

Special Urgency Decision Cabinet (Resources) Panel

Report title	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022 including Rent and Service	
Decision Maker	Special Urgency Decision	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, Cabinet Member for Resources, Resources Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman, City Assets and Housing	
Wards affected	(All Wards);	
Accountable Director	Claire Nye, Director of Finance and Ross Cook , Director of City Environment	
Originating service	Strategic Finance and Housing	
Accountable employee	Claire Nye	Director of Finance
	Tel	01902 550478
	Email	Claire.Nye@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report considered by	Cabinet	20 January 2021

Recommendation for decision:

That the Leader of the Council, two cabinet members, and the Chair and Vice Chair of Scrutiny Board formally agree that, in the absence of a Council meeting, the decisions below take effect on behalf of the Council under the special urgency provisions as detailed in the Council's Constitution namely paragraphs 6.10 and 6.11 of article 6 namely:

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022 including Rent and Service Charges:

1. Adopts the Business Plan set out at Appendix 1 to this report as the approved Housing Revenue Account Business Plan including:
 - a. The revenue budget for 2021-2022 at Appendix 1 to this report.
 - b. The Capital Programme for 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 at Appendix 2 to this report that includes the following among the proposed investment plans;
 - £134.0 million for new build development

- £41.3 million provision for Estate Remodelling
 - £3.6 million for a new programme for low and mid-rise infrastructure replacement
 - £2.0 million budget provision for conversion of commercial property to residential to provide additional homes
 - £44.5 million to complete the refurbishment of the Heath Town estate
 - £86.5 million for programmes to high rise estates to include fire safety improvements, infrastructure replacement, retrofitting of sprinklers and external works.
2. Approves the implementation of an increase of 1.5% to social housing rents in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and to give 28 days notice to all secure and introductory tenants of the rent increase from 1 April 2021.
 3. Approves the rates for garage rents and service charges set out in Appendix 3 to this report and formally notifies tenants.
 4. Approves Management Allowances for Managing Agents as follows;
 - Wolverhampton Homes - £39,425,000
 - Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board - £1,720,000
 - New Park Village Tenants Management Organisation - £383,000
 - Springfield Horseshoe Tenants Management Organisation - £360,000
 - Dovecotes Tenants Management Organisation - £1,113,000

This is agreed by the following:

Leader of the Council - Councillor Ian Brookfield

Cabinet Member – Councillor Steve Evans

Cabinet Member - Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre

Chair of Scrutiny Board – Councillor Paul Sweet

Vice Chair of Scrutiny Board – Councillor Jonathan Crofts

Dated: 3 February 2021

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve decisions from Cabinet on 20 January 2021 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022 including Rent and Service Charges.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 20 January 2021 Cabinet considered the report on Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022 including Rent and Service Charges.

2.2 Copies of the reports have been supplied to Councillors and can also be accessed online on the Council's website [here](#). Councillors are asked to refer to the report when considering the recommendations from Cabinet.

2.3 Cabinet recommended to Council that it approve:

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3.0 Reasons for Special Urgency

3.1 In the light of the current situation involving Covid-19 the Council has, as a result of the Government's decision on restriction of movement, taken the decision not to hold the full Council meeting on 27 January 2020. Whilst currently remote meetings are possible and the Council has used these for a number of Committees including Planning, Scrutiny Board and Licensing Committee and Cabinet meetings, it has decided that a fully remote Council meeting would be challenging and as such it has been decided that until a mixed

remote/physical meeting is permitted under the law, the Council will use its urgent action powers for any decisions that must be taken by Council.

3.2 These powers are to be used sparingly and the guiding principles for any decisions are:

- Only those decisions that have to be made (i.e. as a result of Covid-19 or related matters, including support of businesses in this difficult time or as a result of an immovable deadline) will be made.
- The decisions will be made or endorsed (where the decisions have to be made very urgently) using the Urgent Action powers.
- The decisions will be made available on a regular basis to Councillors through the daily update to Councillors and in any event through a weekly roundup of the decisions made through the relevant pages on the Council's website so that the Public can access them.

The relevant powers under the Constitution are:

Council Decision

6.10 Urgent Decisions outside the Budget or Policy Framework

An urgent decision which is contrary to the Policy Framework or budget adopted by the Council may be taken by the Cabinet if the Chair of the Scrutiny Board agrees that the decision is urgent. If no such Chair is available (or willing) then the Mayor or in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor may agree that it is urgent before a decision is taken.

6.11 Cabinet Decision

Where an urgent decision on a matter delegated to the Cabinet is required but it is not feasible to arrange a meeting of the Cabinet, the appropriate Director, in conjunction with the Head of Paid Service is authorised to take the appropriate urgent action provided that the action shall have first been discussed with and approved in writing by the Leader (or in the Leader's absence, the Deputy Leader) and two other Cabinet Members and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Board or their nominees.

In this case a decision is needed that the decision of Cabinet shall now take effect in the absence of a Council meeting, it is considered that the decisions are urgent.

The proposed decision fall into the criteria for urgent decisions set out above.

4.0 Reasons for decisions

4.1 The reasons for the decisions are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.

5.0 Evaluation of alternative options

5.1 The evaluation of alternative options are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 The financial implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.
[CN/03022021/V]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 The legal implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.
DP/03022021/A

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.

9.0 All other Implications

9.1 The other implications are detailed in the Cabinet report of 20 January 2021.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 Cabinet 20 January 2021 – Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022 including Rent and Service Charges