

Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub- Committee Agenda



To: Councillors Leila Ben-Hassel (Chair), Councillor Jeet Bains (Vice-Chair), Kola Agboola, Jade Appleton, Louis Carserides, Luke Clancy and Caragh Skipper

Reserve Members: Jan Buttinger, Robert Canning, Pat Clouder, Clive Fraser, Karen Jewitt, Michael Neal and Oni Oviri

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 15 March 2022** at **6.30 pm. This meeting will be held remotely**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Simon Trevaskis
Senior Democratic Services & Governance
Officer - Scrutiny
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www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Monday, 7 March 2022

Members of the public are welcome to view the webcast both live and after the meeting has completed at <http://webcasting.croydon.gov.uk>

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If you require any assistance, please contact Simon Trevaskis as detailed above.

AGENDA – PART A

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Committee.

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 30 November 2021 and 1 February 2022 as an accurate record.

To follow.

3. **Disclosure of Interests**

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider **in advance of each meeting** whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), another registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer **in good time before the meeting**.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPis and ORIs at the meeting.

- Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.
- Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation.
- Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation. Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, section 9 of Appendix B of the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the Member to decide whether disclosure is

required.

The Chair will invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3, to be recorded in the minutes.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan (Pages 5 - 34)

The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is presented with a draft copy of a report on the Housing Improvement Plan due to be considered by the Cabinet on 21 March 2022.

The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided in the draft report and consider whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations for submission to the Cabinet during its consideration of the report.

6. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (Pages 35 - 58)

The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is presented with a draft copy of a report on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan due to be considered by the Cabinet on 21 March 2022.

The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided in the draft report and consider whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations for submission to the Cabinet during its consideration of the report.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

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Agenda Item 5

REPORT TO:	Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee 15 March 2022
SUBJECT:	Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	David Padfield, Interim Corporate Director, Housing Yvonne Murray, Director of Housing- Resident Engagement & Allocations Stephen Tate, Director of Housing- Estates & Improvement
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice Cabinet Member for Homes
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This report has been included on the agenda to give the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee to provide feedback on the draft report before its consideration by Cabinet on 21 March 2022.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided in the draft report and consider whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations for submission to the Cabinet during its consideration of the report.

1. Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan

- 1.1. The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is be provided with an early draft version of a report due to be considered by the Cabinet on 21 March 2022, on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan.
- 1.2. The draft Cabinet report has been provided to give the Sub-Committee the opportunity to provide feedback on the content of the report, which can be fed into the Cabinet's consideration..

REPORT AUTHOR: Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Draft Cabinet Report – Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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REPORT TO:	MARCH CABINET 2022 <i>Monday 21st March 2022, 18:30</i>
SUBJECT:	Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	<i>David Padfield, Interim Corporate Director, Housing</i> <i>Yvonne Murray, Director of Housing- Resident Engagement & Allocations</i> <i>Stephen Tate, Director of Housing- Estates & Improvement</i>
CABINET MEMBER:	<i>Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice, Cabinet Member for Homes</i>
WARDS:	All

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024

The Croydon Housing Improvement Plan and Housing Improvement Board will allow the Council to improve the housing service, with particular regard to the Council's landlord responsibilities. Both the Plan and the Board will ensure the Council's improvement plans address the ARK investigation recommendations, reflect the views of tenants and leaseholders, and provide the best quality service the Council can afford in line with the priorities below:

- We will live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents.*
- We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough. We will follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic injustice.*
- We will focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford. First and foremost, providing social care services that keep our most vulnerable residents safe and healthy. And to keep our streets clean and safe. To ensure we get full benefit from every pound we spend, other services in these areas will only be provided where they can be shown to have a direct benefit in keeping people safe and reducing demand.*

[Council's priorities](#)

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of the recommendations would not have financial implications.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Approval of the recommendations would not constitute a key decision.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out below:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Cabinet is requested to note:

- I. The content of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan.
- II. The establishment of the Housing Improvement Board.
- III. The revised Terms of Reference of the Housing Improvement Board.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the revelation of poor housing conditions at Regina Road, the Cabinet agreed to the establishment of an independently-chaired Housing Improvement Board to oversee the development and implementation of the Housing Improvement Plan in May 2021. The Cabinet agreed that the purpose of the Plan and Board would be to address the failings of the housing service highlighted in the ARK Consultancy Investigation into conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood.
- 1.2 The Plan has been developed in response to the declared breach of the Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard by the Regulator for Social Housing. It will form a key part of the Council's voluntary undertaking of improvements to the housing service made to the Regulator. Achieving compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing standards will be a key output of the Plan.
- 1.3 The Plan has also been developed to reflect tenant and leaseholder views. The Housing Improvement Plan reflects the feedback received in the summer 2021 door-knocking survey of council tenants.
- 1.4 In July 2021 a report was made to the Streets, Homes and Environment Sub-Committee recommending the sub-committee to note the Council's progress in improving conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, approve the Terms of Reference of the Housing Improvement Board, and note the approach to the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan. The sub-committee made a series of recommendations which have been largely incorporated into the Housing Improvement Plan and Terms of Reference for the Housing Improvement Board which are included in the Appendices to this report.
- 1.5 The Housing Improvement Plan has been considerably revised based on initial feedback from our external governance structures. In November 2021, the Council's Non-Statutory Review was highly critical of the draft Plan. In January and February 2022, further draft versions of the Plan were presented to the Housing Improvement Board for comment. Feedback from the Improvement & Assurance Panel and the Housing Improvement Board is also included in this report.
- 1.6 The Plan will inevitably continue to evolve over time to reflect further input from the Board, residents, Members and other stakeholders.

2. CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 2.1 The Croydon Housing Improvement Plan has been developed to improve the housing service, with particular regard to the Council's landlord responsibilities. The Plan addresses the following five areas of focus:
- Vision & Governance
 - Repairs & Safety
 - Improving Your Homes
 - Customer Service & Resident Engagement
 - Our Workforce
- 2.2 Each of the five areas has been assigned to project managers within the service who are responsible for delivering the activity, whilst a senior accountable officer (director or corporate director) is accountable for the delivery of the work. The delivery of the Plan will follow the Council's agreed programme management framework.
- 2.3 In response to issues raised in the ARK Consultancy Investigation, Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion will be embedded throughout each of the five work-streams. The Council's Equalities Manager has met with each project manager to ensure that the output of the improvement actions explicitly addresses concerns raised by tenants. Each project manager will be responsible for completing an Equalities Impact Assessment for the work-streams which will be regularly reviewed.
- 2.4 An internal workshop with directors, heads of service, and project managers was held in October 2021 to launch the Plan across the directorate. The workshop provided project managers and senior accountable officers with the opportunity to scrutinize the content of the Plan, and highlight the interdependencies between the work-streams.
- 2.5 Delivery of the Plan is being supported by the Council's Project Management Office. The delivery of the Plan is being overseen by the Housing Improvement Plan Working Group which currently meets fortnightly. The Working Group is chaired by the interim Corporate Director for Housing, and provides a forum for progress to be monitored and shared, and for risks to be mitigated or escalated. The Chair of the Working Group also acts as a direct link to the Corporate Management Team.
- 2.6 The draft Plan was shared with the Council's Non-Statutory Review who commented that the draft Plan was "weak", "poorly presented" and lacked "SMART targets". Section 3.4 of this report details how these comments have been addressed.
- 2.7 The draft Plan was also presented to the independently-chaired Housing Improvement Board in January and February 2022 to allow the Board to scrutinise and challenge the Council's improvement plans with regards to tenant experience and best practice demonstrated by other social landlords.

The Board commented that the draft requires simplification, 'what good looks like' is not clearly defined, and that the impact the Plan would have on tenants and leaseholders was unclear. The feedback from the Board has been incorporated into the finalised version of the Plan found in the appendices. The incorporation of further feedback into the Plan will be an iterative process as the plan develops over time.

- 2.8 Beyond the feedback provided by tenant and leaseholder representatives from the Housing Improvement Board, resident views will continue to shape the Plan. Whilst resident engagement is included within the Plan as a separate area of focus, engagement with our tenants and leaseholders will form a golden thread throughout the areas of focus. Feedback from the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) which is commissioned by the council on a quarterly basis will also inform the focus of the Plan as it continues to evolve.

3. CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD

- 3.1 The establishment of the Housing Improvement Board was agreed by Cabinet in May 2021 with the purpose of providing independent scrutiny and challenge to the Council's improvement plans. The Board provides evidenced feedback to Cabinet, as and when it is required, examining whether the Housing Improvement Plan will deliver the recommendations made in the ARK Consultancy Investigation.

- 3.2 The Board is independent of both Council members and officers, and four of the eight board members are existing council tenants from across the borough. Board members also include representatives from London Councils, the Local Government Association, and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

- 3.3 The Board will initially focus on the following five themes:

- Conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood
- Respect for Tenants & Effective Communication
- Data & Performance
- Member & Officer Governance
- Staff Capability Issues

- 3.4 Feedback from the Board on the extent to which the Housing Improvement Plan addresses the issues across the five themes above will be presented to Cabinet via the Chair of the Board alongside this report. The Board's assessment of the Council's plans will be supported by both tenant experience, and best practice from other social landlords. The Council has provided a series of performance data reports to the Board to support the Board's enquiries. In concurrence with comments in the Independent Non-Statutory Review, the Board has recommended that our improvement plans have measurable targets and outcomes. Each of our milestones in the Plan now have associated metrics, and officers will be working with the Tenant &

Leaseholder Panel to develop revised key performance indicators which will enable tenant and leaseholder scrutiny of the Council's improvement measures.

- 3.5 All of the Housing Improvement Board meetings are open to the public, and the Board is able to request both Officers and Members to be in attendance at the meetings. The inaugural meeting of the Housing Improvement Board was held on 7 December 2021 at Stanley Halls, South Norwood. The second Board meeting was held remotely on 20 January 2022 where the Housing Improvement Plan was reviewed by the Board. The third Housing Improvement Board meeting was held on 24 February 2022. Following the beginning of the next financial year, the frequency of the Board meetings will be reduced. All papers discussed at the Board are made available on the Council's website ahead of the meetings.
- 3.6 The revised terms of reference for the Housing Improvement Board can be found in the appendices. The original terms of reference for the Board were approved by Cabinet in July 2021.

4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Head of XXXXX comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that xxxxxx
- 4.2 Approved by (name), Head of xxxxxx (Job title) on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 5.1
- 5.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of Human Resources)

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1
- 6.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of Equalities)

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.1
- 7.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

8.1

8.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 **WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

NO

9.2 **HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?**

NO

The subject of the report does not involve the processing of 'personal' data. There are therefore no data protection implications.

9.3 "The Director of XXX comments that...

(Approved by: [A. N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XXX)

CONTACT OFFICER: *David Padfield, interim Corporate Director, Housing*

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN (1)

REVISED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE (2)

Housing Improvement Plan

March 2022

DRAFT REPORT

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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DRAFT REPORT

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. Introduction

The independent ARK investigation in spring 2021 into living conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood discovered a wide range of problems across the Council's housing service. The report concluded that there were a range of issues across the Council's operational teams and with the main repairs contractor. These issues led to a failure to deliver even basic core housing services effectively and were symptomatic of poor performance across the Council's housing service.

Specific issues identified include:

- A lack of capacity and competence
- A poor operating culture with a lack of respect and care for tenants
- Systemic problems in how the Council communicates and deals with tenants' concerns and complaints
- Weak performance management meaning senior managers did not have oversight of issues
- Poor use of data and intelligence by the Council and its contractors

In response, we have produced the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan to set out a clear set of objectives and actions that will address these problems and improve services across the new Housing Directorate. The Housing Improvement Plan addresses the seven recommendations for improvement listed in the ARK investigation:

1. Establish clear governance arrangements to provide strategic leadership to the service.
2. Undertake a forward-looking skills gap analysis.
3. Implement a development programme to ensure all staff consistently demonstrate the attitudinal and behavioural competences need to support the Council's values and shape its culture.
4. Strengthen the Council's capacity, competence and commitment to tenant involvement through training and development of staff and councillors.
5. Develop 'business intelligence' systems that allow the Council to collect and share real-time information on asset condition and performance (including from the contractor).
6. Conduct a fundamental review of performance management arrangements.
7. Make improvements to complaints handling in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2. What difference will this make?

In establishing this Improvement Plan, the Council is setting out a vision that enshrines learning lessons from the past and providing safe homes for our tenants and leaseholders.

We aim to provide residents with homes that are safe, warm and dry, and that they are proud to call home. In doing so, we will always aim to treat them with respect and dignity, and listen to their voices, irrespective of race, disability or any other protected characteristic. We will seek to ensure that our contractors do the same. We will aim to measure the things that are important to our residents. We will aim to provide services that offer good value for money.

In order to deliver on this commitment, we know that we need to change the culture of the organisation so that we become more focused on the needs of residents. We will need to put resident engagement at the heart of what we do. We will need to build organisational capacity and competence, and work in partnership with our contractors.

In doing this we will be guided by, and aim to be in compliance with, the four consumer standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing:

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

This change cannot happen overnight, but progress must be demonstrable and visible. If we deliver the outcomes of this Plan successfully, residents will find it much easier to get the services they need from their landlord. These services should also be delivered in a timely manner and to a good standard - and we know that our responsive repairs service is a resident priority for improvement.

All residents should feel that they have the opportunity to have their voices heard in the management of their homes. When we get things wrong, complaints must be dealt with in line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman, and we must act swiftly to put things right. We must also invest in resident homes to maintain and improve them - not only for our current occupants, but also for future generations.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

3. Work to date

Since spring 2021, considerable work has already taken place to lay the foundations for this Plan. As well as basing this Plan on the recommendations of the ARK report, we have listened to the voices of our tenants and leaseholders, councillors, staff, and the independent Housing Improvement Board.

At Regina Road, the worst affected households have either been moved, or approved for a move and are currently waiting for a suitable property to become vacant. An extensive programme of repairs, including fire safety works, has been carried out and further repairs are planned in the immediate future. Detailed surveys of all blocks have been undertaken and shared with residents. A resident reference group has been established to discuss longer term investment plans and the future of the estate.

Previously fragmented elements of the housing service have been brought together into a unified Housing Department and a Corporate Director for Housing has been appointed. A new top-level management structure is in place. Housing staff have run a major exercise of door-knocking and roadshows to gather the views of residents.

Performance reporting has been improved and regular reports are submitted to the Council's Cabinet. Performance in relation to compliance with health and safety requirements is prominent in this improvement. Improvements in governance and contract management have been put in place.

Drafts of this Plan have been widely discussed with stakeholders including the Council's Streets, Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Housing Improvement Board. Their feedback has helped shape the Plan.

As a result of this feedback, we have organised the Plan into five clear Areas of Focus:

- Vision and Governance
- Customer Service and Resident Engagement
- Repairs and Safety
- Improving Your Homes
- Our Workforce

For each Area of Focus, we have set out our desired outcomes, the key milestones on the way to delivering those outcomes, and suggested metrics for measuring progress in that area.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

4. Resident engagement

In delivering the outcomes required by this Plan, resident engagement must be placed at the heart of our landlord service. This means that we must expand and improve our resident engagement structures and processes to enable tenants and leaseholders to set priorities, shape policies and co-design improvements to the service. Feedback from our satisfaction surveys will be central to assessing the progress of our services and the success of this Plan.

In order for this to be successful, we will need to significantly improve the way we provide information about services to our residents, via whichever channels work best for them.

In developing and delivering the Plan, we also need to build upon the excellent work already done by residents as part of the Tenant & Leaseholder Panel, Performance Monitoring Group, and Resident Scrutiny Panel, especially in relation to voids processes and developing a Residents Charter.

5. Equalities

The Council is committed to treating all of our residents with respect and dignity irrespective of race, disability or any other protected characteristic. This commitment needs to be reflected in the delivery of all aspects of this Plan.

Ensuring all council tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and empathy must align with the council's statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. No council tenant or leaseholder should feel discriminated against on the basis of their race, religion, age or gender. The impact of the Plan on council tenants with protected characteristics will be scrutinised and regularly assessed to promote equality. The Housing service must be tailored to reflect the diverse community it serves.

Where compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation, this will mean looking at the outcomes of our services by protected characteristics. Where required, we will prepare Equality Impact Assessments in respect of major service changes.

6. Dependencies and interdependencies

The various areas of focus set out in this plan interact with other to a considerable extent and will only be effective in improving the housing service if they working together as a coherent, integrated set of processes and people working across the Housing service as one team. Furthermore, there are a number of key activities that sit outside of this Plan which will have a significant impact on the desired outcomes of the Plan:

Mayoral election - the move to an elected Mayor in May 2022 will be a key moment in the development of this Plan. The Mayor will no doubt wish to continue to shape the Housing directorate and the development of this Plan.

Croydon Renewal Plan - the Housing Improvement Plan must be read as an important element of the wider Croydon Renewal Plan.

ICT - the Plan references the move towards adopting the new NEC Housing IT System. This is a major project in its own right. As the Plan develops, we will also need to address the Housing aspects of an evolving Croydon Digital Strategy.

Recruitment - the recruitment and retention of key housing staff has been a significant challenge for the Council. If we are unable to recruit and retain housing staff in the future, this will constitute an obstacle to the delivery of the Plan.

Housing Revenue Account – Money has been set aside in the 22/23 HRA budget to fund compliance with the Building Safety Bill. The delivery of the other objectives of the Plan must either be achieved within existing resources or become a draw on HRA Reserves. The Housing Improvement Board will be kept advised as to any spending over and above existing resources.

Procurement – The Plan will involve significant procurement work and the results of this will obviously be influenced by the condition of the market.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

7. Area of Focus: Vision & Governance

In order to deliver a high standard of service to our tenants and leaseholders, it is essential that we have a clear vision that is understood by all our staff. We also need strong governance arrangements that align with the Council's wider governance requirements and link to other key stakeholder such as tenants and leaseholders, and the Regulator for Social Housing.

Our governance must be supported by accurate performance management information that fulfils a dual purpose.

- 1) It measures how we run our business in line with the targets and objectives we set for ourselves; and,
- 2) It also captures how, as a landlord, we meet expectations of our tenants and leaseholders. Likewise, financial reporting needs to be comprehensive, accurate and sufficiently transparent to allow tenant and leaseholder scrutiny.

Outcomes

- A comprehensive vision to guide staff
- Strong governance around everything we do
- A trusted performance management system which provides assurance
- Transparent and accurate financial reporting

Milestones and metrics

A comprehensive vision to guide staff	
Initial statement of values made to the Regulator of Social Housing and communicated to staff	March 2022
Delivery of strategy and service plan for the Department, which sets out the way forward	April 2022
New operating model approved by Cabinet	January 2023
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Staff understand the objectives of the Council and their role in delivering them – as measured through annual staff survey	

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Strong governance around everything we do	
Internal governance statement that captures relevant controls and stakeholder involvement	March 2022
Housing Improvement Plan finalised and approved	March 2022
Regulator of Social Housing determination of compliance with Tenancy and Homes Standards	Mid-2023
<i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Compliance will be set out in an annual governance statement submitted to Internal Audit	

A trusted performance management system which provides assurance	
Policy & Performance Team established to lead work	May 2022
Refreshed set of indicators agreed with Tenant & Leaseholder Panel	September 2022
Accuracy of data and systems used for performance indicators audited	March 2023
<i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Success to be determined by sign-off of management information reports by Tenant & Leaseholder Panel	

Transparent and accurate financial reporting	
Refreshed Housing Revenue Account Business Plan approved by Cabinet	March 2022
Review of Tenant Service Charges to establish accuracy and transparency	October 2022
Regular financial reports made accessible to all tenants and leaseholders for scrutiny	November 2022
<i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Success to be determined by sign-off of financial reports by Tenant & Leaseholder Panel.	

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

8. Area of Focus: Customer Service & Resident Engagement

The overarching aim of the Housing Improvement Plan is to improve the Council's landlord services for our tenants and leaseholders. We have devised a work stream which will improve our customer services and engage tenants and leaseholders in our improvement plans.

Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with the Council's housing services will enable the Council to assess whether the Improvement Plan has been effective. Improvements to our 'front-door' and engaging residents to co-design these improvements will be crucial.

Outcomes

- Residents find it easy to contact us
- Resident engagement is at the heart of all we do
- All residents are provided with the information they need
- Compliance with complaints handling requirements and best practice

Milestones and metrics

Residents find it easy to contact us	
Revised policy on telephony contact developed and implemented	October 2022
Revised access and support offer for vulnerable tenants developed and implemented	October 2022
Clear policy on digital contact and transactions developed and implemented	April 2023
<i>Associated metrics:</i> STAR tenant satisfaction survey ("how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the housing service is easy to deal with?")	

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Resident engagement is at the heart of all we do	
Programme developed of resident engagement to ensure that we create opportunities for all tenants to tell us about and shape their experience of the housing service	October 2022
Resident engagement strategy developed around building safety in high-rise blocks	October 2022
Prepare for implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper)	March 2023
<i>Associated metric:</i> STAR tenant satisfaction survey	

Provide all our residents with the information they need	
Key information is advertised locally via estate and block noticeboards	April 2022
Comprehensive service information is available to residents on the Council's website	October 2022
Comprehensive service information is available via telephone, correspondence or in-person	October 2022
<i>Associated metric:</i> Audit of information through the Housing Scrutiny Panel	

Compliance with complaints handling requirements and best practice	
Full range of service standards co-created and co-produced with tenants and leaseholders	June 2022
Quality of responses to complaints is audited and analysed	July 2022
Learning from complaints is systematically used to improve services	October 2022
<i>Associated metric:</i> Number of complaints received and resident satisfaction with complaints handling	

9. Area of Focus: Repairs & Safety

The Council’s failings at Regina Road and the subsequent criticism set out in the ARK report were, first and foremost, the consequence of failings of our repairs processes. It is essential that the Council has a responsive repairs system that residents find easy to use and can deliver the required repairs on time and to a high standard.

This must be achieved within the context of forthcoming post-Grenfell building safety legislation that places considerable new statutory responsibilities on landlords. We also have to address the challenge of making the best use of our housing stock by turning around empty homes as quickly as possible.

Outcomes

- A system that makes reporting a repair easy
- Repairs done on time and right first time
- Full compliance with the Building Safety Act
- Quick turnaround of voids

Milestones and metrics

A system that makes reporting a repair easy	
Additional tenant and leaseholder engagement on repair contact	July 2022
Redesigned repairs reporting process	September 2022
NEC ¹ Housing management solution implemented	November 2022
<i>Associated Metric:</i> 'Get through on first time' satisfaction rating and overall satisfaction rating with repairs	

¹ NEC is a housing management system provided by NEC Software Solutions.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Repairs done on time and right first time	
Improvement plan with current contractor agreed and implemented	July 2022
Re-procurement of new tenant and leaseholder focused repairs contractor	June 2023
Start of new repairs contract	August 2023
<i>Associated Metrics:</i> Repairs completed first time and overall satisfaction with repairs	

Full compliance with existing and upcoming safety regulations	
Additional resource joins the building safety and compliance team	September 2022
Demonstrable satisfactory compliance within existing regulatory frameworks	March 2023
Demonstrable compliance with Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act upon enactment ensured	May 2023
<i>Associated Metrics:</i> “Big six” main compliance indicators	

Quick turnaround of voids	
Complete benchmarking review to establish best practice	September 2022
Completed business process re-engineering review of void management building upon resident task and finish and scrutiny recommendations	December 2022
NEC Housing Reports available to support decision making	December 2022
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Key-to-key turnaround in calendar days	

10. Area of Focus: Improving Your Homes

Over the next 30 years, the Council expects to invest almost £750m in its housing stock. It is essential that the Council is able to prioritise and direct this investment as efficiently as possible and obtain good value for money. As part of this process, it is important that the Council develops and implements business systems that enable collection and sharing of real-time information on asset condition and performance, in order to improve the management of repairs and drive better investment decisions. We must utilise all available data to develop a cost-effective plan for improving the housing stock to ensure homes are safe, warm and dry.

Outcomes

- Confidence in our stock data and our ability to utilise it
- A robust Asset Management Strategy
- Fit-for-purpose vehicles for delivering investment
- Robust arrangements for managing capital delivery contractors to drive satisfaction and value for money

Milestones and metrics

Confidence in our stock data and our ability to utilise it	
Capacity within the team to analyse and audit data	June 2022
NEC Housing System go-live	November 2022
Receive next tranche of stock condition data	January 2023
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Number of non-decent homes as per statutory return	

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A robust Asset Management Strategy	
Draft Asset Management Strategy available for resident consultation	October 2022
Resident consultation complete	December 2022
Strategy approved by Full Council	January 2023
<i>Associated Metric:</i> None	

Fit-for-purpose vehicles for delivering investment	
Completed review of existing capital delivery vehicles	June 2023
Agreement as to future procurement needs and strategy	September 2023
Additional procurement complete	September 2024
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Resident satisfaction with major repairs to their homes	

Robust arrangements for managing capital delivery contractors to drive resident satisfaction and value for money	
Complete review of Housing contract management processes	July 2022
Review external contract support arrangements	October 2022
Revised contract management process and structure in place	TBC
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Resident satisfaction with major repairs to their homes	

11. Area of Focus: Our Workforce

Everything we do will be determined by the quality and motivation of our workforce. We need to ensure that we recruit and retain the best possible staff, and we want to ensure that the composition of our workforce- at all levels of the organisation- reflects that of the community we serve. The ARK report was highly critical of the culture within the housing service and this must be addressed.

We want our staff to be highly motivated and have the right tools to do the jobs being asked of them. And this can only be achieved if we have good quality leaders and managers who can give staff the support they need and model the behaviours required by the organisation.

Outcomes

- A resident-focused and performance-oriented service
- Housing staff have the right skills, capacity, capability and tools to effectively perform their role
- Accountable and resilient leadership and management
- A diverse and talented workforce reflective of the community it serves

Milestones and metrics

A resident-focussed and performance-oriented service	
Values-based, customer service focused behavioural framework developed and implemented	September 2022
Staff survey culture recommendations for housing directorate implemented	April 2023
Refreshed performance management framework, appraisals and 1-2-1s implemented and monitored	October 2022
<p><i>Associated Metrics:</i> Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with staff interaction – as measured through STAR survey. Staff survey questions on organisational culture</p>	

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Housing staff have the right skills, capability and tools to effectively perform their role	
Staff skills audit completed	June 2022
Comprehensive learning & development programme developed and delivered	February 2023
Impact of learning & development interventions programme measured	June 2023
<i>Associated Metrics:</i> Staff feel equipped to do the jobs required of them – as measured through annual staff survey	

Accountable and resilient leadership and management	
Leadership and management behaviours and skills audit completed	July 2022
Capability interventions to equip all levels of management with skills, tools and behavioural frameworks to effectively lead their teams are implemented	December 2022
Compliance with new behavioural frameworks is measured	April 2023
<i>Associated Metrics:</i> Staff understand the objectives of the Council and feel supported by their managers to deliver them	

A diverse and talented workforce reflective of the community it serves	
Comprehensive data on workforce composition and gap analysis is collected	May 2022
Workforce Plan to address recruitment and retention challenges is updated	October 2022
Systems developed and implemented where housing staff can share their views and regularly be heard	October 2022
<i>Associated Metric:</i> Our workforce data – reporting format still to be confirmed.	

DRAFT REPORT

**CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD
TERMS OF REFERENCE & MEMBERSHIP**

NAME	Croydon Housing Improvement Board
DATE	January 2022
CHAIR	Martin Wheatley
FREQUENCY	Frequency to be determined by the Chair, in consultation with Board Members.
MEMBERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Chair (Martin Wheatley) • Tenant representative (Les Parry) • Tenant representative (Ishia Beckford) • Regina Road representative (Fahad Eisa) • Chair of Tenants & Leaseholder Panel (Yaw Boateng) • Croydon Improvement Panel Representative (Phil Brookes) • London Council representative (Eloise Shepherd) • Representative of voluntary & community sector in the area(s) of family support &/or, housing experience &/or equality and diversity
IN ATTENDANCE	<p>Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Homes Opposition Cabinet Member for Homes Interim Corporate Director, Housing</p> <p>Other invitees as required at the Chair's discretion.</p>

PURPOSE	<p>The Croydon Housing Improvement Board is an independently chaired body which reports and makes recommendations to Cabinet. Feedback from the Board will shape the development and implementation of the Housing Improvement Plan. The Board oversee the delivery of the CHIP by reviewing performance against a plan of action approved by Cabinet.</p> <p>Through their regular meetings the Board will support and challenge the implementation of the CHIP which aims to deliver an improved housing service for local residents, with strengthened governance and management controls, improved tenancy engagement and robust asset management plans, measured by key performance indicators, to ensure council housing across the borough is safe, warm and decent for our residents.</p>
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	<p>The Board will provide challenge and external oversight that ensures council officers deliver the outcomes of the CHIP. The Board will pay particular attention to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH)'s standards and make recommendations to Cabinet to assist the Council to ensure it resolves the current breach and regains the confidence of both the Regulator and council tenants.</p> <p>The Board will review the impact of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan through the use of data, showing progress against clear, measurable objectives within the plan. The Board will receive reports as to progress.</p>
ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR	<p>The Board will nominate and agree a vice-chair from its membership who can deputise in the absence of the chair.</p>
ROLE OF BOARD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influencing development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan (CHIP) and recommending it to Cabinet for approval. 2. The Board will make recommendations to Cabinet on actions to consider to ensure the delivery of the CHIP and achievement of sustainable improvement within the agreed timescales and cost. 3. Provide challenge and opportunities to ensure that actions taken meet the improvement outcomes that are required of the Council. 4. Ensure that the Council hears, understands, and responds to lived experience of residents housed within the borough. 5. Ensure the Council is constantly seeking to learn from best practice elsewhere and builds a learning methodology into its improvement work. The Board to invite external advice where relevant. 6. Report at a minimum of annually to Cabinet on its work.
ACCOUNTABILITY & REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER BODIES	<p>The Board will report to Cabinet.</p> <p>The membership of the Board are able to invite members of another relevant body or board to attend a meeting to inform the discussion on an agenda item.</p> <p>The Board will provide a layer of independent engagement and accountability for the Council in relation to the development and implementation of measures to</p>

	improve its housing service. It does not preclude or prevent Scrutiny & Overview or GPAC from fulfilling the duties as described in the Council Constitution. The Chairs of both committees will be invited to attend the Board.
REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	<p>The Board will be able to receive representations from members of the public and have question and answer sessions.</p> <p>Questions or representations which relate to a current planning or licensing matter or any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment shall not be permitted. In addition, questions/representations shall not be received or responded to where they pertain to anticipated or ongoing litigation, conciliation or mediation or any employment or personnel related issues or disputes. A named member of staff shall not be the subject of a question/representation.</p>
MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD	Recommendations for changes to membership of the Board can come from the Board or the council and will be proposed to the Cabinet Member for Housing for decision.
BOARD MEETINGS	Frequency to be determined by the Chair, in consultation with Board Members and the Council. Meetings will be held in public and will be up to two hours in duration.
STANDARD AGENDA ITEMS	Agenda to be set by the Chair as they see fit.
SUPPORT TO BOARD	The Corporate Director, Housing, will provide appropriate officer support for the Board.
REVIEW & AMENDMENTS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE	The Board will conduct an annual review of its progress to ensure it is meeting its aims and adding value to the improvement work of the housing directorate presented to Cabinet. Changes to the Terms of Reference may be proposed by the Board or Council at any time. Any changes will be subject to Cabinet approval.
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	All members of the Board will be expected to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles) and any interests declared by Board Members will be recorded in the minutes.

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Agenda Item 6

REPORT TO:	Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee 15 March 2022
SUBJECT:	Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	David Padfield – Interim Corporate Directors of Housing Stephen Tate - Director of Housing Estates and Improvements
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice Cabinet Member for Homes
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This report has been included on the agenda to give the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee to provide feedback on the draft report before its consideration by Cabinet on 21 March 2022.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided in the draft report and consider whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations for submission to the Cabinet during its consideration of the report.

1. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 30 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

- 1.1. The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is be provided with an early draft version of a report due to be considered by the Cabinet on 21 March 2022, on the 30 Year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 1.2. The draft Cabinet report has been provided to give the Sub-Committee the opportunity to provide feedback on the content of the report, which can be fed into the Cabinet's consideration of the HRA 30 Year Business Plan.

REPORT AUTHOR: Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Draft Cabinet Report – HRA 30 Year Business Plan

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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REPORT TO:	CABINET 21 March 2022
SUBJECT:	HRA 30 Year Business Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	David Padfield – Interim Corporate Directors of Housing Stephen Tate - Director of Housing Estates and Improvements
CABINET MEMBER:	Councilor Patricia Hay-Justice Cabinet Member for Homes

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The report presents a new 30 year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) with consideration to both capital and revenue investments required for the management and maintenance of Croydon Council's housing stock.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Business Plan demonstrates that the investment proposals are fundable, subject to the assumptions within the plan, and that the HRA remains sustainable and viable over the 30 year period.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to:

- 1.1 Note the HRA 30 year Business Plan based on the previously agreed HRA revenue budget for 2022-23
- 1.2 Note the assumptions the plan is based upon and the risks associated to these assumptions
- 1.3 Note the proposals for the ongoing development of the HRA Business Plan and agreed that the Plan will be updated annually with a full review every third year.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 year Business Plan sets out the long term financial position of this ring-fenced general fund account. Whilst the HRA Business Plan is for a period of 30 years, the key focus is on the medium-term (first five years) as there is more certainty on costs, demands, resources and pressures, to enable the prioritisation of housing investment.
- 2.2 The medium term also considers the strategic objectives of the Council and the impact of Government policies on rents, disposals and regeneration. The Plan is constantly evolving and the impact of the updated Decent Homes Standard and implications of the Government's Social Housing White Paper will be factored into the next iteration of the plan.
- 2.3 The key elements of the HRA financial operations are set out below and are brought together within the Plan. The Plan will be used as a tool to assess the impact of decision making around stock acquisition and maintenance, long-term treasury management strategy and wider strategic options of the Council.
- 2.4 The borrowing within the Plan in the short term is to finance acquisitions of new stock. No other borrowing is modelled at this point and will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.
- 2.5 The Plan has had a full refresh and a change of approach in some aspects, notably a review of inflationary assumptions, it will be updated on a regular basis incorporating changes in stock conditions and other factors.
- 2.6 The Business Plan is limited in scope to those assets that sit within the HRA or on HRA owned land as detailed [Appendix 1](#) and in summary in Table 1.

Table 1 Rent and Tenure Type

Asset Type	Rent/Tenure Type					Grand Total
	General Rent	Leased & Managed Properties	Leaseholders	Serviced Tenancies	Vacant Pending Demolition	
Dwellings	14,572	342	2,507	12	0	17,433
Non dwellings (inc. garages)	2,765	0	0	0	94	2,859
Grand Total	17,337	342	2,507	12	94	20,292

3. HRA BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The HRA specifically accounts for revenue expenditure and income relating to the Council's own housing stock and is ring fenced from the Council's General Fund as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which specifies the items that can be charged and credited to it. The account must include all costs and income relating to the Council's landlord role (except in

respect of leased accommodation for households owed a homeless duty, and in respect of accommodation provided other than under Housing Act powers).

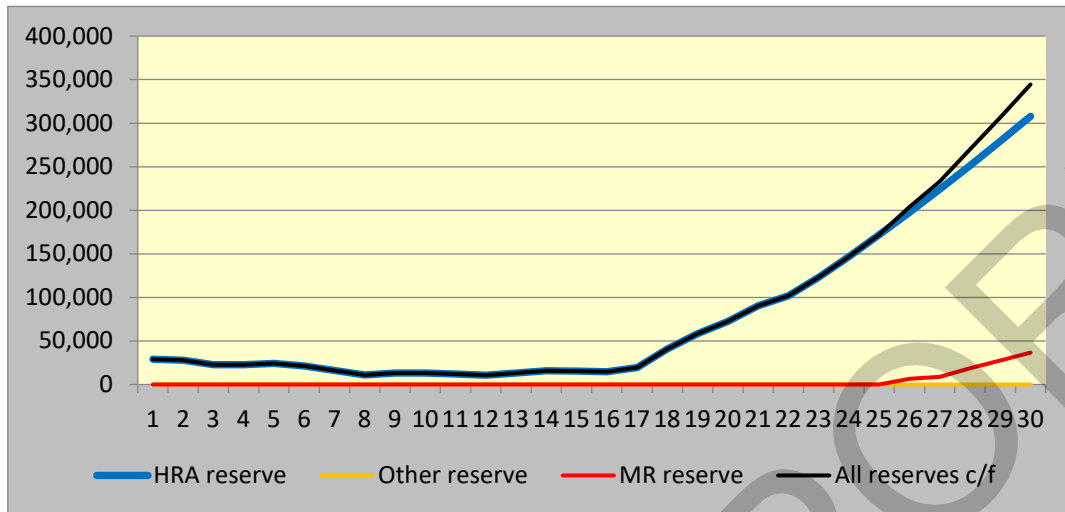
The Council has a legal duty to budget to ensure the account remains solvent and to review the account throughout the year.

- 3.2 The Housing self-financing system was implemented on 1 April 2012 when the HRA subsidy scheme was abolished. At that point Croydon took on £223million of debt. In the interim, acquisitions within the HRA have been made and the opening debt in the Plan in 2021-22 is £322.5million.
- 3.3 Maintaining a residential property portfolio of this magnitude is a major financial commitment. Furthermore, the primary source of funding to meet this commitment is rent paid by tenants and the Council is strictly limited as to the extent it can raise these rents. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Council is clear as to how it intends to balance income and expenditure over time to ensure the property portfolio receives the level of investment it requires and borrowing stays within the necessary prudential limits.
- 3.4 As well as investing in our housing stock to ensure all residents' homes are safe, warm and dry, the Council will also wish to improve its housing stock and invest in significantly reducing its carbon footprint over the life of the Plan. Further property acquisitions and regeneration projects are also likely to require funding during this period.
- 3.5 The HRA Business Plan is therefore a vital document in the proper management of our homes and will form the basis of a new Asset Management Strategy to be prepared later this year.
- 3.6 This report summarises the latest 30-year HRA Business Plan. The report includes financial analysis to demonstrate the viability and sustainability of the Plan.
- 3.7 Each year the Council will review, update and approve the Plan in line with best practice and the wider Improvement Plan contained at Appendix 8. A re-profiling of capital expenditure proposals and updates on how the Council plans to finance the capital programme including use of surplus capital receipts, grants and HRA borrowing, will also be carried out annually. It is envisaged that a complete review of the Plan will take place at least every third year.

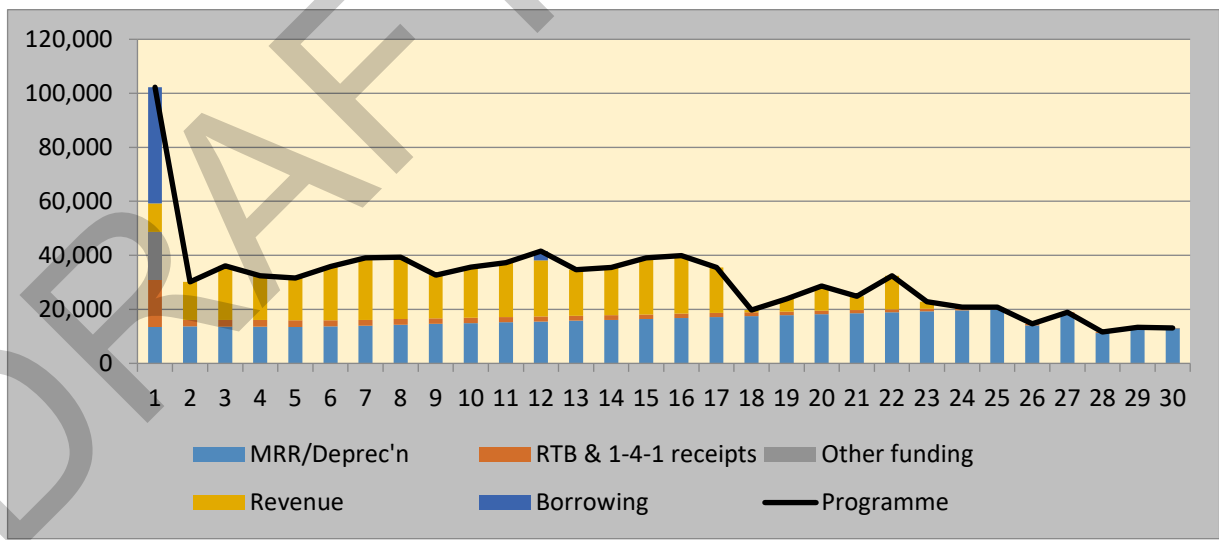
4. BUSINESS PLAN KEY HEADLINES

- 4.1 The HRA Business Plan in its current format presents a sustainable plan. With the current HRA reserves used to meet the investment required for the capital repairs programme. Figure 1 shows the projection of the reserves position over the plan period demonstrating a healthy outturn, risks to this outturn are highlighted in section 5.

Figure 1 Revenue Projection shows the years of the plan and the growth in reserves.



- 4.2 The plan is based on the assumptions and risks as set out in section 5 with expenditure based on CPI and rents of CPI +1% in the years 2022 to 2024 and thereafter CPI only.
- 4.3 The HRA capital programme in Year 1 (2021-2022) is based on the current budgeted plan of £26.7m any slippage from this will be carried forward into 2022-23. The capital programme for Year 2 of £22m is set out in section 5.7 below.
- 4.4 Borrowing in Year 1 only is assumed. Figure 2 provides an overview of the use of borrowing in Year 1 only and thereafter the projected ability of the programme to be met from within the HRA’s own resources.



- 4.5 The opening HRA reserves are £27.6m and a minimum HRA reserve threshold level of £8.6m is set based on generally accepted best practice in the market of 10.5% of annual turnover.

4.6 Croydon benchmark to the outer London average costs and other key metrics are measured and shown in [Appendix 2](#)

5. BUSINESS PLAN KEY BASELINE ASSUMPTIONS

5.1 Key rate assumptions and comparatives to outer London averages used are set out in [Appendix 2](#)

5.2 HRA Revenue

The Council has assumed as per [Appendix 2](#) that rents will increase by CPI plus 1% and based on the assumption of RTB losses [Appendix 4](#) will provide rental income of £79m in Year 1 (2021-22) [Appendix 3](#).

Revenue expenditure is anticipated to increase largely due to inflationary factors. These key assumptions are used to set the below (Table 2) HRA Business Plan Year 1-5 income and expenditure account.

Table 2 Year 1-5 HRA Income and Expenditure Account

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Dwelling rents	78,878	82,438	84,852	87,032	88,399
Non-dwelling rents	1,781	1,852	1,889	1,927	1,966
Service charge income	6,026	6,064	6,185	6,309	6,435
Other income and contributions	3,690	3,763	3,839	3,915	3,994
Total income	90,375	94,117	96,765	99,183	100,794
Repairs & maintenance	13,437	13,799	14,044	14,293	14,547
Management (incl RRT)	38,679	39,453	40,242	41,047	41,868
Bad debts	750	765	860	882	896
Dwelling Depreciation	13,488	13,659	13,599	13,538	13,478
Debt management	149	149	149	149	149
Total costs	66,503	67,825	68,894	69,910	70,937
Net income from services	23,871	26,292	27,871	29,274	29,856
Interest payable	- 12,119	- 13,076	- 13,016	- 12,973	- 12,948
Interest income	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/expenditure before appropriations	11,753	13,216	14,855	16,300	16,908
Set aside for debt repayment	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue contributions to capital	- 10,501	- 14,059	- 20,003	- 16,410	- 15,568
Allocation to/from other reserves	-	-	-	-	-
Other appropriations	-	-	-	-	-
Net HRA Surplus/Deficit	1,252	- 844	- 5,148	- 110	1,340
HRA Balance brought forward	27,629	28,881	28,037	22,889	22,779
HRA surplus/(deficit)	1,252	- 844	- 5,148	- 110	1,340
HRA Balance carried forward	28,881	28,037	22,889	22,779	24,119

The HRA surplus of £1.25m will be a balanced position this table to be updated for P10 outturn

- 5.3 The Repairs and Maintenance budget of £13.4m is made up of responsive and cyclical repairs. Further details of repairs of existing stock and compliance to legislative changes is set out in alongside the Housing Improvement Plan in [Appendix 6](#)
- 5.5 In response to the emphasis on compliance and fire safety an increase in the budgeted spend within the management costs for staffing with this expertise has been included.
- 5.6 Bad debt and voids are provided for within the plan on the basis of 1% and 1.5% respectively, see [Appendix 2](#) for the basis of the assumptions used. They are based on a percentage of rental income and at a prudent level.
- 5.7 The interest payable of £12m is based on the existing debt of £322.5million at interest rate of 2.65% (actual of 2.5%) and assumes an additional £43m in 2021-22. Thereafter debt remains constant. Section 6 Future Considerations, recognises the need to set prudential indicators for financing as well as debt and acquisitions policies.
- 5.8 **HRA Capital**
The long-term 30 year capital forecasts are based on the current status of the asset management database, which includes a significant provision for backlog expenditure which has been allocated over the next 15 years. Work is ongoing to ensure the accuracy of the database and will be backed up by commissioning an external stock condition sample survey to be uploaded to the new IT system. Coupled with the likely introduction later this year of the updated Decent Homes Standard the expenditure profile will change from that modelled in the plan.

Whilst, in overall terms, the expenditure over 30 years is in line with sector benchmarks it is possible that expenditure may be brought forward or delayed in conjunction with accessing delivery capacity. In addition further work is required to establish the costs for improving the energy efficiency of the stock to assist in meeting the Council's targets for zero-carbon. The next iteration of the HRA business plan will incorporate the results of this work, the impact in terms of future borrowing requirements and the approach to defining HRA prudential borrowing limits.

It will align with the Asset Management strategy (due for release at the end of 2022) and will reflect the longer term direction for the management and maintenance of our assets.

The Council will deliver a capital programme that ensures that residents' homes are warm, dry, safe and hazard free. We will work with residents to consult on the work that we intend to carry out and include them in determining our future investment. Details of our Resident Engagement Strategy will be published in 2022.

The 2022-23 plan for capital investment is included in [Appendix 5](#)

The programme will be geared to deliver for Croydon residents, stock that meets and reflects the current Decent Homes requirements and keeps pace with regulation and legislative updates shown at [Appendix 11](#).

5.9 HRA Reserves

Croydon has a healthy opening reserves position sets an opening balance at the start of the Business Plan at £27.6m. This reserve balance contributes towards funding any in-year risks and is set aside to support any one-off projects and investment that leads to efficiencies and/or delivery of a better service to residents of the Council

The year on year projected use of the HRA reserve over the next 5 years along with contributions towards the reserves balance is maintained.

5.10 The Planned Capital Programme will draw down from the Major Repairs Reserve within the HRA reserves to fund the works. The HRA is expected to maintain a minimum level of reserves £8.6m the basis for this is set out in [Appendix 2](#)

5.11 A development and acquisition policy is required the current iteration of the business plan has no such programme assumed, however there are proposals for future activity included in [Appendix 7](#)

5.11 An opening debt balance of £322.5million, largely as a result of the 2012 legislation to make HRA self-financing. A debt repayment plan will also be modelled for future plans, [Appendix 7](#)

5.12 There is an assumed level of Right to Buy and stock loss of 13% over the 30 years of the plan. The details are set out in [Appendix 4](#). Use of RTB receipts are accounted for within capital. It is open to a Council to use those RTB receipts for HRA purposes, which is the assumption within this plan, but there is no obligation to do so.

6. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The Housing Improvement Plan shown at [Appendix 6](#) relies on a robust HRA Business Plan in order to ensure that it can be resourced. There are a number of key considerations as follows:

6.2 An Asset Management Strategy

A detailed Stock Condition Database is a key element and driver for the expenditure within the plan. The Council is investing in a new IT system to make the data that is available on which the stock conditions are based more comprehensive and reliable.

Improvements to the way in which we collect and analyse data as part of stock condition surveys will be implemented. Repair requests will be interfaced between the council's housing system and repair partnering contractor with almost "real time" correlation. Planned works will be instructed through the planned works module and directly linked to the council's financial system.

A number of condition surveys and reports have already been commissioned for our high rise blocks. These have been shared with residents and followed with a short and medium term investment programme.

6.3 Future provision & regeneration

The council needs to determine how it will acquire properties in the short, medium and long term. Finances, policies and procedures need to be put in place to ensure that any acquisitions are properly resourced both financially and in terms of staffing capacity/qualifications. Properties should be acquired in conjunction with specific housing needs and demand - both current and projected

Currently, new build properties are acquired via the Council's shared ownership of Brick by Brick. The remaining contracted sites are scheduled for completion in 2024. After this time, there is no arrangement or financial provision to build or acquire properties inside or outside the HRA

With an ageing stock and continual change in housing standards and needs, it is inevitable that some of the housing stock at some point will be unviable to repair. Where large proportions of this stock is situated on existing housing estates, the council may decide that estate regeneration should be considered. In order to facilitate this, the council needs to formally agree the strategy, processes, gateways and governance procedures in conjunction with a suitable resident offer.

6.4 Changes to legislation

There are a number of fundamental Government Policy decisions and potential legislative changes in process which will have a significant impact upon HRA and future HRA Business Plan updates. While the impact of the changes are not yet fully known there is within the Capital investment programme spend a budget provision for the Councils best current assessment of what actions will be required. [Appendix 8](#)

Social issues and The Social Housing White paper [Appendix 8](#) and preparations for implementation of recommendations where possible will be considered.

7. BUSINESS PLAN KEY RISKS

- 7.1 Long term future rent uncertainty – we have seen the impact of the 4 year rent freeze and any rent reductions will have an impact on the Business Plan.
- 7.2 Increase costs of repairs and major works. Overspends to budget occur which place an increased burden on the HRA. Although it should be noted that the

plan is not wholly and contractually committed therefore the Council can control the level of spend within the plan.

- 7.3 Management options that are used to mitigate additional risks include annual updates to the business plan.
- 7.4 Further changes in government legislation [Appendix 8](#). The Hackitt review of building and fire safety has been published however the new legislation and statutory guidance it requires has been delayed and will need to be reflected in future revisions to the Business Plan.
- 7.5 Borrowing and interest rates. The Business Plan does not have a repayment of debt instead an assumption of refinancing of loans as they become due. While interest rates for borrowing remain at low levels this results in a lower cost to service the debt however this will require prudent management.
- 7.6 Prudential borrowing indicators are required as a result of the removal of the debt cap from the HRA. The Business Plan has a prudent position with 3 metrics showing there is future borrowing capacity however prior to any borrowing the indicators will be set
- 7.7 Sensitivity analysis has been carried out on the plan at mid point Year 15 and final Year 30 see table 3.

A number of variations on inflation and other baseline assumptions have been flexed to predict the impact on the HRA reserves balance by the movement and the impact on the HRA debt levels.

For example the HRA reserves would drop to £11.35m with a repairs inflation of CPI +5% in years 2-5 and the HRA debt would increase to £422.84m in order to sustain the levels of repairs required.

Table 3 Sensitivity Table

Sensitivity	HRA Bal Yr 15	HRA Debt Yr 15	HRA Bal Yr 30	HRA Debt Yr 30
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Base	15.29	369.05	344.43	369.05
Repairs Inflation yrs 2-5 CPI+5%	11.35	422.84	236.71	432.59
Capital Inflation yrs 2-5 CPI+5%	11.35	502.48	195.14	528.64
Rents CPI Only yrs 3 & 4	11.35	391.10	296.08	394.60
Rent freeze from 2022-23	8.95	402.06	95.98	409.97
Voids & Bad Debts +1%	11.35	392.95	294.24	396.57
Long-term Loans +1%	14.69	369.82	319.70	369.82
Capital Expenditure +10%	11.35	419.59	285.53	426.93
Right to Buys +10%	14.87	368.47	336.07	368.47
Acquisitions of 50 per year, yrs 3-8 £300k per unit, 40% Subsidy at LAR	18.02	410.39	364.79	410.39
L/H Recharges 50%	14.09	371.79	336.34	371.79

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

8.1 There are no immediate HR impacts or implications arising from this report

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1

(Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of Equalities)

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

10.1

(Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

11.1

(Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

12. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

a. WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

YES/NO

(If yes, please provide brief details as to what 'personal data' will be processed and complete the next question).

(If no, please complete the sign off)

b. HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

YES/NO

(If yes, please attach a copy).

CONTACT OFFICER:

Guarnori, Orlagh, Head of Finance, Resources.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Appendix 1 Details of HRA Tenant type
Appendix 2 Business Plan – Key assumptions
Appendix 3 HRA Rental Income Budget
Appendix 4 Right to Buy
Appendix 5 Programme of Repairs of Existing Stock
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Appendix 7 Acquisitions & Debt repayment and modelling
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Appendix 1 Details of HRA Tenant type

Table 1 Rent/Tenure Type

Asset Type	Rent/Tenure Type					Grand Total
	General Rent	Leased & Managed Properties	Leaseholders	Serviced Tenancies	Vacant Pending Demolition	
Blocks of Flats	1,128	3				1,131
Caravan Plots	19					19
Caravan Sites	1					1
Dwellings	13,424	339	2,507	12		16,282
Garages	2,533				94	2,627
Garage Blocks	104					104
Parking Spaces	107					107
Playgrounds	21					21
Grand Total	17,337	342	2,507	12	94	20,292

Notes to the above:

General social rent includes general needs, sheltered and extra care schemes. Leasehold costs are paid on behalf of leaseholds and then recovered via service charge billing (in arrears).

Within the HRA are a number of other provisions such as shared ownership, affordable rent and other rents such as community and commercial provisions.

The HRA also supports and manages the provision of statutory required services such as temporary and emergency accommodation and traveler sites, with some provision being made within HRA dwellings/assets along with other non-HRA private leasing schemes.

Appendix 2 Business Plan – Key assumptions & Benchmark to outer London

	Assumption	Notes
Dwelling Rent	CPI + 1% Increase in rents from 2022 to 2024 and CPI only thereafter	
Void rates	2%	
Service Charges	CPI + 1% Increase in rents from 2022 to 2024-25 and CPI + 0.5% increases from 2025-26	Full service charge review to be carried out in 2022
Non dwelling rents	CPI + 1% Increase in rents from 2022 to 2024 and CPI only thereafter	
Garage Rents	CPI + 1% Increase in rents from 2022 to 2024 and CPI only thereafter	Review of long term void garages required with demolitions and infills decisions in 2022
Major Works Leaseholder Contributions	Linked to Capital Programme	
Repairs and Maintenance Costs	RPI increases	
Heating and hot water charges	RPI increases	
Interest rate on borrowings	2.65% on External Borrowing Year 12 onwards 3.5%	
Depreciation	Straight Line Basis over life of Assets	

Other Assumptions:

HRA Bad Debt Provision:

The Plan provision for bad debts is calculated based on a percentage of rental income to reflect rent increases, resulting in greater levels of provision. The provision rate of 1% in Year 1 is used and 1% thereafter is based on the current actual debt recovery.

HRA Voids:

The Plan provision for Voids is calculated based on a percentage of rental income to reflect rent increases. The provision rate of 1.5% is based on the current void rate and for prudence remains at 1.5% in each of the following years.

Garage voids further review of the garages that are long term void will be carried out in 2022 with a view to decisions on demolition and use of the space for parking bays to be considered.

Other long term voids are reviewed as part of the overall stock analysis

Major Repairs Reserve

The Business Plan assumes that any existing components beyond their theoretical lifespan are considered as backlog and due to be replaced on a comparable basis

The HRA has prior year reserves, these funds will be used if required.

The HRA does not go below the pre-set minimum balance of £8.6million (inflated on an annual basis) in any year of the plan. The overall trajectory of revenue reserves is however upwards towards the end of the 30-year term.

The Minimum HRA Balance is based on a 10.5% annual turnover and will allow for 1.5 months of total operating expenditure. It assumes a base cover of £642 per unit

Outer London Borough Benchmarks (14 out of 15)

Metric	Croydon 2020.21	Outer London 2020.21 Average
Rented Properties	13,393	9,521
Gross Management per unit	£3,182	£2,726
Net Management (less service charges) per unit	£2,360	£1,910
Repairs per unit	£762	£1,116
Gross Management and Repairs per unit	£3,944	£3,842
Depreciation per unit	£903	£1,206
Average Rent (52 week basis)	£106.24	£106.40
Other (non-Service Charge) Income per unit	£110	£348
Operating Surplus per unit	£1,760	£1,412
Operating Margin	26.6%	21.9%
Debt per unit	£26,429	£18,740
Interest per unit	£904	£807
Interest Rate	3.42%	4.31%
Reserves per unit	£2,063	£2,313
Existing Use Value per unit	£76,658	£86,887
Interest Cover Ratio	1.95	1.75
Loan to Value	35%	22%
Debt: Turnover	4.0	2.9

Appendix 3 HRA Rental Income Budget

HRA Rental Income Budget:

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account used to manage income and costs associated with managing the Council's owned housing stock and related assets which includes shops and garages on council housing estates. It is funded primarily from tenants' rents and service charges.

An average social rents are taken as the basis for the report, Table 2 sets out the weekly actual social rent charges. The average rent of £xxx is as per the Cabinet agreed (7 February 2022 meeting) rent charges, an increase of 4.1% for the 2022-23 year. The business plan is based on the assumption of 13,432 properties and assumes a CPI & 1% thereafter with CPI set at X% to April 2024 and CPI only for the remainder of the plan.

Table 3 shows the impact of the rental increase on additional income. The use of the revenue income to fund the contributions to capital for major repairs is set out in section XX of this report. Table 3 sets out the total budgeted income to the HRA from rents and other charges for 2022-23.

Table 2 Social Rents p/w 2022-23

Bedroom Size	Average rent 2021-22 - £ p/w	Average rent 2022-23 with Increase - £ p/w	Increase - £ p/w
0 Bedsit	77.11	80.27	3.16
1	92.89	96.70	3.81
2	110.88	115.42	4.54
3	133.02	138.47	5.45

Table 3 Summary of Housing Rent Budgets for 2022-23

Type of Rent/Charge	Rents for 2022-23 with 4.1% Increase £'s	Rents for 2021-22 (as at Apr 21) £'s	Additional Income
Housing Dwelling Rents	£78,662,349	£75,250,856	£3,411,493
Housing Service Charge	£4,352,429	£4,154,111	£198,318
Parking Space Rents	£39,940	£38,367	£1,573
Garage Rents	£1,827,580	£1,756,726	£70,854
Heating Charges	£551,592	£509,304	£42,287
	£85,433,889	£81,709,365	£3,724,525

Appendix 4 Right to Buy property losses

HRA Right to Buy Receipts:

The Plan has an opening assumption of 13,432 properties and assumes an annual loss of 60 properties through right to buy for each of the remaining years. That results in a 13% stock loss over the 30 years. No other stock losses are modelled in the plan.

Although there are a total of 280 properties are forecast to be acquired by the HRA within the current financial year 2021-22 no further acquisitions have been assumed.

The Plan has used the audited actual returns submitted to the department. The opening balance on reserves of RTB receipts is £14.5m. Table 4 sets out the impact of the assumption of continued sales through RTB.

In April 2021 the regulations on the use of RTB receipts were updated, there is now a 5 year window available rather than 3 under which to use the allowable receipts. The Plan allows for the legislation changes and Table 5 sets out the impact and the need for an acquisition policy to be implemented by 2027-28 in order to avoid making a return of unused receipts to Treasury.

Table 4 Assumed Reserves

1-4-1 Reserve	Actuals	Projected	Projected	Projected
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Opening Balance	11,685,942	14,491,401	11,503,653	16,969,219
Additions	2,805,459	5,289,553	5,465,566	5,645,365
Assumed Usage	-	8,277,300		
Closing Balance	14,491,401	11,503,653	16,969,219	22,614,585

Table 5 Assumed Receipts v Spend

Receipts v Spend	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Total Receipts in reckonable Year	24,786,513	33,605,814	42,124,698	47,327,490	53,879,729	59,169,281	64,634,847
30%/40% of Relevant Expenditure	62,047,103	62,047,103	62,047,103	62,047,103	62,047,103	62,047,103	62,047,103
Refundable to Treasury (Excluding Interest)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,587,745

Appendix 5 Programme of Repairs of existing stock

Table 8 2022/23 Capital Programme

Work Type	Budget
General Building Works	£8,368,060
Electrical Works	£3,390,000
Mechanical Works	£1,600,000
Lift Works	£465,000
Window	£3,000,000
Compliance & Fire Safety	£2,310,000
Staffing	£1,800,000
Other	£1,150,000
TOTAL	£22,083,60
Cyclical	£1,624,700

Repairs of existing stock:

The council has procured a new housing database, which will combine the existing housing and asset management database into one software solution. In addition, the council has procured several additional modules and interfaces which will not only assist in linking and reporting across key services but will both provide direct and indirect efficiencies. The works outlined in **Table 8 2022/23 Capital Programme** will be reviewed on a rolling programme and maintained.

Stock data collection in principle will remain the same but the collecting and reporting net will be cast wider, with greater visibility for all.

Repair requests will be interfaced between the council's housing system and repair partnering contractor with almost "real time" correlation. Planned works will be instructed through the planned works module and directly linked to the council's financial system.

An overarching reporting tool will sit alongside compliance, servicing and health & safety modules.

Compliance:

Within the 2022-23 HRA budget is an assumed investment in the employee's costs and specifically compliance. The intention is to enhance the capacity of the team which will then ensure that within the HRA Business Plan there is sufficient resilience built in to allow for changes in legislation and requirements.

The Business Plan has a specific line for Fire Safety. The December 2019 Queen's Speech set out proposals for two separate pieces of new safety legislation - a Building Safety Bill sponsored by MHCLG and a Fire Safety Bill sponsored by the Home Office.

The Building Safety Bill will set out new and enhanced regulatory regimes for building safety and construction products, and make provision for residents to have a stronger voice in the new system. The Bill will take forward all of the recommendations resulting from the Hackett Review of Building Safety in an enhanced safety framework

for higher risk residential buildings.

The Fire Safety Bill will clarify that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 requires building owners and managers of multi-occupied residential premises of any height to fully consider and mitigate risks of any external wall systems and fire doors which open on to escape routes.

In addition to existing duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 the Fire Safety Bill clarifies the requirements of the building owners and managers of a building with two or more sets of domestic dwellings to:-

- a) Share information with their local fire and rescue service in respect of each building for which they are responsible about the design of its external walls and details of the materials of which those walls are constructed, including cladding, balconies and windows.
- b) Undertake annual inspections of all individual flat entrance doors that open onto common parts.

This clarification will mean that fire and rescue services can hold building owners accountable if they fail to comply with these responsibilities. The recommendations state that building owners and managers of high-rise and multi-occupied residential buildings should be responsible for:

Also within the future compliance review and contained within **Table 8 2022/23 Capital PROGRAMME** the Business Plan allows for energy efficiency. The Asset Management Plan 2019-28 sets out a number of key strategic objectives that align with wider corporate objectives of removing our residents from fuel poverty and reducing CO2 emissions.

The Asset Management Plan sets out strategic asset objectives that align with wider corporate objectives such as declaring the Climate emergency (July 2019) and the current target of achieving an average energy efficiency or SAP rating of 68% across our housing stock every year.

The goal of achieving every property meeting at least a SAP rating of band C by 2030 aligns with central government aims, as the Clean Growth Strategy states; “We want all fuel poor homes to be upgraded to EPC Band C by 2030, and our aspiration is that, across the whole housing stock, as many homes as possible reach a similar standard by 2035, where practical, cost effective and affordable.” Clean Growth Strategy.

The Council is currently undertaking major improvement works to a number of blocks in the borough. The works include new windows, fire resistant external cladding and a Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) heating system. These heat pumps will replace storage heaters that were coming to the end. The electric storage heaters are expensive to run and difficult to use for our residents. We estimate that heating bills will be significantly reduced following the works, meaning fuel poverty should also be reduced.

A GSHP system is a renewable heating system. The system extracts low-temperature energy stored in the ground using buried pipework and compresses this energy into a higher temperature which is then used to provide a home with 100% of its heating and hot water all year round.

Appendix 6 Housing Improvement plan update

Put the full plan into here

The housing improvement plan is a clearly defined project of work streams dedicated to ensuring that residents receive an enriched service.

The work streams include:

- Vision & strategy for the housing service
- Performance & complaints
- Resident engagement
- Compliance & safety
- Management of repairs contract
- Business intelligence, asset management & investment planning
- Workforce planning & staff development
- Voids management
- Temporary accommodation

Each work stream has a senior accountable officer and project manager along with a series of tasks, objectives and milestones.

Once the plan is fulfilled, residents will see a significant service improvement carried out by a compassionate, qualified workforce

Appendix 7 Acquisitions & Debt repayment and modelling

An acquisitions policy will be required by 2027 in order to avoid the making payments to Treasury of unspent RTB receipts. The changes to the use of RTB legislation allows the LA to use the receipts to fund the full costs of acquisitions on:

1. Open market acquisitions – this is capped at 20 properties per year
2. Self-development of new builds
3. Grants to a registered provider to developed
4. Combination of the above.

Option 4 allows for a matching position can be taken between open market acquisitions and new development which would effectively allow for an increased number of open market acquisitions to be made.

It was agreed at March cabinet 2021 within the report setting out Croydon's General Fund and HRA budget that: *'No new capital schemes will be added to the PROGRAMME without a business case being approved, a report being submitted to cabinet and then the funds will be released subject to the revenue costs of any scheme being affordable, this applies to both General Fund and HRA capital schemes'*

Debt Repayment plan:

The HRA became self-financing and took on initial debt relating to existing Stock. Originally an additional debt was restricted by a borrowing cap which was lifted in April 2019. The Plan has an opening debt position of £322.6m

A policy is required as to whether repayment of debt should be provided for or whether the debt refinancing only will be pursued. While there is a requirement of 4% debt repayment in the general fund there is no requirement in the HRA. There is however potential for debt repayment if the plan is sufficiently stocked with new acquisitions which are profit generating.

The overall level of reserves is positive at the end of term highlighting that the plan generates sufficient revenue to meet all its obligations (but could not fully repay the full value of the HRA debt outstanding if the council so wished). This combined balance is projected at c£161million by year 30

The proposition within this analysis is that, whilst there is theoretically now no limit to borrowing within the HRA, the existing asset and operating base generates a net income stream that does offer a logical limit on sustainable borrowing levels. In setting out its investment strategy, the council therefore needs to consider how it will take decisions on whether to invest, how to fund, the extent of new borrowing, and determine a framework within which decisions will be taken for the business plan overall, within the medium term financial strategy and within successive budget rounds

HRA financing options available

1. Right to Buy Receipts
2. Conditional Grants
3. Affordable Housing Fund
4. Capital Receipts

5. Reserves and leaseholder contributions
6. Borrowing

Appendix 8 Legislation changes

The Hackitt Report

The Independent Review of Building Regulation and Fire Safety led by Dame Judith Hackitt, found that there are issues in the way some high-rise residential buildings are built, managed and looked after. Her review also found that sometimes residents are not confident that their buildings are safe and have been unable to get their concerns taken seriously. The Government has drafted a set of policy proposals to improve the fire and structural safety of high-rise residential buildings to ensure high-rise residential buildings are safe to live in and residents are able to have their voices heard.

New Legislation

Fire Safety Bill has now been passed by Parliament and is now the Fire Safety Act 2021. The Fire Safety Act clarifies the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which requires a responsible person to undertake, and review regularly, a fire risk assessment of all non-domestic premises, including the non-domestic parts of multi-occupied residential buildings. The Fire Safety Act now covers a buildings structure, external walls, and doors between domestic premises and communal areas.

The Building Safety Bill is intended to establish a Building Safety Regulator to implement and oversee a new inspection regime for higher-risk buildings, establish a legal regime to oversee higher-risk buildings, and ensure residents have a stronger voice in the system

Social Housing White Paper

Published in November 2020, the White Paper sets out a range of standards every social housing resident should expect:

- To be safe in your home
- To know how your landlord is performing
- To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
- To be treated with respect
- To have your voice heard by your landlord
- To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- To be supported to take your first step to ownership

The Government has not yet published a timetable for delivering the measures set out in the Social Housing White Paper. Some of the proposals will require primary legislation before they can be implemented. The planned Social Housing Regulation Bill will address this, however, when this legislation comes into force is not confirmed, the White Paper potentially impacts on the HRA, and the key areas are:

- The requirement for social landlords to have an accountable person responsible for health and safety

- New resident satisfaction measures with a requirement for social landlords to publish their performance against these measures annually and the Regulator will consider ways to compare organisations
- A new regime of inspections which can be resource intensive
- Review of Decent Homes Standard taking place from Spring 2021 to Summer 2022 with the view of creating a refreshed Decent Homes Standard Potential

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