

TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL

To: Councillors Sherwan Chowdhury, Lynne Hale, Maddie Henson, Oliver Lewis, Dudley Mead, Michael Neal, Joy Prince

A meeting of the **TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL** will be held on **Wednesday 4th February 2015 at 6:30pm**, in **The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**.

JULIE BELVIR
Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer,
Director of Democratic & Legal Services,
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk
CR0 1EA

MARGOT ROHAN
Senior Members Services Manager
020 8726 6000 extn.62564
margot.rohan@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/agenda
26 January 2015

AGENDA - PART A

1. Disclosure of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality in excess of £50. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Business Manager at the start of the meeting. The Chairman will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. Apologies for absence

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th October 2014 (Page 1)

To approve the minutes as a true and correct record.

5. Introducing Jo Negrini, Executive Director of Development & Environment – The Croydon Challenge and what it means for the housing service

6. HRA Rent, Service Charge, Garage Rent & Budget Setting 2015/16
(Page 7)

Keith Robbins, Business Partner, Finance & Assets - report attached.

7. Window cleaning update

Verbal report from Justin Hills (Service Manager, Facilities Management)

8. Procurement of planned maintenance work update

Verbal report from Bob Richardson (Head of Planned Maintenance & Improvements) and Judy Pevan (Service Manager Stock Investment)

9. Estate inspections review

Verbal report from Yvonne Murray (Head of Tenancy and Neighbourhood Services) or Marilyn Smithies

10. Feedback

- a) London Tenants' Federation – Michael Hewlett
- b) Mayor's Housing Forum - Michael Hewlett
- c) ARCH – Michael Hewlett
- d) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance (CVSA) – Guy Pile-Grey
- e) Croydon Congress – Marilyn Smithies
- f) All Ages Inter-generational update – Sian Foley

11. FOR INFORMATION ONLY (Page 23)

Resident Involvement Activity Report (attached)

12. Date of next meeting

29 April 2015 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Croydon at 6.30pm

AGENDA - PART B

None

TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th October 2014 at 6:30pm in The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

Present: Michael Hewlett (Chair), Marilyn Smithies (Vice-Chair), Syed Ahmed, James Cassidy, Peter Cooper, Chris Crossdale, Bernard Daws, Bob Dean, James Fraser, Jim Mansell, Peter Mason, Julian Paine, David Palmer, Guy Pile-Grey, John Piper, Stephen Pollard, Laurence Taylor, Kim Wakely and Colin Wood.

Councillors: Councillors Sherwan Chowdhury, Maddie Henson, Oliver Lewis, Michael Neal.

Observers: Dave Sutherland (Director of Housing Management Services), Peter Brown (Director of Housing Needs & Strategy), Sian Foley (Head of Service Development), Yvonne Murrery (Head of Tenancy & Neighbourhood Services), Tim Nash (Resident Involvement Co-ordinator), Judy Pevan (Service Manager Stock Investment), Bob Richardson (Head of Planned Maintenance & Improvements), Lorraine Smout (Head of Responsive Repairs), Chris Stock (Resident Involvement & Scrutiny Manager) and Yaw John Boateng (Scrutiny Panel)
Committee Manager: Solomon Agutu (Head of Democratic Services & Scrutiny)

A27/14 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting.

A28/14 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Michael Hewlett, welcomed all to the meeting.

A29/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Aishnine Benjamin.

A30/14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22ND JULY 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 July 2014 were agreed as a true record of the proceedings.

A31/14 RESPONSIVE REPAIRS CONTRACT PROGRESS

Lorraine Smout (Head of Responsive Repairs) provided a verbal report about the contractor Axis Responsive Repairs illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation. Her report included:

Call handling by external contractors, the key improvement action plan which had 16 bullet points and key performance statistics showing performance against targets.

She then explained about the Social Value benefits included in the contracts comprising of apprenticeships (6) work experience opportunities (10) lunch clubs and coffee mornings, sustainability workshops and she then described the work of the Axis volunteers.

Lorraine then took questions about the proportion of temporary to permanent staff in the contact centre; the numbers of “offered” calls to repairs, how to access the social value resource in the contract.

Questions were asked about the lift breakdown in Tonbridge house(not part of the responsive repairs contract); why the voids had gone up from 16 to 23 and the reasons for the budget underspend. A number of questions were asked.

A32/14

WINDOW CLEANING

Fiona Bowman Head of FM gave a verbal report accompanied by Justin Hills. Interserve had not been invited to the meeting for which she apologised. She had received the feedback about the unhappiness with the window cleaning contract. She apologised that resident expectation had been raised because residents were referring to a different contract from the one that was actually in use. There was a 2001 contract, a 2006 contract and a rebased 2011 contract. She apologised that the end users were not advised of the rebased contract but going forward it is being rebased again and residents would be fully involved. The contract ends in July 2016 and she welcomed comments on it before then. Fiona took questions on the contracts.

- Should contractor clean inside and outside(Monks Hill)
- How would residents be involved in the re-letting? Can residents be involved in the sub group which is re-letting the contract? In reply it was stated that residents would be involved but FM was keen to understand what residents thought was the best way to conduct the consultation.
- How do residents know whether the window cleaner have been? They do not normally leave cards to show attendance.
- How often should the contractors come (Heathfield Gardens). How is it that you never see a difference after they have been? In reply it was stated that they should come once a quarter and clean 60% first time a do the other 40% the next time. It is possible that they keep cleaning the same area and so the remaining 40% never gets cleaned. This would be followed up.

A33/14

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Barry Lambton gave a verbal report on progress with the Horticultural contract about problem with the transition. Action has been taken since then and standards have improved shown by a reduction in the number of complaints. Questions were asked about when the backlogs would be completed, whether the contractor had accepted their failings. Residents disagreed that adequate resources were being put in as the standard remained poor. In reply there was an admission that the standard is poor but is improving, the backlog is reducing and it was hoped that business as usual would be achieved by February 2015. A number for other questions were put, including:

- New machinery no good for sweeping(Tonbridge House)
- Chips from trees
- The responsibility for leaves (Veolia or Quadrant?)
- Whether there were penalty clauses and whether they had been activated
- Whether grass should be blown back from paths and how long afterwards
- The Green at the back of the car park not being cut(Sunny bank)
- In answer to a question it was replied that the contract was for five years with an option to renew for up to another five years. If the service does not improve measures would be taken in accordance with the contract. It was confirmed that there would be no rebate to service charges pending an improvement in service.

A34/14

VEOLIA CONTRACT

Malcolm Kendall (Head of Environmental and Leisure Services) offered apologies for the Quality Control Manager, who had been taken ill. He explained the services - refuse collection (landfill), recycling and street cleaning:

- Leafing started - Veolia responsible
- Tonbridge House - will address street cleaning separately
- Monthly walkabout - walking estates to see what the issues are - cannot tell anyone when they are going as it is a mystery tour!
- Food waste must be collected weekly - report on 'My Account'; - you are our eyes and ears
- Value for money always a challenge in any contract
- Service failure is about thresholds beyond which there are financial deductions

Issues raised:

- Wheelie bins are left in the middle of the pavement

Response: Each crew has been told to return the bins and you should see an improvement.

- Food bins smelling - not emptied often enough (Tollgate Estate)
- Summer collections were missed - is there a penalty?
- Handcroft Estate - food bins leaking and foul - bin doors damaged

Responses: Not part of Veolia contract to clean the bins. A manager will come out tomorrow to look at it.

Have asked for a price for cleaning the bins.

Missed bins reported by onboard computer to the Contact Centre - previous day's missed bins are reviewed daily.

Bins should not be leaking and should have an internal seal

- Full bins - do not pick up dropped rubbish and leave bin lids open so the bins fill up with water when it rains

Response: If there is any spillage, it is for Veolia to clear.

- Performance Management Panel - 4 recycling centres - padlocks missing and bins not emptied
- 3 bins but only one gets emptied
- Litter picker at Monks Hill is 'brilliant'
- Waddon Estate - good crew - put lids back
- Orange bags - when are they collected?

Responses: Recycling bins are not emptied if they are not filled up.

Trying a new lock and, if it works, will order another 40. Current design not good. Quality not there yet but will be in the future.

Orange bags are collected at the end of the following working day.

- Who is responsible for sweeping, weeding and clearing the gullies?

A35/14

PLANNED MAINTENANCE REPROCUREMENT UPDATE

Bob Richardson reported back on the re-procurement. Not much to report. OJEU notice had been issued and now waiting for PQQ to be returned. Anticipating a high level of interest. Training for residents involved in procurement was progressing.

It has been decided to combine all the lift maintenance repairs and refurbishment contracts into one and to review the electrical and mechanical contracts. There was briefing of contractors at Fairfield on Friday and residents had been invited.

The question about the concrete cracking on stairwells at Moffatt Road would be taken up by Yvonne. There was a question why the external painting was taking place at Heathfield House at this time of the year. Other questions were asked about:

- Floor coverings in entrances, and fob keys which had not worked for two years. These would be taken up outside the meeting.

A question was then asked - what was positive about the procurement process. It was replied that procurement is not a quick process but at the end of it there was expected to be financial savings, greater social value benefits and improved service delivery. Bob was thanked for the presentation.

A36/14

SCRUTINY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SERVICE

Croydon' Scrutiny Panel was recognised nationally at an awards ceremony. There are ten people on the panel who are trained and experienced. They received the award for their report on Neighbourhood Wardens.

We want to encourage more people to be involved. The Panel is to help improve services, not to find fault. It meets fortnightly to carry out surveys and mystery shopping.

The Scrutiny Report was 24 pages. Anyone wanting a copy will be sent one.

Guy Pile-Grey explained that the report was work done by the panel which looks at individual services in depth, taking approximately 6 months for each. The recommendations are summarise.

The next Scrutiny exercise will be on anti-social behaviour, reporting back to TLP by April 2015.

A37/14

FEEDBACK

London Tenants' Federation - Michael Hewlett

- There was a verbal report which included information that a tenant manifesto was being drafted

Mayor's Housing Forum - Michael Hewlett

- No further update

ARCH - Michael Hewlett

- No further update

Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance - Guy Pile-Grey

- It was reported that the voluntary Sector Strategy was being developed and that at the launch Cllr Tony Newman, Leader of the Council and Nathan Elvery, Chief Executive had been there to explain their vision

Croydon Congress - Marilyn Smithies

- Marilyn reported on the congress last year 22 November. There was no feedback after 4 hours of a congress meeting and hoped that future congresses would not just be talking shops

All Ages Intergenerational Update - Sian Foley

- The next steering group meeting was in November. A south London Jobs fair was being planned and posters, etc were to be distributed; the fair would include information about jobs, apprenticeships and work experience

A38/14 RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY

There is now a Facebook account to encourage involvement.

A39/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dave Sutherland explained that DASHH was to be dissolved from 1 November 2014, as Hannah Miller was leaving in December. Dave and Peter would be reporting to Jo Negrini the Executive Director of Development and Environment.

The Arts conference was also mentioned

A40/14 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesdays in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Croydon at 6.30pm:
4 February 2015
29 April 2015

The meeting ended at 9:04pm

TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL
4th February 2015

Lead Officer(s): Directors of Housing Management and Resources

Wards: All

Agenda Item:- 6

Subject: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENT, SERVICE CHARGE,
GARAGE RENT AND BUDGET SETTING – 2015/16

1. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel are asked to comment on:

- 1.1 Proposed rent increases for all Council tenants for 2015/16, in line with Government social rent policy. The average rent increase will be 2.2%;
- 1.2 That the full cost of services provided to those tenants who receive caretaking, grounds maintenance and bulk refuse collection services continue to be recovered via tenants service charges, this being achieved with a 2.2% increase;
- 1.3 Proposed charges for garage and parking space rents increase by 2.2%;
- 1.4 Heating charges for Council tenants remain unchanged, see detailed in **Appendix 2**;
- 1.5 The proposed budget for the Housing Revenue and Capital Accounts for 2015/16.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides information on the proposed rent increase for Council housing tenants for the financial year 2015/16 and other charges for tenants for 2015/16.
- 2.2 The report also provides information on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for the financial year 2015/16 (**Appendix 1**), a breakdown of the draft Housing Investment Programme (**Appendix 3**), and graphs showing a breakdown of income and expenditure (**Appendix 4**).

3. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 3.1 The HRA is the main business account for the housing service. It continues to

be a ring-fenced account, funded primarily from tenants' rents. The services provided to tenants, for example: responsive repairs, management services and caretaking, are paid for from this account.

- 3.2 Long term financial planning is based on the HRA 30 year business plan which is updated annually to reflect actual expenditure, changes in stock numbers and financial projections.

HRA Self-Financing

- 3.3 As a consequence of the system of self-financing introduced by the Localism Act 2011, from 1 April 2012 Croydon's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) took on an additional debt of **£223.126m**.

- 3.4 The 'valuation' of the additional debt was based on 30 year subsidy calculations for Croydon, discounted to a current value. The Council borrowed money to make a one off payment to Government. This loan is financed, and needs to be repaid from the HRA after 30 years.

- 3.5 The following assumptions have been included within the latest HRA business plan:

- In line with the revised Government social rents policy, from 2015/16 onwards, rents will continue to rise at **CPI plus 1%**.
- Continued investment in new council homes of **£6m** per annum from 2015/16 to 2018/19.
- All homes to be maintained to the decent home standard over time.

4. HRA Budget – 2015/16

- 4.1 The attached Appendix 1 provides a draft budget for the HRA for 2015/16 based on the proposed rent and service charge increases.

- 4.2 The main changes proposed to the HRA for 2015/16 are identified below. The budget will ensure that existing services are maintained and allow for an increased level of investment in the repair and improvement of homes.

4.3 Increases in Rent

Rent restructuring ended in 2014/15, with the rent increase for 2015/16 being based on the new Government social rent guidelines. Both rent and service charges are covered by housing benefit, although a small number of tenants (large families) will have been affected by the introduction of the benefit cap which limits total weekly benefit payments to £500.

The proposed rent increase for 2015/16 has therefore been applied according to the new Government social rent guidelines. Rent and service charge increases are limited to consumer price index (CPI) at September 2014 + 1%. The September 2014 CPI was 1.2%.

The proposal that the Council increases rents by 2.2% from April 2015 will ensure that the long term sustainability of the HRA remains, together with the ability to repay the Self-Financing loan.

4.4 Service Charges

The unpooled service charge for caretaking, grounds maintenance and bulk refuse collection will increase in line with the Government social rent guidelines. It is proposed that the charges for 2015/16 will therefore be:

- Caretaking – £9.98pw (an increase of £0.21)
- Grounds maintenance and refuse collection - £2.05pw (an increase of £0.04)

4.6 Heating Charges

Only a small number of tenants use communal heating systems and are charged a fixed weekly amount for the gas they use. Apart from the Handcroft Road Estate all other schemes are retirement housing schemes for older people. The way in which Croydon purchases energy changed in 2009 by entering a bulk purchasing consortium and as a result it is proposed that heating charges will not be changed from 2014/15. See Appendix 2 for details on weekly heating charges. The proposal is that heating charges are not increased in 2015/16.

4.7 Garages and Parking Spaces

It is proposed that the rents for garages and parking spaces in 2015/16 will increase in line with dwellings rents by 2.2%.

5 Draft housing investment programme

- 5.1 The table below sets out the summary of proposed expenditure in 2015/16 compared with 2014/15. In total, the resources for all purposes – responsive repairs, major repairs and improvements, and measures to increase housing supply, have increased by £0.389m to £49.369m.

Table 1

| Housing Supply | 2014/15 £000 | 2015/16 £000 |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Assisted Private Purchase Scheme (APPS) | 500 | 500 |
| Special Transfer Payments | 250 | 250 |
| Larger Homes | 100 | 100 |

| | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| New Build Council Housing | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| Sub-Total | 6,850 | 6,850 |
| Repair and Improvements | 29,771 | 29,771 |
| | | |
| Total capital expenditure | 36,721 | 36,721 |
| | | |
| Responsive and Cyclical Repairs Budgets | 12,259 | 12,648 |
| Grand Total | 48,980 | 49,369 |

6 Draft Planned Maintenance and Improvement Programme

- 6.1 It is proposed that the annual planned maintenance and improvement budget, which is used for maintaining homes at the decent home standard and for other major works to our stock such as external decorations, will be £29.771m, an increase of £15.551m since 2011/12. The Government's decent homes target – that 100% of social homes should meet the standard by 31 March 2011 – was met on time for the council's stock. We will continue to invest in our properties to ensure they are maintained at this standard over time. A breakdown of the repairs and improvements and cyclical budgets is shown in Appendix 3.
- 6.2 The proposed resources for responsive and cyclical repairs will be £12.648m which is a small increase from 2014/15 due to contract inflation. The proposed level of funding will continue to meet the ongoing repairs requirements.

7 Housing Supply

- 7.1 The Housing Revenue Account has traditionally been used to fund a number of supply initiatives to increase the council's housing stock or make better use of the existing stock. These supply measures will enable the council to address local housing need and help tenants who need to move because of overcrowding or other reasons.
- 7.2 The Assisted Private Purchase Scheme budget will remain at the current £0.5m. This scheme assists qualifying council tenants to purchase a home in the private sector. The special transfer payments scheme, which provides financial help to under-occupying tenants who move to smaller homes, will remain at £0.25m.

8. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Revenue consequences of report recommendations

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Medium Term Financial Strategy |
|--------------------------------|

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| £,000 | £,000 | £,000 | £,000 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| HRA Budget | | | | |
| Current Budget | 88,412 | 91,046 | | |
| Effect of Decision | 88,412 | 91,046 | Not known | Not known |
| | 0 | 0 | | |

- 8.2 The financial considerations are contained in the main body of the report and a high-level summary of the Housing Revenue Account for 2015/16 is provided at Appendix 1.
- 8.3 Although the council borrowed an additional £223.126m as a consequence of the system of self-financing introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the loan is at a fixed low rate of interest, meaning the HRA will not be susceptible to changes in interest rates. The main risk area in the Housing Revenue Account is the programmed works budgets. A well-established monthly monitoring process is in place to assist in the management of expenditure in this area. There is also a risk that there will be an increase in the level of arrears as a result of the rent increase, combined with the changes in the housing benefit under the government's welfare reforms. Mitigation of this impact is dealt with in section 12.2 below.
- 8.4 The development of financial plans for the Housing Revenue Account has involved the consideration of a range of options for investment in Council homes including further investment in existing stock as well as the building of new homes.
- 8.5 The Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan Model has been updated to reflect the self-financing settlement and the proposed changes in Government rent policy and will be reviewed and updated every 12 months. The HRA is now directly included in the Council's overall financial strategy to ensure alignment of financial governance with other council services.

(Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer)

9. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR

- 9.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that under section 25 of the Housing Act 1985 (the Act) the Council has the power to determine reasonable charges for its tenancies and leases, and is required by the Act to review these from time to time and to make such changes as circumstances may require. In addition, the housing authority is required, in exercising its functions under these provisions, to have regard to any relevant standards set under [section 193](#) of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- 9.2 In accordance with the Act the process for varying the rent and charges for secure tenancies and leases is determined by the terms of the tenancy agreement or lease, while for non-secure tenancies section 25 specifies the procedure to be followed. The Council is required to give tenants' written notice of the proposed changes to their rental.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor Head of Corporate Law on behalf of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no immediate Human Resource considerations that arise from the recommendations of this report for LBC staff.

(Approved by: Michael Pichamuthu, Strategic HR Business Partner DASHH, on behalf of Heather Daley, Director of HR)

11. CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 11.1 The proposed HRA budget for 2015/16 includes a rent increase of 2.2%, and increases in service charges of 2.2%. Charges for rent and service charges are eligible for Housing Benefit.

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 12.1 The increase in rent of 2.2% will have an impact on current tenants. The increase is in line with the revised Government social rents guidance. The full increase is eligible for housing benefit, although a small number of tenants may be subject to the benefit cap introduced in April 2013. Large families in all rented tenures who are not in receipt of working tax credit are affected by the benefit cap and this will make renting anywhere in London unaffordable to most large families even based on current rent levels. This rent increase will ensure the HRA is properly funded in 2015/16.
- 12.2 Mitigation of the impact of the rent increase on tenants who are not in receipt of housing benefit will be in the form of advice on welfare benefits (from income officers and the four welfare rights advisers dedicated to advising council tenants), referrals to specialist debt counselling, and help with money management. Income officers will continue with the programme of visits to all households affected by the benefit changes, which includes those affected by the benefit cap, and will explain options and refer people to specialist help or to advice sessions where appropriate. The council has also developed a money management campaign, with advice for all residents and money management sessions specifically for council tenants.
- 12.3 The effect of self-financing and the rent increase is a higher level of investment in new housing supply measures and in improving the council's existing stock which will have a positive impact on many groups with protected characteristics because they are more dependent than average on social housing. One of the areas of expenditure which people struggle with is heating costs and this is particularly true for those living in homes which are hard to heat because of their construction or design. The capital programme,

next year and in the longer term, will include investment in homes with solid wall construction and other hard-to-heat properties so will be of particular benefit to tenants with the highest heating bills.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 13.1 New homes funded by the council are subject to regulatory requirements in terms of scheme design and protection for the environment. All new council homes will be built to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 13.2 Energy efficiency measures (upgrading boilers, central heating systems and insulation; double-glazing, and the kind of measure referred to above for hard-to-heat homes such as external cladding) are a key investment priority within the repair and improvement programme. These measures will contribute to a reduction in CO₂ emissions as well as reduce heating bills and ensure that keeping the home warm is affordable.

14 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 14.1 There are a range of measures within the council's repair and improvement programme that support the council's wider objective to improve community safety. These include installation of security entry door systems to flats, environmental improvements improved lighting, and a targeted security door programme.

15 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

- 15.1 There are no human rights considerations arising from this report.

16 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

- 16.1 The information contained in this report will be accessible as part of the Council's Publication Scheme maintained under the Freedom of Information Act, while information held by the Council supporting the report may also be accessible under that Act subject to consideration of any relevant exemptions.

Report author: Keith Robbins, Finance Business Partner, Housing and Health, Ext 65750

Contact Officer: Keith Robbins, Finance Business Partner, Housing and Health, Ext 65750

Background Documents: None

Housing Revenue Account 2015/16

Appendix 1

| | Original Budget 2014/15 £,000 | Draft Budget 2015/16 £,000 | Increase/ (decrease) £,000 |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>EXPENDITURE</u> | | | |
| Management - General | 22,788 | 24,775 | 1,987 |
| Management - Special | 13,285 | 12,721 | (564) |
| Maintenance and Repairs | 12,259 | 12,648 | 389 |
| Major Repairs Allowance | 16,983 | 17,342 | 359 |
| Capital Financing | 11,911 | 12,374 | 463 |
| Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay | 10,186 | 10,186 | 0 |
| Provision for Doubtful Debts | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0 |
| | 88,412 | 91,046 | 2,634 |
| <u>INCOME</u> | | | |
| Dwelling rents and Service Charges | 78,595 | 80,623 | 2,028 |
| Garage rents | 1,312 | 1,258 | (54) |
| Other Charges | 8,501 | 9,162 | 661 |
| Interest on Council Mortgages | 4 | 3 | (1) |
| | 88,412 | 91,046 | 2,634 |
| Working Balance | (5,595) | (10,554) | (4,559) |
| Contingency Reserve | (3,769) | (3,995) | (226) |
| Total | (9,364) | (14,549) | (5,185) |
| Major Repairs Reserve | (470) | (947) | (477) |
| Grand Total | (9,834) | (15,496) | (5,662) |
| Average Rent (50 Week year) including unpooled Service Charges | £109.26 | £111.66 | £2.40 |
| Average Garage Rent | £12.22 | £12.49 | £0.27 |
| Numbers of properties | 13,998 | 13,922 | (76) |

Appendix 2

Heating Charges From April 2015

| Scheme | Accommodation | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | Change |
|------------------|---------------|---------|---------|--------|
| Allington Court | 1 Bed | £10.96 | £10.96 | £0.00 |
| Arthur Court | Bedsit | £7.84 | £7.84 | £0.00 |
| | 1 Bed | £11.57 | £11.57 | £0.00 |
| Arun Court | 1 Bed | £10.38 | £10.38 | £0.00 |
| Bell Court | 1 Bed | £10.00 | £10.00 | £0.00 |
| Borough Grange | 1 Bed | £10.66 | £10.66 | £0.00 |
| Brookhurst Court | Small 1 Bed | £10.59 | £10.59 | £0.00 |
| | Large 1 Bed | £11.28 | £11.28 | £0.00 |
| Creed Court | 1 Bed | £10.17 | £10.17 | £0.00 |
| Freemans Court | Small 1 Bed | £10.66 | £10.66 | £0.00 |
| | Large 1 Bed | £11.28 | £11.28 | £0.00 |
| Frylands Court | Small 1 Bed | £9.70 | £9.70 | £0.00 |
| | Large 1 Bed | £10.56 | £10.56 | £0.00 |
| Handcroft Road | 1 Bed | £10.17 | £10.17 | £0.00 |
| | 2 Bed | £18.14 | £18.14 | £0.00 |
| Kuala Gardens | Bedsit | £6.79 | £6.79 | £0.00 |
| | 1 Bed | £10.37 | £10.37 | £0.00 |
| Laxton Court | Bedsit | £6.93 | £6.93 | £0.00 |
| | 1 Bed | £11.49 | £11.49 | £0.00 |
| Purvis House | 1 Bed | £11.14 | £11.14 | £0.00 |
| Southlands | 1 Bed | £10.66 | £10.66 | £0.00 |
| Southsea Court | Small 1 Bed | £10.33 | £10.33 | £0.00 |
| | Large 1 Bed | £10.73 | £10.73 | £0.00 |
| Toldene | 1 Bed | £9.87 | £9.87 | £0.00 |
| | 2 Bed | £16.41 | £16.41 | £0.00 |
| Truscott | Small 1 Bed | £11.26 | £11.26 | £0.00 |
| | Large 1 Bed | £11.42 | £11.42 | £0.00 |

Stock Investment - Asset Management**Appendix 3**

| Main Programmes | 2015/16 |
|---|----------------|
| Capital Budget Resources Available £000s | 29,771 |
| Capital Budget Set Total | 29,771 |
| Capital (Deficit) / Surplus | 0 |
| Revenue Budget Resources Available £000s | 975 |
| Revenue Budget Set Total | 975 |
| Revenue (Deficit) / Surplus | 0 |

Capital Budget Headings

| Central Heating / Energy Efficiency Programmes £000s | 2015/16 |
|---|----------------|
| Carbon Monoxide Detectors | 10 |
| Central Heating - Repairs Replacements | 400 |
| Change from Storage to Gas Central Heating | 30 |
| Central Heating Programmed Replacements | 3,800 |
| Communal Boiler Replacement | 190 |
| Energy Performance Certificates | 50 |
| Thermal Imaging | 20 |
| Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency | 32 |
| Central Heating / Energy Efficiency Sub-Total | 4,532 |

| Kitchen and Bathroom Programmes £000s | 2015/16 |
|---|----------------|
| Kitchen and Bathroom Extensions | 600 |
| Installation of Wet Rooms (Special Sheltered Homes) | 100 |
| Kitchen and Bathroom Refurbishment | 7,100 |
| Kitchen and Bathrooms Sub-Total | 7,800 |

| Security Programmes £000s | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------|
| Door Entry Installation to Blocks | 750 |
| Individual Security Doors Installation | 450 |
| Security Sub-Total | 1,200 |

| Other Programmes £000s | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------|
| Asbestos Strategy – Removal | 300 |
| Major External Building Works | 300 |
| Windows | 1,850 |
| Roofs | 500 |
| External Painting | 3,750 |
| Supported Decorations Scheme | 250 |
| Communal Flooring | 250 |
| Garages - Refurbishment and Demolition | 50 |
| Lift Refurbishment | 1,750 |
| Major Adaptations | 1,000 |
| Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) | 500 |
| Rewiring | 1,800 |
| Smoke alarm replacement | 400 |
| Subsidence - Expenditure | 215 |
| Support Costs | 2,000 |
| Other Programmes Sub-Total | 14,915 |

| Miscellaneous Programmes £000s | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------|
| Apex Development | 55 |
| Door Entry Replacements | 60 |
| Health and Safety Works | 100 |
| Fire Damage Works | 30 |
| Inspection & Maintenance of Playgrounds & Equipment | 19 |
| Lift Motor Room Improvements | 30 |
| Major Ad Hoc Works (incl Major Works Voids) | 400 |
| Minor Ad Hoc Adaptations - New Tenants | 10 |
| Minor Estate Improvements | 75 |
| PAC Testing | 15 |
| Pest Control | 120 |
| New and replacement of Emergency Lighting | 50 |
| Replacement of Fire Alarm Systems | 120 |
| Replacement of Warden Alarm Systems | 40 |
| Retirement Homes Health & Safety & Minor Works (inc. CCTV) | 200 |
| Miscellaneous Programmes Sub-Total | 1,324 |

Revenue Programme

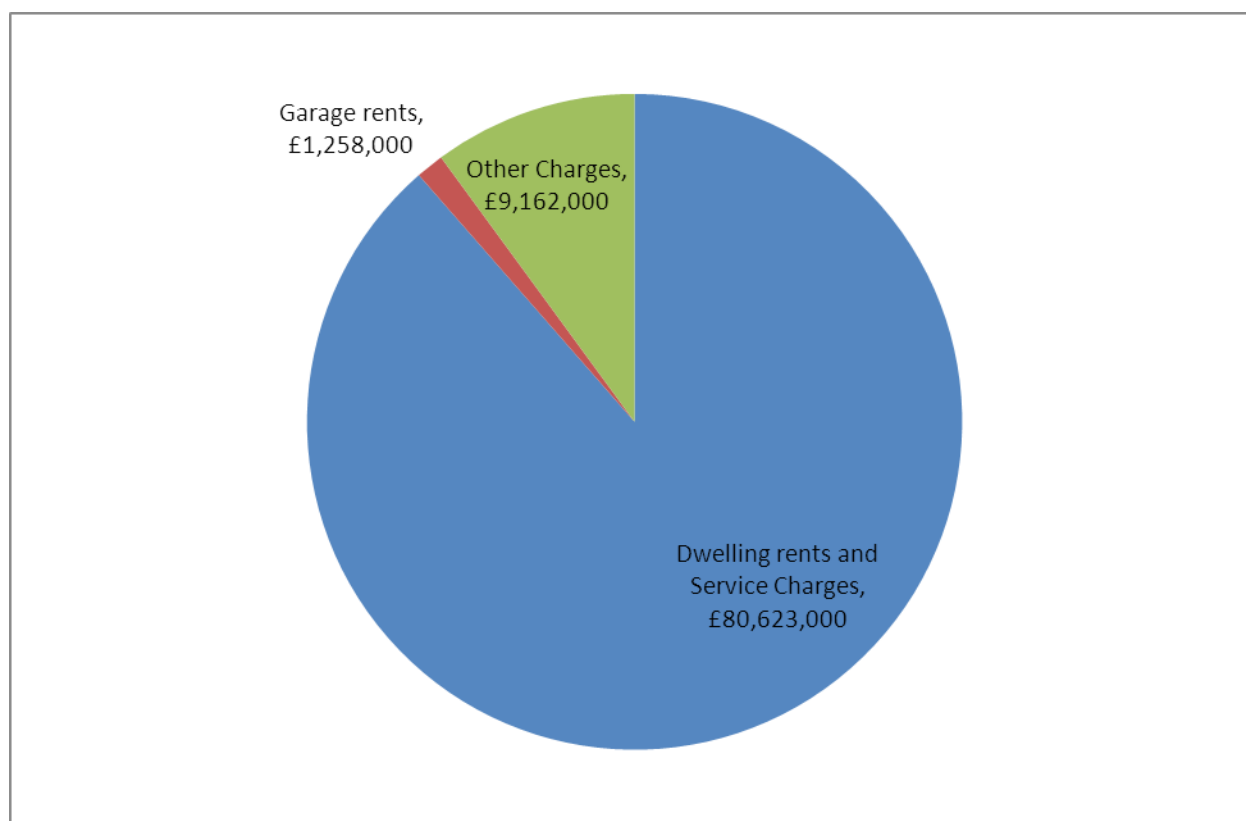
| Cyclical Works £000s | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------|
| Booster Pump Servicing | 8 |
| Regular Maintenance of Door Entry IT Equipment & Software. | 12 |
| Cladding Cleaning - Wates Blocks | 35 |
| Fire Protection | 108 |
| Legionella Assessments & Risk Assessments | 150 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Repair & Maintenance of Lifts | 65 |
| Servicing of Communal Boilers & Plant | 45 |
| Servicing of Disabled Adaptations | 10 |
| Servicing of Gas Appliances & Gas Soundness Testing | 406 |
| Test & Inspect Communal Areas to Blocks | 20 |
| Test & Inspect Electrical Circuits | 100 |
| Test & Inspect Lightening Conductors | 10 |
| Warden alarms | 25 |
| Cyclical Works Programmes Sub-Total | 994 |

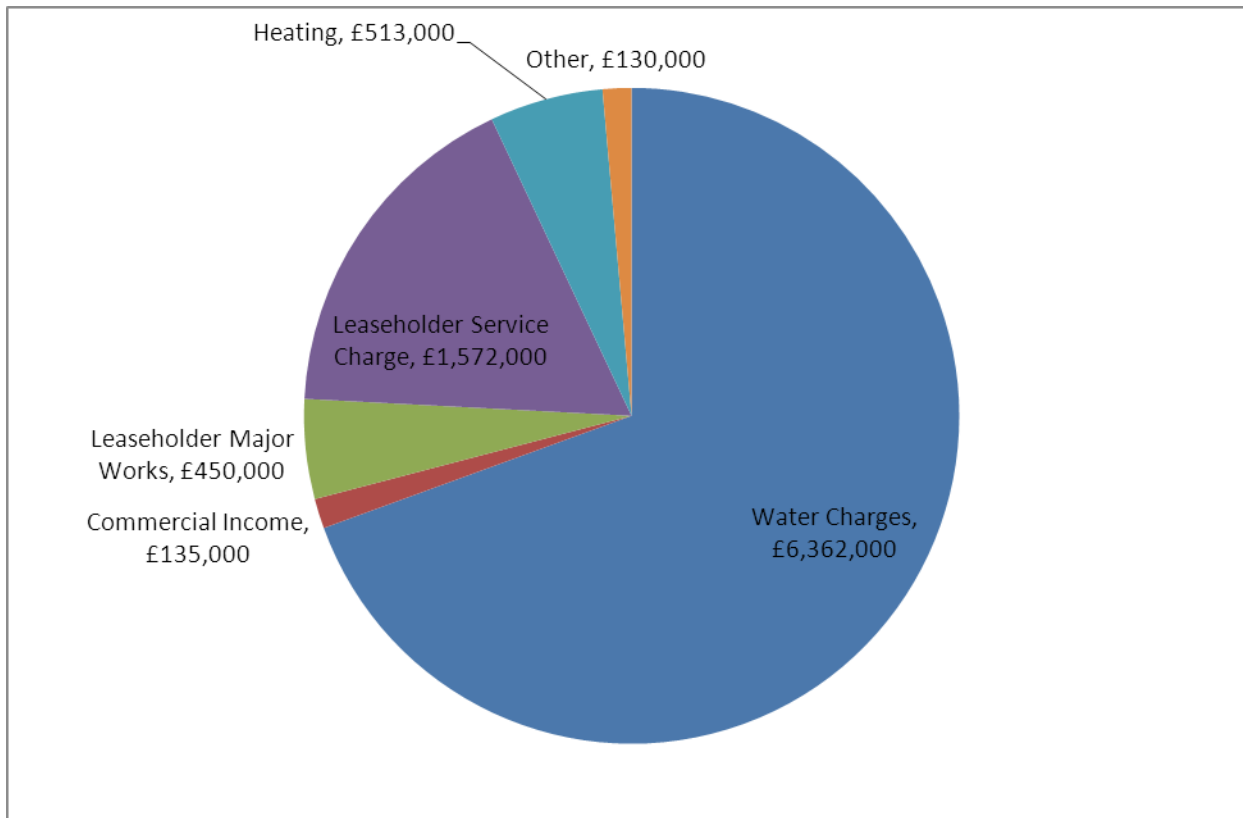
Appendix 4

Graphs breaking down estimated income and expenditure for 2015/16 are shown below.

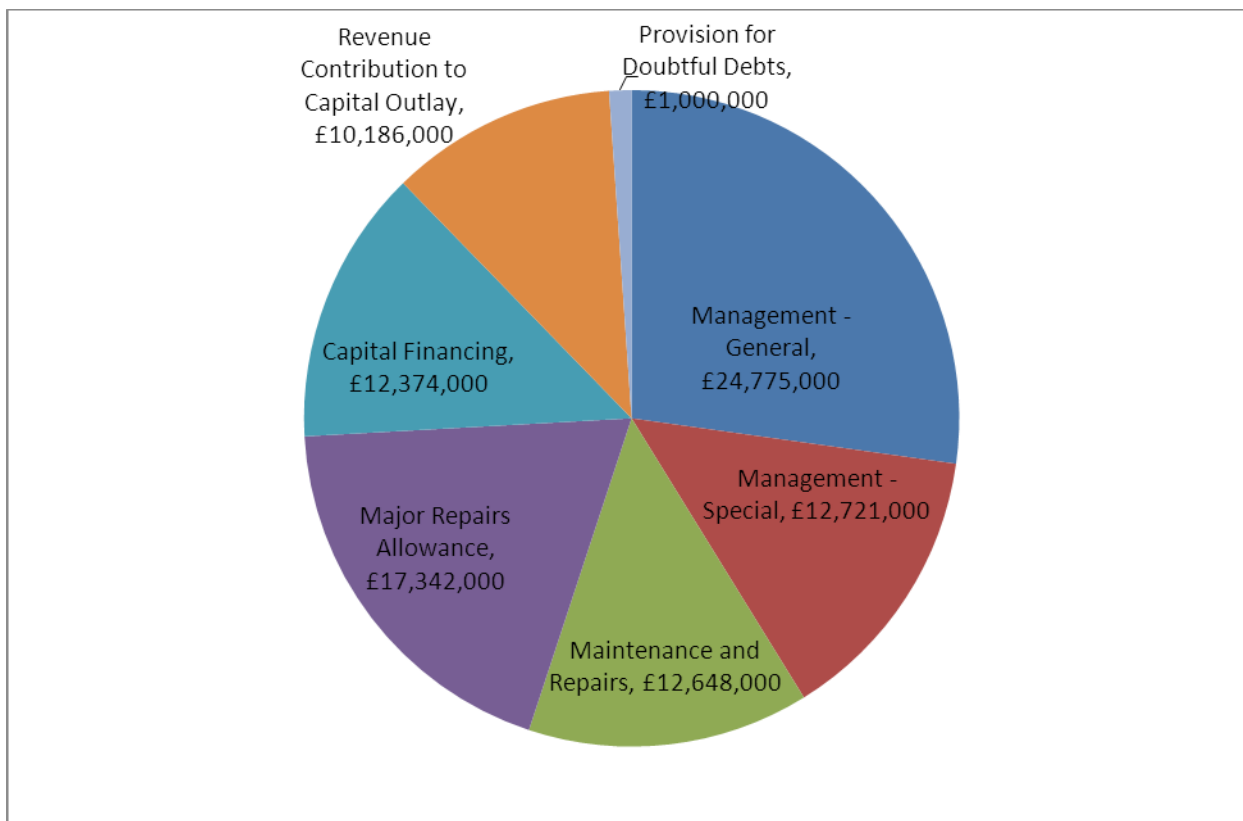
Graph 1 – HRA Income breakdown



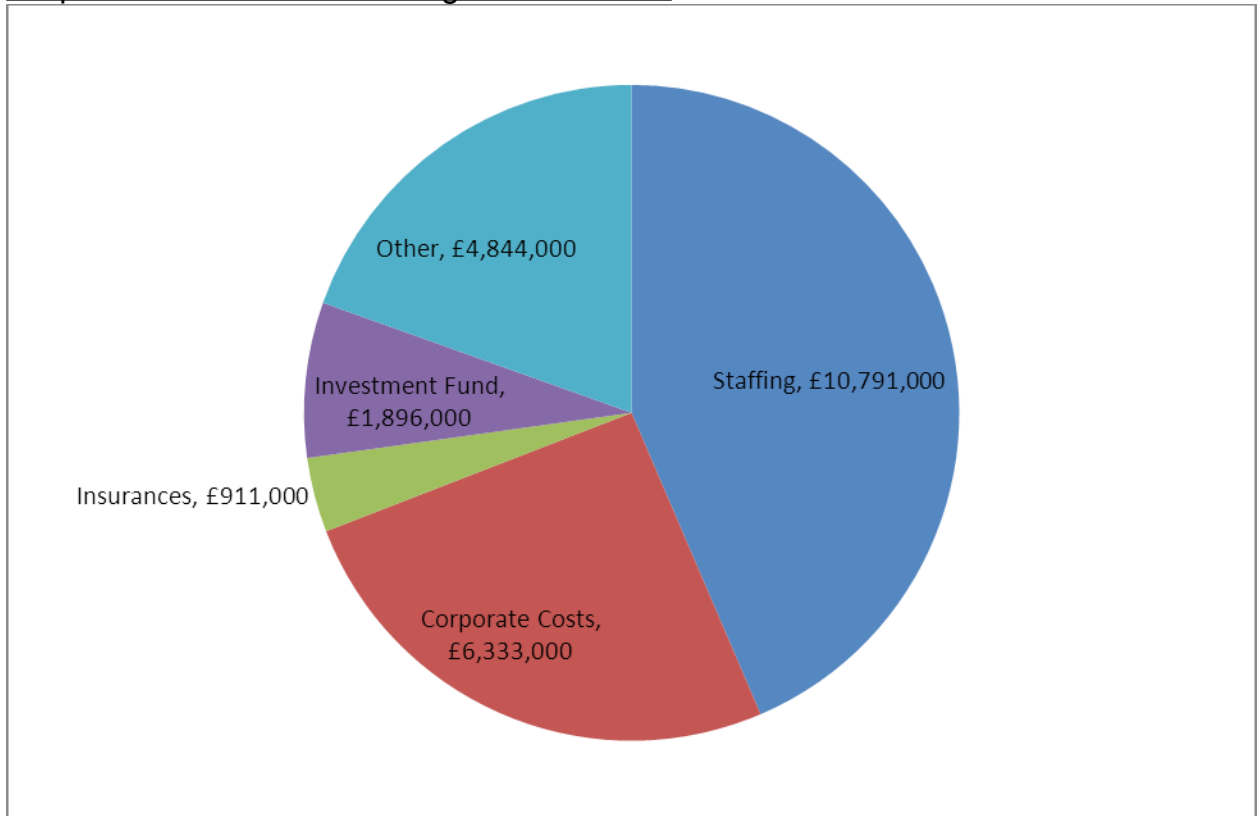
Graph 2 – Breakdown of Other Charges in Graph 1



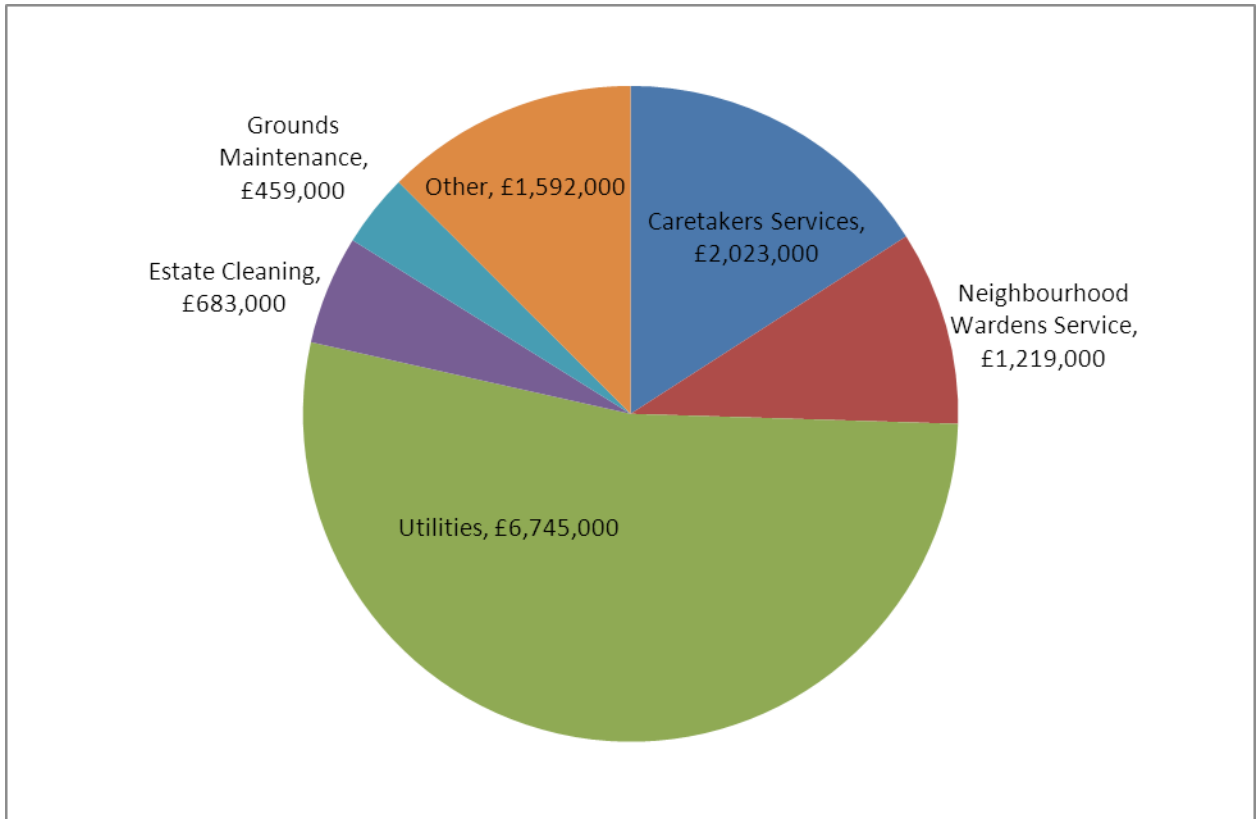
Graph 3 – HRA expenditure breakdown



Graph 4 – Breakdown of Management General



Graph 5 – Breakdown of Management Special



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Resident involvement & scrutiny team activity sheet:



October - December 2014



| Activity | What has happened |
|--|---|
| Housing services forum | <p>The forum did not meet in November due to a lack of agenda items. Whilst previous meetings have been well attended, it has been agreed to refresh the format for this panel, with a view to improving outcomes from these meetings.</p> <p>A series of brief presentations by senior officers, followed by discussions in small groups will enable residents to feed directly into improving the services they receive, in an informal environment.</p> <p>The next meeting is on 28 January 2015, with a focus on window cleaning and anti-social behaviour services.</p> |
| Your housing, your questions | <p>The latest YHYQ event took place in New Addington on 7 October. 22 residents took part.</p> <p>A surgery style format was trialled following feedback from residents. This enabled those who attended to speak directly with officers from various housing services and to ask individual questions.</p> <p>There were also information stands provided by Axis repairs, The Big Energy Switch, My Account and IT training company Open Doors, who are providing free computer training to tenants.</p> |
| Sheltered housing panel | <p>The panel met at the end of October with 20 residents attending.</p> <p>Councillor Alison Butler (cabinet member for homes and regeneration) attended the meeting to introduce herself to members and also to inform the panel of the council's key objectives relating to housing and in particular, housing for older people.</p> <p>Residents also heard about the range of services provided by Careline and discussed issues with access to IT in sheltered schemes.</p> <p>The new repairs partner, Axis attended and discussed issues related to the responsive repairs service in sheltered schemes. They also discussed the provision of repairs surgeries, which are being organised to enable residents in sheltered units to drop in and report repairs.</p> <p>The next meeting is scheduled for 19 March 2015.</p> |
| Housing disability panel | <p>The panel meeting on 18 November was attended by 16 residents.</p> |

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| | <p>The meeting was themed around safeguarding. Kay Murray, Head of Professional Standards, Adult Social Care, spoke about the work of the safeguarding team including how and when it could be accessed. There was also a discussion about the newly formed service user sub-group to the safeguarding board.</p> <p>Those that completed feedback forms indicated that they all felt welcome and able to take part and 92% considered the event very, or quite informative.</p> <p>The next meeting is on 24 March 2015.</p> |
| <p><u>Resident involvement group (RIG)</u></p> | <p>The meeting in November was attended by 14 residents.</p> <p>The group looked at the 'Impact Assessment' for the work of the resident involvement team. This document compares the resources used (time, finance etc.) for each panel or initiative and identifies what the outcomes were in each case. The discussion resulted in a number of recommendations being made to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.</p> <p>The group received an update on the new group that is being established to consider issues related to the housing revenue account. They also approved changes to three documents that had been discussed at previous meetings: the code of conduct, the information available explaining how a residents' forum should work and the text for a training brochure.</p> <p>Feedback forms indicated that all felt able to take part and that the meeting was useful.</p> |
| <p><u>Housing Sounding board</u></p> | <p>Membership currently at 448.</p> <p>Members were invited to take part in website testing, mystery shopping, STAR survey feedback sessions and Christmas buffet.</p> <p>The HSB will be re-launched as the housing involvement database or 'Housing ID' in January.</p> |
| <p><u>Adult social services involvement</u></p> | <p>Croydon adult social services user panel (CASSUP) met in November. Councillor Louisa Woodley (cabinet member for people and communities) attended the meeting along with her deputy, Councillor Andrew Rendle, to introduce themselves to the panel.</p> <p>The two councillors provided updates on recent changes relating to adult social care and gave an overview of the general direction for the future of provision in Croydon.</p> <p>Aarti Joshi spoke to the panel about the work of the recently launched Integrated commissioning unit (ICU), whose key role is to co-ordinate the funding and provision of care services in Croydon through the NHS, council and others.</p> <p>The council's Independent Living Fund officer provided information on the recent changes to this national scheme.</p> |

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| <p>Surveys</p> | <p>The following surveys have been carried out this quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult safeguarding - a survey of clients who have been through the safeguarding procedure. The purpose is to ascertain whether the reported issue has been dealt with and resolved to the client's satisfaction. The results are being used to improve the safeguarding service going forward. This is a pilot survey running until January 2015 • Internet access - a face to face survey of a range of tenants and leaseholders across the borough regarding internet access. The results are being used by the housing strategy team, who are looking at the viability of wireless internet installation on some council estates in the borough. • Carers Survey – annual statutory survey from the Department of Health (DoH), for those people caring for vulnerable adult(s). The survey includes questions about the health and wellbeing of the carer as well as how satisfied they are with the help and support they receive from the council and external agencies, such as local charities. The data collected will go back to the DoH for national benchmarking. Croydon will also produce a report of the data collected, which will be used to improve services going forward. |
| <p>Scrutiny panel</p> | <p>The scrutiny of the anti-social behaviour (ASB) service is progressing. The panel has been supplied with documents for their desktop review and this enabled them to identify what methods they wanted to use for the scrutiny exercise.</p> <p>The panel have appointed two scrutiny leads who will oversee progress of the exercise and will plan the activities, along with helping officers. The panel have begun the process of interviewing staff and will also be carrying out surveys and holding a focus group with invited residents. They will also look at the casework system (which the council use to record information about ASB cases).</p> <p>The panel plan to produce their recommendations in March and after meeting with senior management, the final report will be presented to residents at the Tenant & Leaseholder Panel in April 2015.</p> |
| <p>Housing complaints panel</p> | <p>The panel met in December and looked at the latest quarterly performance reports for housing from the corporate complaints team and the contact centre.</p> |
| <p>Neighbourhood voice (NV)</p> | <p>81 NV forms completed by 39 residents this quarter.</p> <p>A survey was conducted asking members for their views on the following topics; the scheme generally, the newsletter, their interest in attending a focus group relating to neighbourhood services, interest in returning forms online. 42 voices completed the survey -the majority of our active voices. The next issue of NV news in the Spring will feature feedback on the survey.</p> <p>Membership levels have remained fairly consistent although some work needs to be carried out to achieve a better return rate. Current membership stands at 68.</p> |

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| | <p>The team will be calling neighbourhood voices during January/February time to encourage voices to return forms. We hope that a recruitment campaign will take place in the spring of 2015.</p> |
| <p>Mystery shoppers</p> | <p> As part of the action plan drawn up after scrutiny of the contact centre, the scrutiny panel identified the need to carry out mystery shopping exercises to check the services provided in Access Croydon.</p> <p>Scenarios were devised and two training sessions took place to prepare mystery shopping volunteers for the shops they completed in October 2014. The results of these have been passed back to the scrutiny panel. However, low numbers taking part in this exercise has meant further shops are needed to make the process worthwhile.</p> <p>In order to increase levels of interest we are undertaking a full review of the mystery shopping scheme. Currently a job advert is being put together to promote being a mystery shopper as a voluntary position offered on the council's job site and we are reviewing the way we brief shoppers.</p> |
| <p>Residents training</p> | <p>In September three Croydon residents attended the annual ARCH (Association of Retained Council Housing) tenants conference. This two day event was a chance for tenants of stock-retained councils from across the country to hear about and discuss the key topical issues affecting council housing, and what these issues mean for tenants. A series of presentations, workshops and small discussion groups were delivered by leading tenants and experts in the social housing field. A very informative and enjoyable couple of days was had by all attendees.</p> <p>The weeks leading up to Christmas are usually very busy for everyone – residents and officers alike so no training was arranged during the last quarter of 2014 but plans are well ahead for a range of sessions taking place in the coming weeks.</p> |
| <p>Involve e-newsletter</p> | <p>The latest issue was sent out in November to 2581 residents. It was opened by 630 people (26%).</p> <p>The newsletter covered various housing or wider involvement issues such as promotion of our new Facebook page, 'Your Rent, Your Say' group, RI awards and a scrutiny panel update.</p> <p>The next newsletter will be sent out in January.</p> |
| <p>Other activities</p> | <p>A resident involvement Facebook page was set up and publicised in Open House and Involve.</p> <p> Recruitment for the new Your Rent, Your Say focus group is underway. This will look at how housing finance priorities are decided. The idea was suggested initially by a resident and was also one of the recommendations in the neighbourhood warden scrutiny report.</p> <p>Residents took part in the Open House editorial group in November.</p> |