.2. Reduced Right to Buy sale completions in 2020/21, along with increased acquisitions and new build dwelling additions being added, means the overall lettable stock total has increased in year to 5,787.
- 7.3. Due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on capital improvement works, budget totalling £1,267k is requested to be carried forward to support 2021/22 programmes.

8. Financial Implications and Risks

- 8.1. The detail within the report highlights the significant variances for the 2020/21 financial year, including a full year review of the HRA revenue and capital budgets
- 8.2. The HRA monitoring report aims to capture all impacts as a result of the 2020/21 COVID-19 pandemic. This includes capital budget carry forward requests to support 2021/22 shortfalls.
- 8.3. The position as reported, has been used to inform the publication of the draft statement of account, which are subject to external audit review ahead of approval by the Audit and Risk Committee by the statutory deadline.

9. Background Papers

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	
Existing Council Policies:	
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	
Legal Implications (including human rights):	
Risk Implications:	
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	
Crime & Disorder:	
Every Child Matters:	

Appendix A - HRA Income and Expenditure 2020/21

	Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Dwellings Rents	(21,817)	(21,903)	(86)
Non Dwelling rents	(275)	(240)	35
Interest & Investment income	(15)	(16)	(1)
Charges for services and facilities	(1,442)	(1,193)	249
Total Income	(23,549)	(23,352)	197
Repairs & Maintenance	8,984	8,419	(565)
Supervision and Management (Direct Employee)	2,439	2,376	(63)
Supervision and Management	2,908	2,693	(215)
Rents Rates & Taxes	249	322	73
Depreciation	3,780	3,678	(102)
Capital expenditure funded by the HRA	3,267	4,041	774
HRA Interest Payable	2,874	2,691	(183)
Provision for bad and doubtful debts	150	135	(15)
Total Expenditure	24,651	24,355	(296)
Transfers (from)/to Earmarked Reserves	0	(32)	(32)
Capital Grants & Contributions receivable	(50)	(28)	22
Contribution to Pension Reserves	394	58	(336)
Deficit/(Surplus) for the year	1,446	1,001	(445)
Bfwd HRA Reserves Balance (01 Apr)	9,559	9,559	0
Deficit/(Surplus) for the year	1,446	1,001	(445)
Cfwd HRA Reserves Balance (31 Mar)	8,113	8,558	445

Appendix B - HRA Capital Programme Outturn Variances 2020/21

	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Reason
Kitchens & Bathrooms	3,050	3,376	326	Kitchen and bathroom improvement spend has exceeded its budget provision for 2020/21, with 513 Kitchen and 412 bathroom improvements being completed.
Improvement Programme Windows and Doors	650	592	(58)	Programmed Window and Doors have experience delays due to fire doors availability restrictions. Remaining budget allocation is requested to be carried forward.
Planned Maintenance	665	387	(278)	Rewires programme is reflecting a £257k underspend. Capital adaptations works have resulted in an £31k underspend. Planned maintenance works have been reduced as a result of the COVID-19 lockdowns, works overall have been reduced due to limited access availability. Remaining adaptation budget is requested to be carried forward.
Energy Efficiency Improvements	1,185	1,270	85	Heating works have been accelerated in year. Capital overspends have been support by revenue repair heating savings in year.
Specific Planned Projects	620	418	(202)	Whole house and empty property programmes have experienced delays due to additional time being required to individually prepare and tender each project. Reduced workflows have also been as a result of increased number of affordable homes purchased requiring works. Remaining long term void budget is requested to be carried forward.
Empty Properties	700	614	(86)	Major voids reduced workflows is due to increased completions of the number of affordable homes purchased, requiring works.
Additional Housing	250	0	(250)	Due to delays, no spend was incurred within 2020/21. Budgeted provision is to be carried forward to 2021/22.
New Affordable Housing - Right to Buy receipts	3,280	3,289	9	Twelve properties have been purchased from the open market year to date as part of the planned programme using retained receipts. New build works have also been completed on two sites,

	Current Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Reason
				resulting in an additional eight affordable units. Currently the 1-4-1 receipt commitments are ahead of the retention requirement.
Neighbourhood Plans	2,090	1,895	(195)	Neighbourhood planned works reflect an overspend of £157k, including the completion of dwelling canopies. External wall insulation (EWI) has reflected a £299k underspend, due to roofing works needing to be completed prior to the completion of EWI works. Budget is requested to be carried forward for EWI improvements in 2021/22.
Housing Transformation Budget	415	18	(397)	Delay to programme has resulted in reprofile of spend. Remaining budget is requested to be carried forward.
Key safe Installation	0	47	47	Additional works to replace key safes within Housing. Programme to continue within 2021/22 against key safe budget allowance.
	12,905	11,906	(999)	

Appendix C – Revised 2021/22 HRA Income and Expenditure

	Original Budget £000	Revised Budget £000	Variance £000
Dwellings Rents	(21,495)	(21,495)	0
Non Dwelling rents	(275)	(275)	0
Interest & Investment income	(15)	(15)	0
Charges for services and facilities	(1,366)	(1,366)	0
Total Income	(23,151)	(23,151)	0
Repairs & Maintenance	9,257	9,257	0
Supervision and Management (Direct Employee)	2,580	2,580	0
Supervision and Management	3,126	3,126	0
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	284	284	0
Depreciation	3,738	3,738	0
Capital Expenditure funded by the HRA	2,334	3,561	1,227
HRA Interest Payable	2,945	2,946	1
Provision for bad and doubtful debts	150	150	0
Employer's Pension Adjustment	513	513	0
Total Expenditure	24,927	26,155	1,228
Transfers (from)/to Earmarked Reserve	(30)	(30)	0
Capital Grants & Contribution receivable	(20)	(20)	0
Net (surplus)/Deficit for the year	1,726	2,954	1,228
HRA Reserves Balance B/Fwd.	8,558	8,558	0
Deficit/(Surplus) in year	1,726	2,954	1,228
HRA Reserves Balance C/Fwd.	6,832	5,604	(1,228)

Appendix D - Revised 2021/22 HRA Capital programme

Capital programme	Revised budget £000	Revised budget £000	Variance £000
Kitchens & Bathrooms	2,869	2,869	0
Windows & Doors	592	647	55
Planned Maintenance	611	642	31
Energy Efficiency Improvements	1,173	1,173	0
Specific Planned Projects	546	756	210
Empty Properties	700	785	85
New Affordable Housing - Right to Buy receipts	3,648	3,648	0
New Affordable Housing – Additional Non 1-4-1 Provision	250	500	250
Decarbonisation	1,738	1,978	240
Neighbourhood Plans	91	91	0
Housing Transformation Budget	211	607	396
Total Expenditure	12,429	13,696	1,267
Financing:			
Borrowing	4,110	4,150	40
Capital Receipts	2,227	2,227	0
Revenue	2,334	3,561	1,227
Depreciation	3,738	3,738	0
Leasehold Contribution	20	20	0
Total Financing	12,429	13,696	1,267

URN: 21-043

Subject: Sheltered Housing Review

Report to: ELT 30 June 2021
Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 15 July 2021

Report by: Justin Gibbs, Tenancy Services Manager
Sue Lake, Tenancy Team Manager

SUBJECT MATTER

This report sets out the scope of the review which will be undertaken in relation to the Council's sheltered housing provision.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee:

Approve the approach to the sheltered housing service review set out in this report.

1.1 Introduction

This report sets out the scope of the review which will be undertaken of the Council's sheltered housing service. This report responds to the request from Full Council that Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee review the way the Sheltered Housing service is provided following the changes made in July 2017. It is important in conducting a review of the sheltered housing service to consider all of the lessons we have learnt as a result of the Covid pandemic and to reflect the ongoing need and demand for sheltered housing, to ensure the service meets current and future needs. A thorough review will ensure we deliver the most effective service for tenants moving forward.

2.1 Background

Great Yarmouth Borough Council currently owns, manages and provides sheltered housing support to 945 homes providing a service to 1076 tenants. Through our service we promote independent living, reducing the need for higher dependency services such as residential care or extra care.

Norfolk County Council (NCC) undertook a review of funding housing related support called Building Resilient Lives – Reshaping Housing Related Support in 2016. In response to the consultation and as a result of the findings they removed their funding for sheltered housing (Supporting People funding).

Following the period of review by NCC in 2016/17, GYBC considered the most viable service for our vulnerable tenants to deliver a scheme that would be eligible for Housing Benefit and support tenants'

needs. This resulted in a paper to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee setting out the new service which resulted in Wardens (now called Tenancy Support Officers):

- Rotating between many sites to ensure tenant care was balanced.
- Not facilitating events in communal rooms.
- Emergency call outs actioned through support provided remotely by the Independent Living Services at Wherry Way.
- Undertaking contact with tenants on need rather than frequency basis.

The service prior to July 2017 involved patch Wardens visiting each home on a frequency basis from daily to monthly in accordance to each tenant's request and providing the support required. Each warden was at the heart of the local community facilitating communal room activities and delivering specific immediate welfare and care requirements. This service was paid for through service charges; Supporting People funding and eligible Housing Benefit.

2.2 Current Service provision

Sheltered Housing plays an important and fundamental role within Great Yarmouth Borough Council's wider Housing Service provision. It endorses the importance of tenants remaining independent in their homes and supporting them to sustain their tenancies. Tenants are supported with their health and wellbeing, through fostering a professional and open relationship with the team of Tenancy Support Officers through regular contacts/visits/actions. The service reacts to moments of crisis or concern, for example bereavement or moving home. Usage of communal rooms is now led by tenants and used for activities but this has resulted in some rooms being under used and some tenants not being involved. The service is delivered by 9 Tenancy Support Officers (7 full time equivalents), management of the team sits within the role of the Tenancy Team Manager. The service is now funded through a service charge to sheltered housing tenants. This is eligible for Housing Benefit with the HRA currently contributing 30% towards the cost.

2.3 COVID Pandemic

When the National Lockdown and COVID regulations were imposed by the Government in March 2020, we reviewed what we were able to deliver for our sheltered housing tenants whilst working from home and adhering to national guidance. We developed a welfare call service, contacting each tenant on a weekly basis to support them with issues and difficulties they were experiencing. Examples of support included arranging food and prescription deliveries and providing information on how to stay safe during the pandemic. This welfare call service provided an enhanced contact service during this critical period of time. Over time the frequency of contact on average has reduced from weekly calls to fortnightly. It is increased when required to resolve a concern or issue ensuring prompt early interventions. All communal rooms within schemes have been closed since March 2020 along with any social activities that had been taking place. With the Lockdown restrictions being reduced/removed arrangements are being made to reopen all of the rooms in July 2021 to support tenants usage.

3.1 Sheltered Housing Review

This will explore the whole of the sheltered housing offer to tenants both before/during the pandemic and future proof the provision by adapting and refining to the needs of our prospective tenant cohort and the wider community. We will ensure our tenants; Tenancy Services Team and other stakeholders including Norfolk County Council Adult Social Services and Age Concern are consulted to understand what service they would like to see delivered moving forward and to understand future needs and demand. We will consider:

- What elements of the service have worked well (pre and during the current COVID pandemic) and areas that could be improved
- Tenants preferred communication and support method/frequency
- Range of services that are desired by sheltered tenants linked to service costs reflecting the self-funding nature of the sheltered housing service
- Review of current and future demand and need for sheltered housing over the short and long term (10-20 years) including care needs and the types of homes and services needed to meet these needs.
- Whether the existing types, sizes and locations of sheltered housing properties meet current and future needs and demand.
- What types of communal provision are required within sheltered housing schemes – for example laundry rooms.
- How communal rooms can be effectively operated to ensure all rooms maximise capacity to provide benefits to tenants and the wider community
- What other service providers are delivering as part of their sheltered housing offer and best practice in relation to sheltered housing delivery.

The findings will shape the recommendations we will make in our final report proposed to be delivered to Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee in early 2022 to ensure tenants receive the most effective service to support independent living moving forward.

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial risks at present, but there may be in future depending on the outcome of the full report. This would be linked to additional costs of an enhanced service; the impact of an increased service charge to tenants and eligibility of Housing Benefit. The HRA currently subsidises the Housing Benefit element by 30%. An increase in overall service costs is likely to result in a greater liability to the Housing Revenue Account. There may also be capital costs if changes to the type of homes/communal facilities are required as a result of the review.

5.1 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications in this report, recommendations made in the full report will have consideration of the Housing Act 1985 in relation to areas including consultation and service charges.

6.1 Risk Implications

The full review proposed will include a statutory consultation regarding any changes to service to ensure all views on tenants are considered.

7.1 Conclusion

This approach to reviewing the Sheltered Housing Service ensures the Council considers the views of all relevant parties including tenants when shaping future service delivery. It will ensure our tenants continue to be supported to live independently in our homes and we respond to their needs to promote sustainable communities.

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Existing Council Policies:	None
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	See section 4
Legal Implications (including human rights):	See section 5
Risk Implications:	See section 6
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	Will be considered as part of the review
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Every Child Matters:	N/A

URN: 21-082

Subject: Tenancy Policy

Report to: ELT

30 June 2021

Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee

15 July 2021



Report by: Christine Spooner, Housing Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer

SUBJECT MATTER

The Tenancy Policy provides the basis of the Council's approach to the provision of tenancies and mutual exchanges. The policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect both operational and legislative changes. This report requests that committee approve the Tenancy Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:

- Adopt the updated Tenancy Policy

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Tenancy Policy 2019 was approved by Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee on 25 July 2019. The Tenancy Policy sets out the Council's approach to the provision of tenancies and mutual exchanges within its own housing stock. The Tenancy Policy 2019 combined two existing policies, the Tenancy Policy and the Introductory Tenancy Policy and incorporated a number of changes made to increase the clarity of the document.
- 1.2. This report seeks approval of the Tenancy Policy 2021 following biennial review. As part of the review a number of amendments have been made to reflect the need for operational and legislative changes.

2. CHANGES TO THE TENANCY POLICY

The following changes have been made to the Tenancy Policy 2021:

- At 3.1 Legislation: addition of the Localism Act 2011 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- At 5.4.1 Secure Tenancy - Fixed Term and 5.4.2 Secure Tenancy – Lifetime a paragraph has been added to reflect new legislation following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- At 5.5 Non-Secure Tenancy: this paragraph has been revised and more detail added for clarification purposes.
- At 5.7 Use and Occupation: a paragraph has been added which explains that where a household has been permitted to stay in a property following the end of a tenancy this is to enable Housing Options to consider the housing need of the household so that they

- can be supported into accommodation that is appropriate for them.
- At 7.2 Succession Rights: the word ‘continuous’ has been added to clarify that the qualifying period of at least a year should be a continuous period.
- At 7.3 Succession Rights: the wording at 5.7 Use and Occupation has been duplicated for additional clarity.
- At 7.6 Succession Rights for tenancies which commenced from 1 April 2012: a paragraph has been added to make clear that the Council does have discretion and can consider applications from close family members who have lived in the property as their family home for a significant continuous period.
- Minor amendments to update terms/job roles/team names have been made throughout.
- Procedural references have been removed throughout.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications in relation to the updating of the Tenancy Policy.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The legislative framework is clearly set out and changes required by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 have been incorporated into the updated Tenancy Policy.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications in relation to the updating of the Tenancy Policy.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This report seeks approval and adoption of the updated Tenancy Policy following biennial review and the addition of amendments to improve clarity and to incorporate new legislation.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation	ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation	ELT
Existing Council Policies	Tenancy Policy, Tenancy Strategy
Financial Implications Within existing budgets	See section 3
Legal Implications (including human rights)	See section 4
Risk Implications	See section 5
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment	EQIA 2019 reviewed – no additional issues.
Details contained in strategy	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Every Child Matters	None



Great Yarmouth Borough Council Tenancy Policy 2021

Author	Justin Gibbs
Date	June 2021
Document Status	Policy Review for Approval

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy covers the tenancies offered by Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) and sets out the Council's approach to the provision of tenancies and mutual exchanges within its own housing stock.
- 1.2 GYBC owns and manages 5787 Council dwellings as well as providing services to 367 leaseholders.¹ GYBC is the largest Registered Provider of Social Housing within the Borough of Great Yarmouth, with the next largest provider managing around 400 properties.
- 1.3 The Council aims to manage our properties to the benefit of all tenants and to ensure that tenancies are sustainable.
- 1.4 GYBC believes that sustainable tenancies are created by allocating the right property to the right tenants and by ensuring the appropriate management of tenancies. We will work with our Housing Options Team to ensure that all new tenants are allocated properties that maximise the opportunity to create a sustainable tenancy.

2. Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this Policy are to:
 - provide clarity regarding the different kinds of tenancies offered by Great Yarmouth Borough Council
 - establish tenancies that are sustainable in the long term and contribute to stable communities
 - balance the needs of the individual with those of the existing community and neighbours
 - establish clear messages and standards for new and potential tenants that indicate our commitment to tackling anti-social behaviour
 - ensure that the policy operates consistently within the law and other GYBC priorities and policies.

3. Legislation

- 3.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with:
 - Housing Act 1985

¹ Stock and leasehold property numbers as at 31/03/2021

- Housing Act 1996
- Localism Act 2011
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

4. Strategies and Policies

4.1 This policy has been written with regard to the following GYBC Strategies and Policies:

- Tenancy Strategy 2020
- Housing Strategy 2018-2023
- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018-2023
- The Corporate Plan 2020-2025
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2018
- Housing Allocation Scheme

5. Types of Tenancy

In order to meet the Council's priority to build and maintain sustainable communities, provide chances for people to improve their circumstances and protect vulnerable residents whilst ensuring effective use of the affordable housing stock, the Council will offer the following types of tenancy:

- Introductory Tenancies
- Secure Tenancies (Fixed term)
- Secure Tenancies (Lifetime)
- Non-Secure Tenancies.

5.1 Introductory Tenancies

Introductory Tenancies will be offered to all new social tenants and are 12 months by statute. Introductory tenants have less security and fewer rights than secure tenants. Their home is at much higher risk of repossession.

After 12 months introductory tenancies become secure tenancies by default unless GYBC as landlord has taken steps to end or extend the tenancy.

Introductory tenants enjoy the majority of rights held by secure tenants. However, the Housing Act 1996 denies Introductory Tenants a number of rights given to secure tenants and they do not have the right to:

- exchange their property with any other Tenant
- buy their home (however, the period of Introductory Tenancy may count towards the qualification period of the Right to Buy)

GYBC's purpose in using Introductory Tenancies for new tenants is to:

- provide tenancy support for new tenants who experience difficulty in complying with their obligations as a tenant in order to turn failing tenancies into sustainable ones
- deter new tenants from behaving anti-socially or criminally
- reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and nuisance behaviour among new tenants
- encourage community stability and cohesion
- reduce the impact of residents who behave anti-socially
- enable early action for any serious breach of the tenancy agreement
- encourage regular payment of rent.

5.1.1 Extending an Introductory Tenancy

- If there have been minor tenancy breaches during the trial period and the tenant, with or without a package of support, has made a commitment to improving their behaviour and has demonstrated early signs of improvement, the Council may decide to extend the introductory tenancy so it may be assured that the improvements are sustained.
- Extending an introductory tenancy is a decision that should be made no later than the 6 month tenancy review check, unless a further period is required to establish whether the tenant can satisfactorily manage their tenancy in which a decision will be made no later than 9 months after the start of the tenancy.
- An introductory tenancy can only be extended for six months and only once. The trial period will be monitored very carefully so that a decision can be taken whether to terminate the tenancy or allow it to convert to a full secure tenancy at the end of the extended period.

5.1.2 Terminating an Introductory Tenancy

- Action to terminate a tenancy can be taken at any time.
- Termination should be considered if it is clear that the tenancy conditions are being breached and that termination is proportionate to that breach. An example of the types of breaches that could lead to termination are:
 - Proven non-occupation – with significant belief that the tenant does not intend to return to the property or has failed to return.
 - Rent arrears – where the tenant has failed to pay rent regularly or failed to maintain repayment agreements; and/ or failed to co-operate with the appropriate benefits department in making claims for any relevant benefits.

- Anti-Social Behaviour – where the tenant has engaged in serious anti-social behaviour that threatens the safety and security of the property and neighbours, or persistent minor breaches of tenancy.
- Failing to engage – where the tenant has been identified as committing minor breaches of tenancy but has failed to engage with Housing Services staff, or other support networks to improve their behaviour.

The above list is not exhaustive, but the general principles should be that extension is preferred to termination if there are real prospects of improvement so that the tenancy will be conducted in a satisfactory manner and subject to taking account of the safety and comfort of the wider community.

- A decision to terminate rather than extend can be taken if there have been substantial tenancy breaches at any time during the trial period, or as part of the 6 month review there is evidence of poor conduct throughout the trial period that has been raised with the tenant and there has not been a satisfactory improvement in their behaviour.

5.2 Vulnerability

5.2.1 Where there is evidence of vulnerability, for example:

- Learning difficulties requiring support to carry out day to day tasks
- Physical or sensory disability
- Clear lack of life skills including budgeting and prioritising bills, managing visitors, etc
- Drug and alcohol addiction
- Mental health affecting the ability to maintain a tenancy

There should be evidence of attempts to identify existing or creating new support networks to enable the tenant to receive support and work towards the sustainment of the tenancy.

5.2.2 Where vulnerability exists, the tenancy should not normally be terminated unless evidence can be produced to show the tenant has failed to engage or has not worked successfully with their support networks to improve tenancy conduct.

5.2.3 In dealing with vulnerable cases, a tenant's authority to discuss all relevant aspects of the tenancy with their support networks must be obtained and retained on the tenancy file.

5.2.4 With regard to sheltered housing residents, consideration must be given to the health and other personal circumstances of the tenant(s) to determine whether an

assessment

should be requested based on the tenant(s) behaviour and whether it demonstrates the need for advanced care. Actions on cases involving sheltered housing should always be made in consultation with the Independent Living Service.

5.3 Conversion to a Secure Tenancy

Providing the Council has not commenced possession proceedings or served a Notice of Extension, every introductory tenancy will, upon the anniversary of the tenancy start date, convert to a full secure tenancy.

Conversion is only a change in the status of the tenancy, therefore the tenancy start date will remain the date the initial trial period began.

5.4 Secure Tenancies

GYBC issues two types of secure tenancy agreement: fixed term (flexible) tenancies and lifetime tenancies. Secure tenants may:

- rent out rooms (though not sub-let the whole property)
- buy their property through the Right to Buy scheme (subject to eligibility)
- exchange their home with another council tenant (with the formal permission of the Council)
- pass on their tenancy to someone else in some circumstances (see Succession below)
- make improvements to their home (with permission from the Council).

Secure tenancies can only be ended by a court order, following a court hearing to look at the reasons behind the breaches of tenancy. They may also be demoted for a year where there is a breach of tenancy.

5.4.1 Secure Tenancy - Fixed Term (Flexible Tenancy)

In some limited cases, a fixed term secure tenancy will be offered; these tenancies will be used for the following properties:

- properties with 4 or more bedrooms
- properties which have been built to be wheelchair accessible or which have been specifically adapted to meet the needs of a wheelchair user.

For properties with four or more bedrooms the initial fixed term period will be the time needed for the youngest child to reach the age of 16 years of age or at least 5 years

whichever period is the longest. For adapted or wheelchair accessible homes, a 5-year, fixed term period will be offered.

At the end of the 5-year, fixed term period, a review of the tenancy will be carried out and the Council will either:

- renew the fixed term tenancy for a further 5 years
- or
- end the fixed term tenancy and move the tenant to a property which meets the tenant's needs. In this latter case, the Council will either issue a new fixed term tenancy or a secure, lifetime tenancy in accordance with this Policy.

Fixed Term tenancies will not be granted in cases where the Council grants a new tenancy to a victim of domestic abuse and the Council is satisfied that:

- the person is or was a victim of domestic abuse
and
- the person is granted a new tenancy for reasons connected with that abuse.

Where the person has or has had a lifetime tenancy (whether with a local authority or housing association) the new tenancy must also be a lifetime tenancy.

5.4.1.1 Review of Fixed Term Tenancies

- Tenants will be contacted by GYBC six months before their fixed term tenancy is due to end so that the Council can carry out the review.
- Where there has been no significant change in circumstances the Council will grant another secure tenancy, either fixed term or lifetime.
- GYBC will renew the tenancy, or offer a suitable alternative, where not doing so would result in the tenant falling into a reasonable preference category for rehousing.
- GYBC will not renew the fixed term tenancy in the following circumstances and the tenant will be provided with a suitable alternative:
 - the property is permanently under-occupied
 - the property is no longer suitable for the tenant's needs or member of the household it was allocated to meet
 - disposal or refurbishment of the property is required.
 - GYBC will still carry out the Review in situations where possession proceedings have commenced or obligations have been broken, for example, in cases of anti-social behaviour or rent arrears.

The Council will notify the tenant in writing of the outcome of the review.

5.4.2 Secure Tenancy – Lifetime

A lifetime secure tenancy is for the rest of a tenant's life as long as the tenant does not break the conditions of the tenancy.

Introductory tenancies will default automatically to secure tenancies after 12 months unless GYBC has ended or extended the tenancy or the tenancy will be a Fixed Term Tenancy in accordance with this policy.

In cases where the Council grants a new tenancy to a victim of domestic abuse and the Council is satisfied that:

- the person is or was a victim of domestic abuse and
- the person is granted a new tenancy for reasons connected with that abuse

where the person has or has had a lifetime tenancy (whether with a local authority or housing association) the new tenancy must also be a lifetime tenancy.

5.4.3 Demotion of Secure Tenancies

A secure tenancy, whether lifetime or fixed term, may be ended by a court order for some kinds of Anti-Social Behaviour and replaced with a demoted tenancy for a year. A demoted tenancy has less security and fewer rights. It is broadly like an introductory tenancy.

A demoted tenancy will automatically revert to a secure tenancy (lifetime or fixed term) at the end of the 12 months, unless action is taken to end the tenancy due to ongoing minor breaches or a major breach.

5.5 Non-Secure Tenancy

Non-Secure Tenancies do not benefit from all the security and protections offered by secure (lifetime or fixed term) tenancies and normally will apply to the provision of short-term accommodation. In most circumstances this will be accommodation provided by the Council in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and/or Housing Act 1996 as applicable.

5.6 Licence Agreements

A licence is issued in cases where a household has been placed in Interim Accommodation while enquiry takes place into their homelessness. License Agreements are not tenancies and are therefore beyond the scope of this policy.

5.7 Use and Occupation

In some cases a household will be allowed to stay in a property following the end of the tenancy (and there is no right of succession) or where a joint tenancy has been ended by one of the joint tenants but the other former joint tenant has been left in occupation. They are not tenancies and the occupiers have no rights of tenancy.

This allows Housing Options to consider the housing need of that household in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme and subsequently support them with accommodation pending rehousing in an appropriate property as long as the normal conditions of a tenancy are maintained.

6. Tenants in need of additional support

The needs of vulnerable households have been fully considered when finalising the Tenancy Policy. If the obligations of any tenancy are not maintained by the tenant we will offer support to that tenant to meet those obligations. If, following the offer of support, the tenant continues to fail to meet their obligations, GYBC may take enforcement action.

7. Succession

7.1 In all cases, there can only ever be one succession to a secure tenancy. In situations where the original tenancy was a joint tenancy and one of the original tenants has died, the surviving joint tenant will have taken over the tenancy by survivorship. This is counted as a succession in law.

7.2 The position on succession rights for tenants whose tenancies began before 1 April 2012 is that, where there is not a joint tenancy, another person may be able to take over the tenancy by succession if they are:

- the tenant's spouse or registered civil partner, as long as they were living together at the time of their death (or, if the tenancy is a demoted tenancy, for at least a year beforehand), or
- another family member (this includes cohabiting partners, children, parents, siblings and most other close relatives, but not foster children) as long as there is no surviving spouse or civil partner and they were living with the deceased for a continuous period of at least one year before their death.

7.3 In some cases a household will be allowed to stay in a property following the end of the tenancy (and there is no right of succession) or where a joint tenancy has been ended by one of the joint tenants but the other former joint tenant has been left in occupation. They are not tenancies and the occupiers have no rights of tenancy.

This allows Housing Options to consider the housing need of that household in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme and subsequently support them with accommodation pending rehousing in an appropriate property as long as the normal conditions of a tenancy are maintained.

7.4 Where a succession takes place and the new tenant was not previously a joint tenant but is under-occupying the property, GYBC have an opportunity to offer another property to them as suitable alternative accommodation. If an offer of accommodation is made between 6 months and one year after the Council becomes

aware of the death of the tenant and it is refused, GYBC may take possession action to recover the property.

7.5 In deciding whether to offer suitable alternative accommodation we will take into account a number of factors, including

- The level of under-occupation
- The length of residence in the property
- The individual need of the tenant, including health, support needs etc
- The demand for the type of property they are currently residing in
- The demand for the type of property they could potentially move to
- The location of available alternative accommodation.

7.6 New tenants from 1 April 2012

For tenants whose tenancy began after 1 April 2012, succession rights are limited to the tenant's spouse or registered civil partner, as long as they were living together at the time of their death (or, if the tenancy is a demoted tenancy, for at least a year beforehand).

In exceptional circumstances the Council will consider applications from close family members who have lived in the property on a permanent basis as their family home for a continuous period of at least 12 months prior to the death of the tenant.

Where a succession takes place and the new tenant was not previously a joint tenant but is under-occupying the property, GYBC have an opportunity to offer another property to them as suitable alternative accommodation. If an offer of accommodation is made between 6 months and one year after the Council becomes aware of the death of the tenant and it is refused, GYBC may take possession action to recover the property.

8. Mutual Exchanges

8.1 Secure tenants and flexible secure tenants (i.e., fixed term) have a legal right to exchange tenancies under the Housing Act 1985.

8.2 Landlords, including GYBC, are able to withhold consent to exchange tenancies only in certain circumstances as listed under Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985. These include where:

- the Council has started eviction proceedings

- the home is adapted for a person with special needs and nobody in the new tenant's household has those needs
- the home the tenant wants to move to is 'substantially more extensive' than the household needs
- the home the tenant wants to move to is too small for their household and they would be overcrowded.

8.3 There is no legal definition of the phrase 'substantially more extensive' and GYBC have interpreted this as being one bedroom or more in excess of the size of property required, so that the household would be under occupying the property. The Council will consider whether a household is under or over occupying a property with regard to the size criteria used when assessing Housing Benefit or the Housing Element of Universal Credit, i.e.:

- children under 16 of the same gender will be expected to share a bedroom
- children under 10 will be expected to share a bedroom regardless of gender
- a tenant or partner with disabilities requiring a non-resident overnight carer will be allowed an extra bedroom. We will require sufficient documentary evidence for this.

8.4 The Council takes into account everyone who lives with the tenant on a permanent basis and will usually only agree to the exchange if the property is the correct size for the incoming tenant and their family. The Council, may at its discretion, consider the additional needs of the household within the next 3 to 6 months.

8.5 Consideration will be given for any medical or social need that leads to a family requiring more bedrooms than allowed under these criteria. Medical and social needs will be considered by a senior Council officer who may request evidence from other agencies or seek advice from the Council's medical advisor.

8.6 Consent may be granted in situations where allowing an exchange, regardless of the size criteria, will enable the best use of our stock. This may include situations where one party would substantially benefit from a move and the only reason for withholding consent would be the size criteria. This would only apply to allow a move where a household would be one bedroom in excess of the size criteria.

8.7 Where it is accepted that a household requires more bedrooms than allowed under the size criteria, advice will be given on the impact of any housing benefit claim and therefore any increased net rent liability.

9. Joint Tenancies

9.1 The tenancies granted by GYBC may be held on a sole basis or jointly by two or more joint tenants. Joint tenancies may be awarded at the time of allocation or an existing sole

tenant may apply for a new joint tenancy to be granted. There is no legal right to a joint tenancy and GYBC will consider each application upon its merits.

9.2 Consideration will be given to awarding a joint tenancy at the point of offer of a tenancy where the partner or prospective joint tenant are both eligible to be housed in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 and meet one or more of the following:

- the applicant's spouse, registered civil partner or partner who has continuously resided with the applicant in the previous 12 months.
 - the applicant's carer where a medical need for a residential carer exists and the carer has either:
 - surrendered a tenancy from a Registered Provider in order to move in with the tenant to provide care
- or
- lived with the applicant or not sought independent accommodation for a period of 12 months or more due to undertaking caring responsibilities of the applicant and where the exceptional circumstances of the case mean that awarding a joint tenancy will substantially increase the likelihood of that tenancy being sustained.

9.3 Where an application for a joint tenancy is made by an existing sole tenant, the same criteria will apply as above, with the word 'tenant' substituted for 'applicant'.

9.4 To ensure the best use of our housing stock, children of applicants or tenants will not normally be considered as joint tenants unless exceptional circumstances criteria as a carer are satisfied.

9.5 A joint tenancy may not be awarded in any of the following circumstances:

- the existing tenant has more than 3 minor breaches or is significantly breaching their tenancy agreement
- the prospective joint tenant has an interest in another property or land
- the prospective joint tenant has previously demonstrated that they are unable to sustain a tenancy or are unsuitable to be a tenant. This will be by conduct that, if a secure tenancy was in place, would result in a breach of that tenancy.
- the property has additional features or adaptations which are specific to the needs of the tenant and, in creating a joint tenancy; it would have a direct effect on the possible future best use of the property.

9.6 Termination of Joint Tenancies

9.6.1 A joint tenancy may be terminated by any joint tenant by providing the statutory notice. The notice will terminate the tenancy for all joint tenants. Any joint tenant who

has not submitted the notice to terminate can apply for a tenancy of the property in their sole name.

9.6.2 In such circumstances, a request for a sole tenancy should be made prior to the end of the tenancy unless there are exceptional reasons why a request should be considered after the end of the tenancy. Any decision to offer a new sole tenancy of the property or another suitable property is at the discretion of the Council as exercised by the nominated officer.

9.6.3 In considering requests made in accordance with 9.6.1 for a new sole tenancy to be issued the following factors will be considered:

- whether the tenancy has been satisfactorily conducted in accordance with the requirements of the tenancy agreement
- whether the remaining tenant would have had the right to succeed to the property
- whether there are special characteristics about the property and the remaining tenant does not require the type of property they are living in
- whether the remaining tenant is a perpetrator of domestic abuse and the other tenant has left the property as a result of that abuse
- where there is evidence that matrimonial or court procedures were in progress to change the tenancy into the sole name of the remaining tenant but the processes had not been completed or the order issued prior to the serving of the notice to quit
- any exceptional circumstances which are relevant to the decision.

9.6.4 Where a decision cannot be made on whether the remaining tenant can be offered a new sole tenancy before the end of the joint tenancy, they will be allowed to remain in the property on a use and occupation basis without security of tenure or any of the rights of a secure tenant. A use and occupation charge will be made. Any failure to pay the use and occupation charge or conduct which would be akin to the breach of the Council's tenancy agreement will result in eviction. For minor breaches including failure to pay the use and occupation charge, the occupier will be provided with appropriate support and will have three months to rectify the issue before eviction is considered.

9.6.5 If a decision is not made prior to the end of the tenancy or where a decision is made to offer a sole tenancy of a different property, the former tenant will remain in the property on a use and occupation basis. Where the decision is made to offer a sole tenancy of a different property the remaining party will be entitled to one suitable offer of accommodation through the Housing Allocations Scheme.

9.6.6 In some limited cases the decision will be not to offer a sole tenancy of the property or any other property, in which case action will be taken to recover possession of the property they are residing in.

10. Appeals and Complaints

- 10.1 It is important that tenants and prospective tenants are able to appeal against decisions made in regard to this Tenancy Policy in a clear, fair and efficient process. Appeals should be heard as soon as possible to ensure that there are no delays in accepting an offer of a tenancy or in making alternative arrangements where a tenancy is not granted.

10.1.1 The appeals process is:

An appeal should be made by the tenant or prospective tenant within 21 days of the decision regarding their tenancy. Appeals should be submitted in writing to the Tenancy Services Manager.

- The appeal will be conducted by another Council Officer who was not involved in the original decision and must be senior to the person who made the original decision.
- The appeals process will be based on written representations. The senior officer may interview tenants, prospective tenants and other interested parties but there will be no requirement to hold a full oral hearing.
- The appeal decision should be made within 20 working days of the appeal request being made or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards.
- If the tenant or prospective tenant is dissatisfied with the response from the senior officer, they will have a further right of appeal to the Appeals Committee. Such requests should be made in writing to the Corporate Services Manager within 21 days of the initial appeal decision being provided to the tenant or prospective tenant.

- 10.2 Complaints will be handled under the GYBC corporate Compliments and Complaints Policy. .

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Subject: Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts Update

Report to: ELT

30 June 2021

Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee

15 July 2021

Report by: Christine Spooner, Housing Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer
Nicola Turner, Housing Director



SUBJECT MATTER

The updated Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts Policy was approved by Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee on 4th February 2021.

In accordance with the Policy this Report contains an annual summary of the spend committed to Retained Right to Buy Receipts and details of the types and locations of homes acquired. As this is the first report, two years have been included for Members' information.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Committee note the report.

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report is to fulfil the annual monitoring requirement in the Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts Policy which states that:

'An annual report will be provided on spend of Retained Right to Buy Receipts, total expenditure and the number of homes delivered by source (Acquisition, development within HRA or grant contributions) and location.'

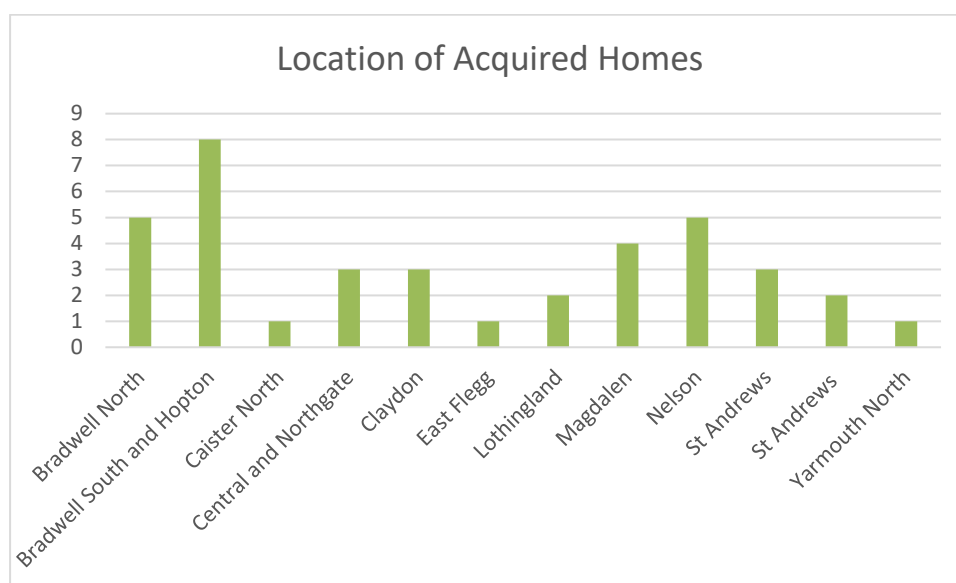
- 1.2 Table 1 below identifies the number of Right to Buy sales in each of the last five years, the amount of receipts available to be used to support affordable housing delivery, the total amount of spend required to fully utilise the available receipts, the under or over spend in year for receipt usage and the amount paid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). With effect from April 2021 the Council is able to use retained receipts for up to 40% of the costs of acquisition/building an affordable home. Previously receipts were only able to be used for up to 30% of spend as reflected in Table 1.

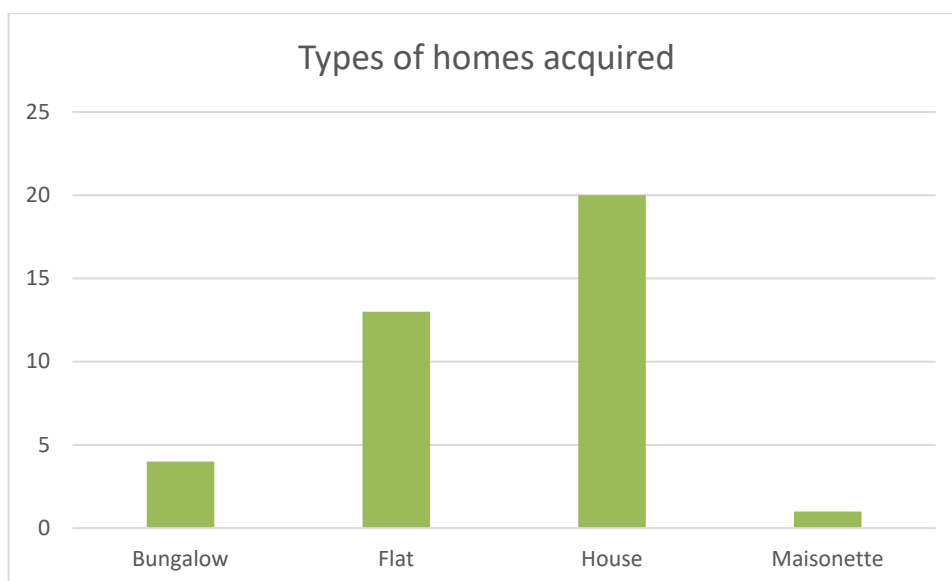
Table 1

	Number of RTB Sales	RTB Receipts for 1-4-1 programme	Total Spend required in year	Actual Spend	Receipt Overspend / (Underspend) in year	Amount paid to MHCLG
2020/21	9	984,086	£3,280,288	£2,559,287	(216,300)	£0
2019/20	27	641,632	£2,138,772	£2,967,328	248,567	£0
2018/19	50	408,000	£1,360,000	£1,426,236	19,871	£26,961
2017/18	47	615,600	£2,052,000	£1,943,851	(32,445)	£53,696
2016/17	40	630,000	£2,100,001	£2,100,011	3	£21,244

2. USE OF RETAINED RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS

- 2.1 The revised Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts Policy as approved by Housing & Neighbourhoods on 4th February 2021 introduced a new price limit of £350,000 for acquisitions of homes which will meet specific needs for adapted or adaptable homes and for the acquisition of homes with 4 or more bedrooms as well as amending the 'payback' period for all acquisitions for up to 40 years. (Previous 'ceilings' had been £250,000 and 30 years). Appendix 1 shows that this change enabled a 4 bedrooomed, wheelchair accessible home to be purchased for £270,000.
- 2.2 During 2019/2020, 19 homes were acquired using Retained Right to Buy Receipts, and during 2020/21, 19 were acquired, 2 homes were built and grant funding for 5 homes was provided (total 26 homes).
- 2.3 Over the two years homes were acquired across the Borough as follows:





2.4 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the number and type of homes purchased by ward along with specific information on each home:

- Date of acquisition
- Whether the home was a former local authority property purchased under Right to Buy
- Whether the Council has exercised its Right of First Refusal to acquire a home (i.e., it is less than 10 years since the property was sold by the Council under Right to Buy)
- If the property was or was purchased to provide a wheelchair accessible home
- Purchase price.

2.6 Grant funding of £68,558 was provided to Herring House Trust to deliver five homes within Central and Northgate ward, which were completed in 2020/21. Grant funding was provided across the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years as works were delayed by the Covid pandemic. The five homes delivered are:

- Purchase and repair of one property. The property will provide interim accommodation for 3-6 months with intensive support for current/former rough sleepers.
- Four properties providing move on accommodation for individuals leaving Herring House Trust's High Support Unit for those individuals who are recovering from substance dependencies to support their progression to settled accommodation.

2.7 During 2020/21, two x two-bedroom houses were completed in Fleggburgh ward. These new build homes were developed on a garden plot of an existing Council home.

2.8 Table 2 provides a summary of the total number of properties acquired, built or grant funded over the last five years.

Table 2

	Number of homes acquired	Number of homes built	Number of homes grant funded	Total
2020/21	19	2	5	26
2019/20	19	0	0	19
2018/19	7	0	0	7
2017/18	25	0	0	5
2016/17	6	6	0	12

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The sale of Council homes through the Right to Buy is set out in the Housing Act 1980. The Council has powers through the Housing Act 1985 to provide homes through the acquisition, conversion or new build.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The committed spend of Retained Right to Buy Receipts is regularly monitored to ensure full spend of receipts within the required timescales and spend is also monitored as part of the capital programme reflecting the borrowing used to fund that part of expenditure not funded by receipts. Table 1 shows the level of expenditure against required spend for the last five years and evidences that due to the requirement to spend Retained RTB receipts in a particular quarter, an underspend in an individual quarter spend has meant that a payment to MHCLG on unspent 1-4-1 receipts plus interest has had to be made irrespective of the position at the end of the financial year.

For 2021/22 the position re expenditure is that the Council is achieving all quarter targets to date reflecting over commitments in previous financial years, even when the underspend in 2020/21 is taken into account. From 1 April 2021, the Council now has five years to utilise receipts from the quarter in which the receipt was received.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no risk implications in relation to this report.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 During the years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, 38 properties have been acquired/built or grant funded using Retained Right to Buy Receipts and the Council has been able to increase its stock of larger (4 bed plus) and accessible properties in locations across the Borough.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts Policy - Housing and Neighbourhoods
Committee 4th February 2021

Area for consideration Comment	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation	Via ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation	Via ELT
Existing Council Policies	As section 7
Financial Implications	As section 4
Legal Implications (including human rights)	As section 3
Risk Implications	As section 5
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment	The use of the Retained Right to Buy receipts supports the acquisition/development of homes which meet particular needs for which there is a shortage of homes including wheelchair accessible homes.
Crime & Disorder	n/a
Every Child Matters	The use of the Retained Right to Buy receipts supports the acquisition/development of homes which meet particular needs for which there is a shortage of homes including larger and wheelchair accessible homes.

Appendix 1 – Acquired homes

Table 1: Location of homes by type and size

Ward	House/Beds	Bungalow/Beds	Flat/Beds	Maisonette/ Beds
Bradwell North	3 x 2 bed 1 x 3 bed 1 x 4 bed	1 x 3 bed		
Bradwell South and Hopton	1 x 2 bed	1 x 2 bed	6 x 2 Bed	
Caister North	1 x 2 bed			
Central and Northgate	1 x 3 bed		2 x 2 bed	
Claydon	1 x 4 bed		1 x 2 bed 1 x 3 bed	
East Flegg		1 x 3 bed		
Lothingland	1 x 2 bed	1 x 3 bed		
Magdalen	2 x 2 bed 1 x 3 bed		1 x 2 bed	
Nelson	1 x 2 bed 1 x 1 bed		1 x 1 bed	1 x 2 bed
St Andrews	4 x 2 bed 1 x 3 bed			
Yarmouth North	1 x 4 bed			

Note: the homes acquired in Nelson ward are held in the General Fund and provide temporary accommodation

Table 2: Location of homes by type and size – purchases in 2019/20

Ward	Date of Acquisition	Type	Beds at purchase	Ex-Right to Buy	Right of First Refusal	Wheelchair Accessible	Purchase Price
Magdalen	18/04/2019	House	3	Yes	Yes	No	£135,000
Bradwell North	10/05/2019	Bungalow	3	No	No	Yes	£187,500
Bradwell North	17/05/2019	House	2	Yes	Yes	No	£164,000
Central and Northgate	24/05/2019	Flat	2	Yes	No	No	£70,000
Lothingland	10/06/2019	House	2	Yes	Yes	No	£137,000
St Andrews	24/07/2019	House	2	No	No	No	£135,000
Nelson	30/08/2019	House	2	No	No	No	£150,000
Nelson	30/08/2019	House	1	No	No	No	£90,000
Nelson	26/11/2019	Flat	1	Yes	No	No	£58,000
Central and Northgate	06/12/2019	House	3	Yes	Yes	No	£126,000
Nelson	06/12/2019	Maisonette	2	Yes	No	No	£77,000

Bradwell South and Hopton	19/12/2019	House	2	No	No	No	£180,000
Bradwell North	13/01/2020	House	3	No	No	No	£225,000
Caister North	06/02/2020	House	2	No	No	No	£137,500
Bradwell South and Hopton	19/02/2020	Bungalow	2	Yes	Yes	No	£165,000
Yarmouth North	19/02/2020	House	4	No	No	No	£190,000
Bradwell North	24/03/2020	House	2	No	No	No	£160,000
Lothingland	20/03/2020	Bungalow	3	No	No	Yes - will be	£190,000
East Flegg	21/03/2020	Bungalow	3	No	No	Yes	£216,000
Total 2019/20							£2,793,000

Table 3: Location of homes by type and size – purchases in 2020/21

Ward	Date of Acquisition	Type	Beds at purchase	Ex-Right to Buy	Right of First Refusal	Wheelchair Accessible	Purchase Price
Central and Northgate	04/05/2020	Flat	2	Yes	No	No	£90,000
Claydon	28/05/2020	Flat	2	Yes	No	No	£95,000
Magdalen	12/06/2020	House	2	Yes	No	No	£117,000
St Andrews	26/06/2020	House	3	Yes	Yes	No	£150,000
Bradwell North	02/07/2020	House	4	No	No	Yes	£270,000
St Andrews	22/12/2020	House	2	No	No	No	£161,667
St Andrews	22/12/2020	House	2	No	No	No	£161,667
St Andrews	22/12/2020	House	2	No	No	No	£161,667
Claydon	04/09/2020	House	4	Yes	Yes	No	£170,000
Nelson	23/02/2021	Flat	2	Yes	No	No	£82,000
Magdalen	24/02/2021	House	2	Yes	Yes	No	£135,000
Magdalen	01/02/2021	Flat	2	Yes	Yes	No	£120,000
Claydon	15/03/2021	Flat	3	Yes	Yes	No	£150,000
Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	Level Access	£824,671
Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	Level Access	

Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	No	
Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	No	
Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	No	
Bradwell South and Hopton	07/08/2020	Flat	2	No	No	No	
Total 2020/21							£2,688,671

URN: 21-034

Subject: Council Housing Compliance and Performance – 2020/21

Report to: ELT 30 June 2021
Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 15 July 2021

Report by: Nicola Turner, Housing Director
Russell Heath, Resident Engagement Officer

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper sets out the Council's compliance with the regulatory requirements for its landlord function and provides an overview of complaint handling during 2020/21. It provides a benchmark for the Council's performance and supports the ongoing oversight by committee of the Council's landlord compliance and performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:

1. Note the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 4 March 2021, Committee received a paper providing an overview of the Charter for Social Housing which also set out the new Council compliance and performance framework which was being developed to respond to the Charter and the role of committee in providing oversight of the Council's compliance and ensuring that complaints are used to improve service delivery.
- 1.2 This report provides information on the Council's compliance and performance as at 31 March 2021 and provides a benchmark against which committee can monitor and review the Council's performance and compliance. To support this, committee will receive six monthly reports on performance and compliance as well as information on complaint handling and Resident Engagement activity.

2.0 Regulatory Compliance

- 2.1 Appendix 1 provides information on the Council's compliance against each of the Consumer Standards and the Rent Standard. Compliance is RAG rated to identify where the Council is fully compliant, compliant but there is a need for further improvement and where the Council is non-compliant. The appendix demonstrates the following position:

Standard	Sub area	Rating
Neighbourhood and community		
	Neighbourhood management	Fully Met
	Local area co-operation	Fully Met
	Anti-social behaviour	Fully Met
	Overall rating	Fully Met
Tenancy		
	Allocations and mutual exchanges	Fully Met
	Tenure	Fully Met
	Overall rating	Fully Met
Home		
	Quality of Accommodation	Met - improvement required
	Repairs and maintenance	Met - improvement required
	Overall rating	Met - improvement required
Tenant involvement and empowerment		
	Customer service, choice and complaints	Fully Met
	Involvement and empowerment	Met - improvement required
	Understanding diverse needs	Met - improvement required
	Overall rating	Fully Met
Rent Standard		
	Setting rents	Fully Met

- 2.2 Whilst the Council is compliant against all of the requirements of the five regulatory standards there are a number of areas where further improvement is required, further information on these areas is shown below:

Home Standard

This standard relates to the standard of homes and delivery of a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service.

Quality of Accommodation

The Council has significantly reduced the number of non-Decent Homes across its housing stock reflecting an increase in capital work programmes from 2018/19 onwards. At the 31 March 2021, 95% of homes met the Decent Homes Standard. The amber status reflects the requirement to:

- build upon current reductions in non-decency and ensure all homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and are free of Category 1 Hazards (as defined by the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System).
- Produce a new Asset Management Strategy for 2021-26 to provide the strategic plan for the maintenance of council homes including the requirement to decarbonise the housing stock.

Repairs and Maintenance

The amber status reflects the requirement to:

- Ensure value for money in repairs and maintenance
- Focus on communal areas to ensure they are well maintained in terms of both repairs and decoration – enhancing both homes and neighbourhoods.
- Timely and cost-effective void process and bringing long term empty homes back into use

The return of the Asset function from GYN to the Council is providing the necessary client function to oversee the responsive repairs and planned worked functions ensuring value for money and standard of works. Additionally, the Asset function will ensure that the decarbonisation agenda is reflected in capital programmes ensuring that the Council's homes continue to meet required standards. These interventions will address the areas identified above allowing the amber status to change to green.

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

This standard requires landlords to provide choices, information and communication which reflects the diverse needs of tenants, to have a clear approach to complaint handling and provide wide opportunities for tenant involvement and influence.

Involvement and Empowerment

The amber status reflects the fact that until the latter part of 2019, tenant engagement was delivered as part of the Neighbourhoods that Work service and whilst this provided wider benefits for the residents of Council homes, there was not a focus on the purpose of tenant involvement. Formal resident engagement was limited to the Community Representatives supported by the Tenancy Services team. Since the recruitment of a dedicated Resident Engagement officer in December 2019 within the Housing Service there has been a wider focus on tenant involvement across the service and the development of a new approach to tenant engagement has increased the number of ways which tenants and residents can be involved.

Understanding diverse needs

The amber status of this measure reflects the fact that the Council's current IT system limits the ability to access and analyse up to date information on the needs of tenants which means the Council is unable to use this insight to support resident engagement

and service improvement. In the meantime, the number of engaged tenants and residents is increasing widening the demographic profile of the Council's tenants.

A new Resident Engagement Strategy has been developed with tenants reflecting the new approach developed since December 2019 which will be presented to committee in September for adoption. This will enable the Council to build on current progress allowing the amber status to change to green.

3.0 Complaint Handling

- 3.1 The Council has a corporate Compliments and Complaints policy and monitoring of the number of complaints and outcomes is managed corporately. Appendix 2 provides an analysis of complaints received during 2020/21 in relation to the Council's landlord function and in relation to repairs. Great Yarmouth Norse (GYN) are responsible for responding to complaints for the repairs service and have provided the information in Appendix 2 on the number and timescale for responding to Stage One and Stage Two complaints.
- 3.2 In responding to complaints, the Council seeks to ensure that where improvements can be made to the delivery of the Housing Service or processes and procedures, this is captured and implemented.

4.0 Resident Engagement Update

- 4.1 Following the presentation to Committee on 1 October 2020 on the new Resident Engagement approach the following work has been undertaken:
- Development of the Resident Engagement Strategy – including seeking views from residents on the approach, contents and measures for inclusion in the strategy
 - Introduced transactional surveys to capture qualitative feedback on the Council's performance with the results used to refine service delivery. To date transactional surveys have been completed for:
 - New home (capturing views on the void standard and letting process)
 - General Needs Tenancy Support Service
 - Anti-Social Behaviour complaints handling.
 - Launched the Estate Monitor role in June 2020 – where residents work with the Council to monitor grounds maintenance and caretaking performance and standards.

4.0 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

- 4.1 The Tenant Satisfaction measures proposed as part of the Social Housing White Paper remain proposed at this time, with work underway to develop and refine the measures and clarify requirements particularly in relation to qualitative measures.

The measures are not expected to be required to be reported upon this financial year and potentially not until 2023/24. Appendix 3 identifies which of the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Measures are currently recorded/reported on as well as identifying those measures for which performance is not currently recorded.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

6.0 Risk Implications

6.1 The Council remains focused on ensuring it is compliant with the regulatory requirements for social housing. The most significant risk with maintaining compliance relates to the Home Standard reflecting the need to ensure the Council's Homes are safe, well maintained and meet the Decent Homes Standard. This risk is mitigated by the Council's capital and responsive repair programmes which are remain focused on ensuring the Council's homes meet the Decent Homes Standard. The Council's performance on carrying out compliance checks is good.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The report evidences at the end of 2020/21, the Council is compliant with the Consumer Standards and the Rent Standard reflecting improvements over a number of areas over the last few years. The report identifies that in relation to the Home Standard and Tenant Involvement and Engagement Standard there are areas where further improvement is required although the Council does meet the requirements of the standards. The report also provides information in relation to the Council's performance against the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Measures and in relation to complaint handling.

7.2 This report provides a benchmark against which committee can monitor and review progress on regulatory compliance and complaint handling every six months.

8.0 Background Papers

The Charter for Social Housing – Social Housing White Paper published by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Social Housing White Paper – report to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 4
March 2021

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Via ELT

Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Existing Council Policies:	Tenancy Policy, Housing Allocations Scheme, Void Policy, Social Housing Tenancy Fraud Policy, Rechargeable Repairs Policy
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	None associated with the report.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No legal implications associated with the report.
Risk Implications:	Set out in the report.
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	None
Crime & Disorder:	None
Every Child Matters:	None

Appendix 1: Meeting the Regulatory Standards - 2020/21

Introduction

The Council is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing against four Consumer Standards and one of the three Economic Standards, this paper sets out the position as at 31 March 2021 in relation to the Council's compliance with the requirements of these five standards:

Consumer Standards

- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and Community
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

Economic Standards

- Rent Standard

Compliance and Regulation

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) adopts a co-regulation approach and under the current regulatory framework, would only intervene to investigate and take any required action if it considers it has reasonable grounds to consider that a landlord had breached one or more parts of a Consumer Standard and that breach was sufficiently serious that it met the "serious detriment test. The RSH considers serious detriment to be where there is a risk of, or actual serious harm to tenants. A lower threshold applies to intervention in relation to the Economic Standards. The standards provide specific expectations and outcomes but how these are achieved is determined by the landlord. Under the co-regulation approach, as a landlord we are responsible for ensuring the service meets the regulatory standards (and complies with relevant legislative requirements). The RSH seeks assurance from landlords of compliance – landlords must be able to demonstrate compliance.

In order to ensure the Council meets the requirements of the five consumer standards it has carried out a self-assessment of compliance against all of the five standards with the results of that review detailed below. This will be reviewed annually, but with reporting made twice yearly to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee to provide assurance to councillors on the Council's performance.

Overall Judgement

A review undertaken following the 2020/21 financial year of the Council's compliance with the five regulatory standards has been completed, some of the standards have sub areas and a rating is provided for each sub area as well as for overall compliance. The following rating has been used to assess compliance with the standards.

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Rating	Definition	Status
Dark Green	GYBC exceeds the requirements of the Standards across all requirements	Exceeds requirements
Light Green	GYBC fully meets the Consumer Standards	Fully met
Amber	GYBC meets the Consumer Standards but needs to improve some aspects to support and strengthen its compliance	Met and improvement required
Red	GYBC does not meet the requirements and there are areas of concern. Gaps exist, but work is ongoing to improve the position	Non-compliant

The outcome of the review is shown in the table below:

Standard	Sub area	Rating
Neighbourhood and community		
	Neighbourhood management	Fully met
	Local area co-operation	Fully met
	Anti-social behaviour	Fully met
	Overall rating	Fully met
Tenancy		
	Allocations and mutual exchanges	Fully met
	Tenure	Fully met
	Overall rating	Fully met
Home		
	Quality of Accommodation	Met and improvement required
	Repairs and maintenance	Met and improvement required
	Overall rating	Met and improvement required
Tenant involvement and empowerment		
	Customer service, choice and complaints	Fully met
	Involvement and empowerment	Met and improvement required

Appendix 1: Meeting the Regulatory Standards - 2020/21

	Understanding diverse needs	Met and improvement required
	Overall rating	Fully met
Rent Standard		
	Setting rents	Fully met

Commentary

The sections below provide information on each of the standards and information which evidences the rating applied.

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

The Neighbourhood and Community standard includes elements on Neighbourhood Management, Local Area co-operation and Anti-social behaviour.

1. Neighbourhood Management

Required outcomes:

Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- GYBC's Estate Services Team ensures the estates we manage are kept clean and tidy.
- A programme of quality assurance inspections is undertaken to assess the quality of caretaking and gardening services.
- A contract is in place with GYB Services to provide gardening and grounds maintenance services. This is managed through operational meetings and reviewed annually. We operate an outcome-based standard on a three-weekly rota.
- Work with the community and promote the use of the Love Clean Streets App to raise issues.
- Fire Risk Assessments are routinely completed and reviewed with correct equipment and notices in place.
- Complete a regular garden inspection programme to maintain environmental standards.
- Operate a low-cost gardening scheme where tenants can pay monthly for the provision of garden services.
- We have an annual programme of communal improvements.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) enforcement is undertaken via the Tenancy Team and partnerships with other agencies through the Safer Neighbourhood Area Panels (SNAP).
- Clear roles and responsibilities are published on the website and are outlined at the new tenant sign up.

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- Benchmarking undertaken through House Mark.

2. Local area co-operation

Required outcomes:

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- Across the borough we have substantive support agencies and clear referral routes to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing working collaboratively together through the Community Hubs.
- The Tenancy Support service has been expanded to general need tenants at any stage of their tenancy to support sustaining tenancies.
- The Independent Living team runs the borough wide community alarm service.
- There are two public forums lead by Councillors and the Tenancy Team work closely with the Police attending the Safe Neighbourhood Action panels.
- The Tenancy team works with Community Reps and Caretakers to increase environmental awareness and improvement on estates.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour

Required Outcomes:

Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- There is a clear corporate policy for addressing and managing ASB and proactive neighbourhood focused activities.
- Comprehensive Introductory Tenancy Policy and Procedure in place
- Strong partnership working with other agencies through the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panels and Early Help Hub as a co-ordinator within the borough

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- Approach to ASB is to support perpetrators to amend their behaviour and where this does not resolve ASB to use appropriate and reasonable enforcement action reflecting the full range of powers available including CPWs, CPNs, FPN, Closure Orders, Injunctions and ASBOs.
- Residents impacted by ASB are supported and receive regular feedback on complaints
- The Tenancy team promotes the use of a Noise app for residents to make easy records and evidence of noise nuisance and utilise the Report-It App to record environmental crime across the borough.
- GYBC has the legal support of NPLaw with a dedicated team based in the borough.
- Small community fund that supports creating cleaner, greener and safer areas.
- Comprehensive sign up procedure reinforces tenants' responsibilities and rights.
- Housing Officers have been upskilled to ensure consistency in place in dealing with ASB cases.

Tenancy standard

1. Allocations and Mutual Exchange

Required Outcomes:

Landlords shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:

- (a) make the best use of available housing
- (b) are compatible with the purpose of the housing
- (c) contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities.

There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.

Landlords shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- Allocation of Council homes are made in accordance with the Housing Allocation Scheme – including transfers supporting the most effective use of the housing stock.
- There is a clear Tenancy Policy.

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- The tenancy support service provides advice and guidance in setting up a new home.
- GYBC is signed up to House Exchange and a clear procedure through our IT system to support tenants through the process.
- There is close working arrangements with GYBC Housing Options Team to prevent and address homelessness in the borough.

2. Tenure

Required Outcomes:

The Regulator expects that GYBC will offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock

We must also meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation

Examples of basis of compliance:

- The Tenancy Policy sets out the Council's approach to the granting of tenancies and the different types of tenancies which will be offered
- Our tenancies are secure and introductory and comply fully with the requirements of the Housing Act 1985 and Housing Act 1996.
- GYBC introduced Fixed Term tenancies for a minority of new tenants in accordance with the Council House tenancy Policy as per The Localism Act 2011 reflecting the high levels of demand and low supply of larger family homes and homes which are wheelchair accessible.

Home standard

(a) Quality of Accommodation

Required Outcomes:

Landlords shall:

- (a) ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard
- (b) meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard
- (c) in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance.

Examples of basis of compliance:

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- 95% of properties meet the decent homes standard and this is maintained through our Decent Homes Standard programme
- The Asset Management Strategy for 2021-2026 is under review. The strategy will consider:
 - Decent Homes Standards and any future amendments
 - Building Safety Bill
 - Fire Safety Bill
 - Housing Green Paper
 - Government targets for carbon neutral new homes by 2025 and carbon reduction schemes in our current homes.
 - Smart technology – extending home automation to asset components.
- All tenants are contacted to advise that they are included on a programme and we publish a summary of the annual improvement scheme and what we have completed.
- GYBC strive to deliver safe, decent and attractive homes for our residents. We look at the potential for wider regeneration schemes and how properties can be improved for carbon efficiency.
- When undertaking improvements or regeneration we undertake extensive customer consultation and involvement offering ‘choice events’ or individual home visits ensuring that customers are treated as individuals and their needs taken into account.

2. Repairs and Maintenance

Required Outcomes

Landlords shall:

- (a) provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time
- (b) meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- The repairs and maintenance service is delivered through a Joint Venture arrangement with Great Yarmouth Norse.
- The repairs and maintenance service is accessible with tenants being able to report repairs in the following ways:
 - telephone
 - Email

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- Monday to Friday 9-5 at an Area Offices using the free phone facilities (this was unavailable during office closures due to the Covid pandemic)
 - Through the Love Clean Streets App
- Appointment slots for repairs and gas servicing are offered (am and pm).
- The website has a range of information on repairs and maintenance providing details of the repairs we will do and those which are the tenant responsibility. This information is also included within our Tenant Handbook
- There is an assured process for measuring tenant satisfaction with our repairs service. We also ask all new tenants if their new home meets our Void Standard for empty properties.
- Tenant satisfaction is high with all aspects of our repair and maintenance service.
- Statutory compliance is maintained through a cyclical programme as follows:
 - Gas – annually
 - Fixed Appliance testing – 5 yearly
 - Lift Servicing – annually
 - Water hygiene – bi-annual
 - Solid fuel – bi-annual
 - Portable appliance testing – annual
 - Service pumps – annual
 - Fire Alarms – annual
- Planned and capital works to be based on a 5-year programme of works but reviewed annually to take into account newly arising need in relation to decency.
- Adaptations delivered in liaison with the Independent Living Service to ensure the needs of the resident and requirements of Occupational Health are addressed and delivered.

Tenant Involvement and empowerment standard

1. Customer Service, Choice and Complaints

Required outcomes:

Landlords shall:

- (a) provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards

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(b) have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- There are varying ways for tenants to access our services in a way and time that suits them. We have simple contact methods through our contact centre, area offices and online
- GYBC have contracts with translation / interpreting and transcribing organisations to enable staff to provide information in alternative formats (e.g. INTRAN or GYROS).
- The Tenancy team are actively capturing and do hold some information on resident's communication preferences including partially sighted and language preference.
- Twice-yearly resident magazine containing key service information and other articles of interest.
- Each policy has due regard to Equality and Diversity as an integral part of policy formation and Equality assessments are completed.
- GYBC has a clear corporate policy and process for receiving and responding to complaints.
- Completed the Housing Ombudsman self-assessment on the Complaint Handling Code see [here](#).
- Ensuring that the learning from complaints is used to improve service delivery.

2. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

Required Outcomes:

Landlords will ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:

- (a) the formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and strategic priorities;
- (b) the making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards;
- (c) the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved;
- (d) the management of their homes, where applicable;
- (e) the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made; and
- (f) agreeing local offers for service delivery.

Examples of basis of compliance:

There are flexible ways for tenants to be involved and influence service delivery and these are set out on our website and forthcoming Resident Engagement Strategy. They include:

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- Your Area including Community Reps and estate monitors focusing on the local environment.
- Your Voice – engagement online and focus on communications.
- Your Service – including scrutiny and performance challenge to support accountability across the borough.

3. Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Required Outcomes:

Landlords will:

- (a) treat all tenants with fairness and respect; and
- (b) demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the seven equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- The Equality Policy and a senior designated manager who ensures that GYBC is compliant with all legislation and good practice.
- Where we have a right to do so, we collect and collate data across all equality strands and use this data to help shape services.
- A programme of Equality Impact Assessments with rolling reviews of existing processes and all new process/policies having such an assessment before being implemented.
- All committee reports have a section on equality and diversity.
- GYBC has clear values, expected behaviours and diversity training to promote our commitment to equality and diversity.

Rent Standard

Required outcome

Registered providers must set rents from 1 April 2020 in accordance with the Government's Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing 2018 (hereafter Rent Policy Statement) which can be found on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) website.

Examples of basis of compliance:

- The Council is committed to providing value for money homes that are well maintained and using funds where possible to provide further social housing in the borough to meet the needs of its residents.
- Right to Buy Retained Receipts are being used to buy additional homes in the borough.

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- Social and Affordable Rents are charged, with Affordable Rents capped at Local Housing Allowance rates when set.
- There is strong governance in its practices with any changes in rent or service charges approved by Council
- During the implementation of the rent setting process quality assurance checks are completed and a 6-monthly audit around September/October of new accounts to ensure they meet the new formula rent levels set is undertaken.
- Rents setting was completed within the Rent Standard Guidance of CPI + 1% (total of 2.7% – for 2020/21).
- Individual service charges (excluding caretaking service charges) are charged on a cost basis.

Annual complaints summary 2020/21

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This appendix provides an overview of the number, type and outcomes of complaints handling in 2020/21 for the Council's landlord and repair functions. Please note that due to the timescale of complaints, the stage a complaint is recorded at may fall across more than one financial year.

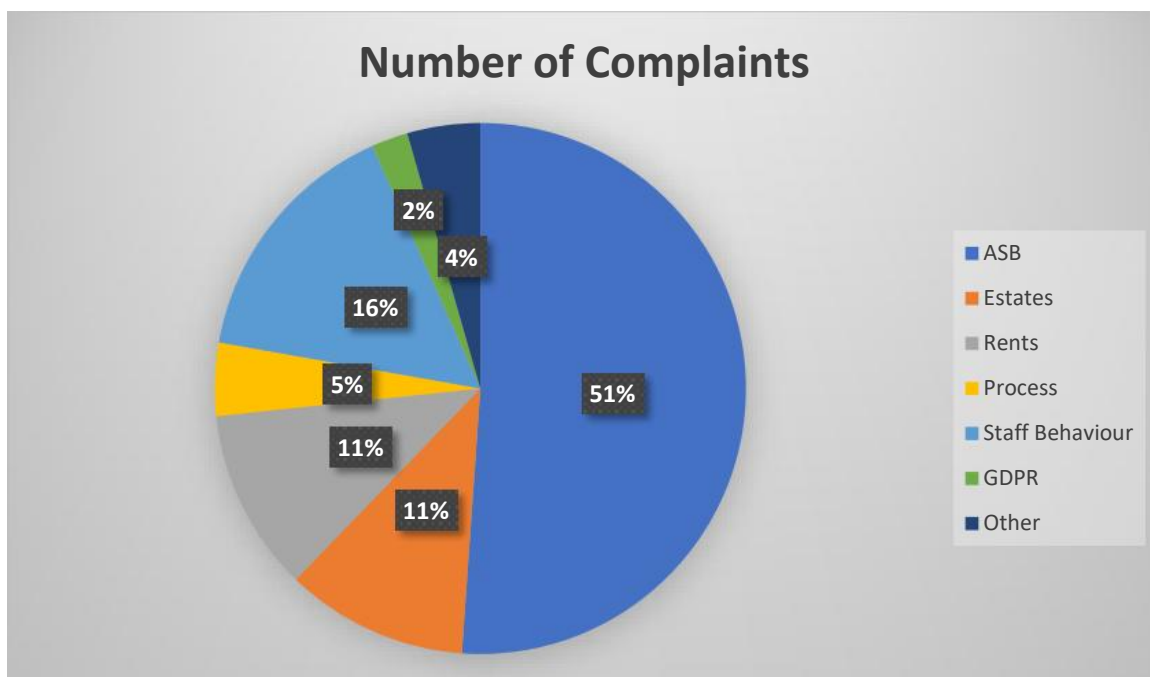
	Housing Services – Landlord function	Repairs (GYN)
Number of complaints received	45	73
Number of Stage 1 complaints	32 (13 were service requests)	73
Number of Stage 2 complaints	5	4
Number of Stage 3 complaints	0	0
Number of complaints escalated to Housing Ombudsman	2	0
Number of complaints responded to at Stage 1 within timescales (including agreed extension)	25 (78%)	32 (44%)

2.0 Complaints Handling Performance

- 2.1 The total number of complaints received in relation to the Council's landlord services at Stage One was 32, with 5 Stage Two complaints and 2 cases considered by the Housing Ombudsman. The repairs service recorded 73 Stage 1 complaints of which 24 remain open complaints and 4 Stage 2 complaints.

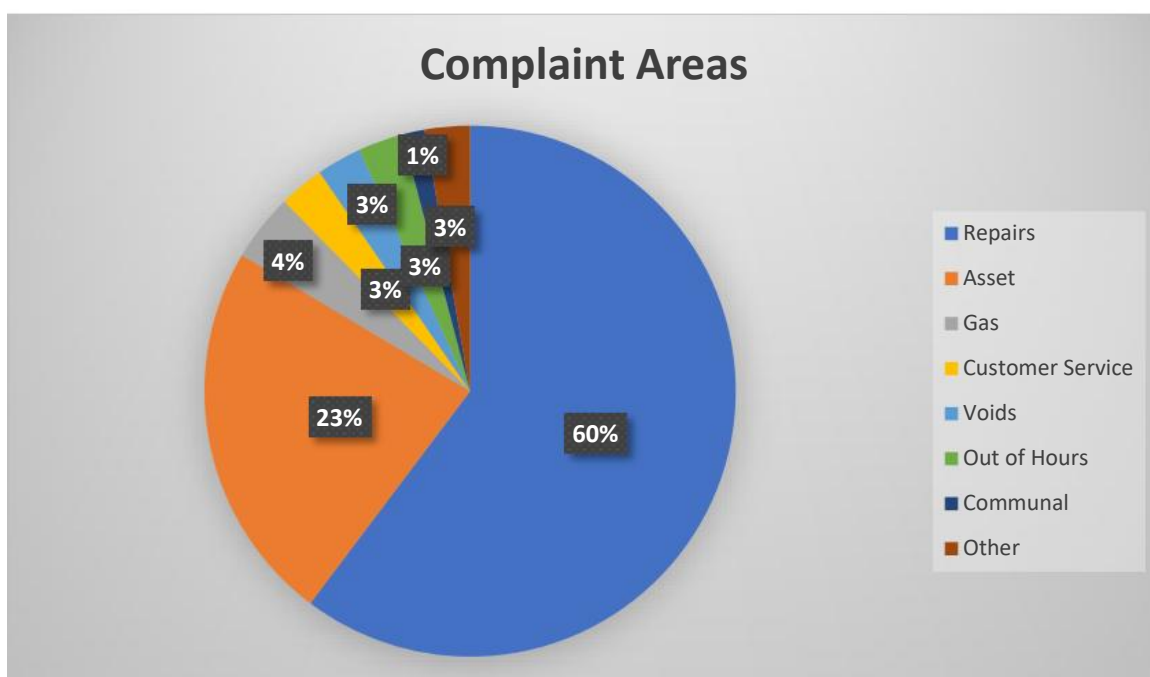
3.0 Analysis of reason for complaint – landlord services

- 3.1 The graph below provides an analysis of the reason(s) for complaints received in relation to the Council's landlord services, some complaints have a number of aspects.



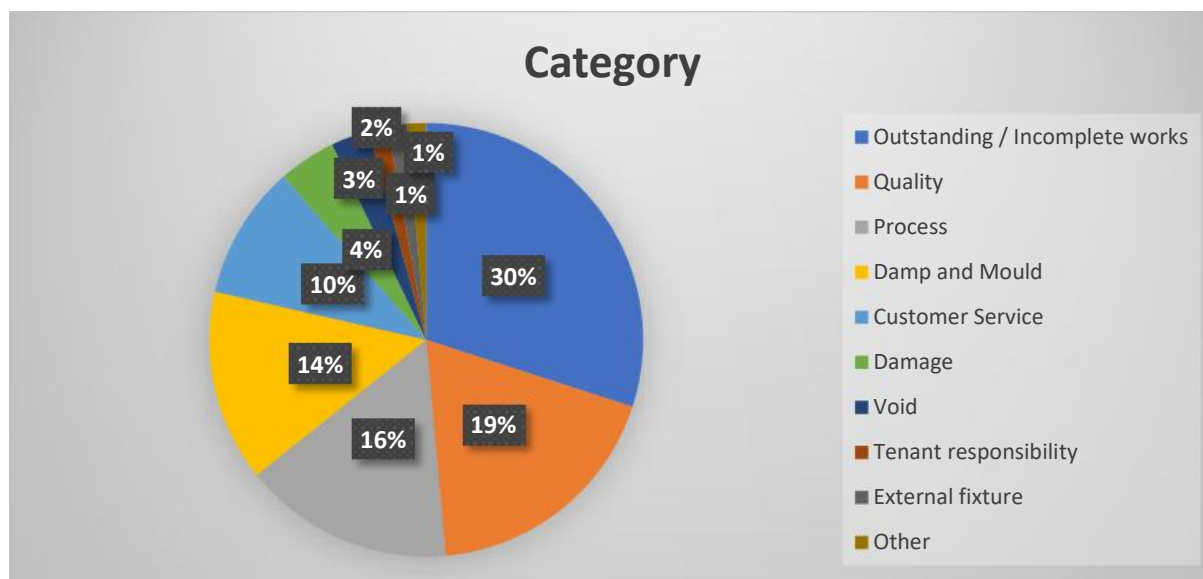
4.0 Repairs and Asset Management

4.1 The graph below provides an analysis of the reason(s) for complaints received in relation to the services provided by GYN.



4.2 GYN Complaint Category

Each complaint is assigned a category to support learning from the complaints received.



Theme	Proposed Measure	Current GYBC Measure	Performance at 31 March 2021
Keeping properties in good repair	Decent Homes Standard (DHS) compliance	Percentage of homes meeting DHS at year end	95%
	Repairs completed right first time	Percentage and number of responsive repairs which are completed 'right first time'	93.31%
	Tenant satisfaction with repairs	HN05: Percentage of residents very or fairly satisfied with the repairs service they received	92.40%
Maintaining building safety	Gas Safety	Percentage of properties with a valid gas certificate	99.20%
	Electrical Safety	Properties with a valid electrical test in the last 5 years	98.82%
	Fire Safety	FRA's overdue for review	76
	Asbestos	Percentage of communal areas with an asbestos test	100%
	Water Safety	Percentage of water hygiene assessments carried out	99.83%
	Lift Safety	Percentage of lift servicing carried out	100%
	Tenant Satisfaction with Health & Safety of home	Not currently collected - awaiting guidance on measure	
Effective handling of complaints	Number of complaints received	Number of complaints received	123
	Complaints responded to within agreed timescale	Not currently reported	78%
	Tenant satisfaction with complaints handling	Not currently collected - awaiting guidance on measure	
Respectful and helpful engagement	Number of complaints related to fairness and/or respect	Not currently reported	n/k
	Tenant satisfaction that landlord listens to views and takes notice	Satisfaction with views being listened to and acted upon by tenure	65% *
	Tenant satisfaction with engagement	Not currently collected - awaiting guidance on measure	
Responsible neighbourhood management	Communal areas meeting required standard	Quality Assurance checks (score out of 4)	3.49 / 4
	Number of complaints relating to communal areas	Not currently reported	4
	Tenant satisfaction with communal areas	Not currently collected - awaiting guidance on measure	
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord contribution to the neighbourhood	Not currently collected - awaiting guidance on measure	

	Number of complaints relating to anti-social behaviour	Not currently reported	750
	Tenant satisfaction with handling of anti-social behaviour	How satisfied are you with the handling of your complaint?	52%
Overall	Tenant Satisfaction with overall service	Overall how satisfied are you with the overall service provided?	83%*

* - data source - STAR survey completed October 2019

CONFIDENTIALITY

The contents of the appendix to this report qualifies as exempt information under section 100(A)(4) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it is *“information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”*

and

2) In relation to the “exempt” information, it has been determined that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because disclosure would adversely affect the authority’s ability to manage its commercial financial and business affairs.

Accordingly, it is proposed that the appendix shall remain exempt.

URN: 21-081

Subject: Council Homes Programme – Progression of infill sites

Report to: ELT 23 June 2021
Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 15 July 2021

Report by: Claire Wilkins, Housing Delivery Manager
Nicola Turner, Housing Director

SUBJECT MATTER

This report sets out the Council’s approach to the development of infill sites through the Council Homes Programme. It seeks approval of the drawdown of expenditure to be incurred in the delivery of the new Council Home schemes detailed in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee:

- 1. Note the report, progress to date and the forthcoming workshop on infill sites.**
- 2. Approve the development of the sites at Charter Close and The Close and the expenditure as set out in the Confidential Appendix.**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2021 an update on the Council Homes Programme was provided to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee, this reported identified a further report would be presented to committee in relation to infill opportunities as well as setting out the wider approach to the delivery of infill sites reflecting the recent withdrawal of planning applications for Crab Lane and Great Northern Close.

1.2 A number of infill sites held within the Housing Revenue Account were identified as part of the initial assessment works undertaken to scope the potential size of the Council Home

Programme. Infill sites vary in size with some able to accommodate only one home but their development can allow specific needs to be met as part of a wider development programme.

2 INFILL SITES – THE WIDER APPROACH

- 2.1 The development of infill sites (sites which may have an existing use or which were left vacant following historic development of a larger site) will form an integral part of the delivery of the Council Homes Programme, particularly where such sites sit within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). HRA sites are more viable to deliver as there is no land cost associated with the development of HRA sites. Infill sites vary in size with some only being able to accommodate a single home which can result in higher development costs – these sites can, however, be useful in meeting particular needs such as the need for wheelchair accessible homes or larger homes.
- 2.2 Many infill sites will be parking areas, garage sites or areas of land which whilst not officially designated as open space form part of the green areas within council estates. These sites may therefore be vacant and unused or in current use to some extent. Other infill sites will become available by subdividing large gardens of council homes when they become vacant allowing one or more homes to be developed either by directly building onto the side of the existing home or building elsewhere within the garden. Where a garden is subdivided the new tenant is made clear the infill plot is not part of their tenancy and where required temporary fencing will be provided to separate the infill plot from the tenant's garden. The Council's staff actively seek to identify such infill sites as well as to identify areas of land which are not or under used which could more productively become an infill housing site. A workshop for members will be held to discuss infill sites identified for the Council Homes Programme.
- 2.3 All development requires planning consent and approval of the scheme by this committee, the process for seeking such consents is set out below. This process will only start where an initial assessment shows the site in principle could be developed:
- Local member(s) are advised that potential site for the Council Home Programme has been identified along with details of how the site may be developed. Member's feedback will be sought on the site and the proposed scheme.
 - An initial proposal for how the site could be developed will be prepared and pre-application planning advice sought. Initial appraisal of scheme viability will be completed. At this stage some further site surveys and investigations will be required. The proposed scheme will be considered by the project team (including representatives from Tenancy Services, Property and conversation and design as well as the architects).
 - Pre-planning formal public consultation will take place. Local members will be advised prior to the public consultation starting. Feedback from the consultation will inform the finalisation of the design by the project team. The scheme appraisal will be refreshed.
 - Planning Application Submission
 - Report to this committee to seek approval of required spend.
- 2.4 Throughout the preplanning consultation and planning application process residents and the community have the opportunity to raise concerns and objections to proposed schemes. Objections made during the formal planning process will be form part of the consideration by planning officers and members of the Development Committee of the formal planning applications. In some cases, there may be a significant number of objections, such as in relation

to the recent withdrawn planning application for Crab Lane. Some concerns and objections raised will relate to the nature of infill sites and that they increase the number of homes in the immediate area. Where parking areas or garage areas are proposed for development this is likely to result in objections in relation to loss of parking and in relation to vacant sites which are grassed the loss of open space and areas for recreation and play even though the spaces are not designated open space. In designing schemes, the project team will consider how and to what extent any potential wider impact on any area can be mitigated within the design of the scheme, particularly where parking sites are being proposed to be developed. As part of this surveys will be used to identify usage of parking/garage sites and to identify the wider local parking provision for the area in which a site is located. It should be noted no development by the Council of new homes can be required to address an existing deficit in parking provision. However, where viability and site constraints allow the Council will seek to deliver wider benefits which could address existing issues within the immediate area.

- 2.5 Whilst there are benefits of free land for sites held within the HRA, the Council Home Programme will also include infill sites which are owned within the General Fund (and for which the land will need to be bought by the HRA) and by purchasing private sites. The process through which non HRA infill sites will be brought forward will be the same as set out above. To increase the viability of infill sites as a whole, the Council will look to parcel up sites, particularly sites of one or two homes to increase the value for money of delivering small sites. The two sites detailed below will be brought forward using this approach.

3 THE CLOSE, BRADWELL

- 3.1 The Close is an area of former and existing Council owned housing consisting of a mix of family and sheltered homes. An infill site of surplus Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land has been identified as suitable to accommodate a two-bedroom wheelchair property, dedicated parking and garden. The bungalow would be designed to meet as a minimum the National Space Standards. The area of infill land is not identified as designated open space and offers very little amenity value to the area. As part of the proposal to use this site, pre-planning advice has been sought with regard both to the style and finish of the property as well as the impact on the surrounding housing. To ensure existing tenants are not disadvantaged by the proposal to infill in this location, additional parking would need to be provided and is proposed to be provided opposite the site to account for the loss of available on street parking as a result of the development of this site.
- 3.2 In the past, traditional build has been the main area of focus around these opportunities. With the drive for increased energy efficiency, standardisation of design to reduce costs and speed of delivery, consideration has been given to modular build for this development. Following receipt of price estimates, as shown within the confidential appendix it was found that the costs for a modular build were too high for the scheme to be viable therefore the dwelling will be traditionally built.
- 3.3 The proposed scheme does not have planning permission and any development of this site will therefore be subject to planning. Public consultation would be held prior to submission of an application. The costs of delivering this bungalow are set out in the Confidential Appendix.

4 CHARTER CLOSE, GORLESTON

- 4.1 14 Charter Close was identified by Tenancy Services when it became void as being a larger bungalow which could be reconfigured to provide better accessible accommodation. Alongside the bungalow is a redundant boiler house. Plans were drawn up which provided 2 x one bedroom fully wheelchair accessible (Part M(4)3) bungalows using the redundant boiler house

to provide an additional home. These plans keep the laundry room albeit moved to a new location. The intention would be to move the laundry room to the communal area during construction, so as not to interrupt usage.

- 4.2 A consultation with residents was carried out in June 2020, in advance of a planning application being submitted. The intention was to carry out a consultation in the communal room at Charter Close, however the timing of this was as during Lockdown 1, so a written consultation took place with the Tenancy Support Officer following up with phone calls to each resident to capture their thoughts where a response had not been returned by post. Following the consultation, plans were formalised and a planning application submitted. Planning was approved in September 2020 for both the reconfiguration of the existing bungalow and the boiler house conversion.
- 4.3 Subsequent permission to proceed with the extension of the Boiler House was required from Anglian Water as the new section of building fell within 3 metres of a sewer pipe. This permission has been declined therefore plans are currently being amended to decrease the size of the dwelling slightly to ensure the appropriate legal distance from the pipe but the new home will remain well in excess of Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 4.4 Updated cost estimates have been obtained (June 2021) and changes in the market and price of materials have significantly affected viability of the scheme as a whole. When separating the costs between dwellings, making the changes to number 14 to allow for it to become fully wheelchair accessible bungalow is not cost effective. The scheme does not repay over 40 years and the Council considers that the benefits do not outweigh the significant costs. The property has been returned to the Asset and Tenancy Teams for re-let and subject to void turn around works will provide a spacious, level access home to a single person or couple over 55.
- 4.5 The costs of the boiler house conversion (which includes costs to re-provide the laundry room which would form part of the new dwelling) are set out in the Confidential Appendix. The next step is to procure the delivery of the home which offers an opportunity for the Council to test the market costs and achieve best value for development.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 As agreed at the November 2019 Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee, the reduction of the Repairs & Maintenance spend by £500k for the years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 will support the additional borrowing to support the Council Homes Programme. The level of expenditure for The Close and Charter Close set out within the Confidential Appendix will be funded from a mixture of borrowing and Retained Right to Buy receipts or Homes England grant funding.
- 5.3 An allowance for cost increases has been allowed for within the budgets for which approval is sought. Procurement processes will seek to ensure an optimum tender price, maximising quality alongside value for money. Costs will be closely monitored during the procurement and development periods to ensure any cost overruns and potential abortive costs can be managed appropriately. The Council will consider whether tendering the two sites as a package will offer cost benefits.
- 5.4 Changes to the use of Right to Buy Receipts in April 2021 will enable the use to fund up to 40% of new development costs, an increase from 30% where this supports scheme viability.
- 5.5 Abortive costs for schemes for where external and internal fees and charges have been incurred will be met from a specific revenue reserve. The project team will use appropriate procurement

to ensure all costs in relation to both abortive schemes and schemes which are built are value for money and costs are only incurred when required to progress a development scheme.

6 Risk Implications

- 6.1 The delivery of any new housing scheme is dependent upon the scheme being viable and securing planning permission. As discussed above there is a risk of abortive work and costs, but these will be managed to minimise as much as possible abortive costs.
- 6.2 The requirement for adequate staffing remains an ongoing risk and the need for additional staff will be closely monitored to ensure there is appropriate staff resources to deliver the Council Home Programme.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council is able to provide homes through acquisition, conversion or new build in accordance with Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 This report sets out the approach to the development of infill sites and seeks approval to drawdown the expenditure required to deliver the dwellings proposed on the two sites at The Close and Charter Close.

9 Background Papers

Council Homes Programme Update Report – Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee June 2021

Council Homes Programme Update Report – Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee October 2021

HRA Borrowing report approved at November 2019 Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee.

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Through ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Through ELT
Existing Council Policies:	N/A
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	At section 5 and in the Confidential Appendix
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Included in section 7
Risk Implications:	Included in section 6 and the confidential appendix
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	The new homes provided will be designed to meet housing need and address particular shortages in supply which may currently have a negative impact on the likelihood of some households with protected characteristics from being able to have their needs

	met in a timely way. This recognises that households in higher levels of need will have more opportunity to be accommodated in the Council's housing stock (and that of Registered Providers) than those with low needs.
Crime & Disorder:	New housing schemes will be designed and built to minimise properties vulnerability to crime.
Every Child Matters:	The Council's Development Standard for new housing will take into the account the needs of children.