Meeting	EXECUTIVE / COUNCIL
Portfolio Area	RESOURCES/ HOUSING, HEALTH AND OLDER PEOPLE
Date	19 January 2022 / 26 January 2022

FINAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET SETTING AND RENT REPORT 2022/23

KEY DECISION

Authors	Clare Fletcher| 2933; Keith Reynoldson |2403
Contributor	Chris Stratford | 2024; Ash Ahmed | 2805; Andrew Garside | 2545; Clare Fletcher | 2933; Steve Dupoy | 2587; Richard Protheroe | 2938;
Lead Officers	Chris Stratford| 2024; Clare Fletcher | 2933
Contact Officers	Keith Reynoldson |2403

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update Members on the final proposals on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets and rent setting for 2022/23, to be considered by Council on 26 January 2022.

1.2 To update Members on the formula for setting rents for 2022/23.

1.3 To propose the HRA rents for 2022/23.

1.4 To propose the HRA service charges for 2022/23.

1.5 To update Members on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 HRA budget, incorporating the Making Your Money Count options and fees and charges.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That HRA rent on dwellings be increased, week commencing 4 April 2022 by 4.1% which is an average increase of £4.06 for social rents, £6.60 for affordable rents and £4.74 for Low Start Shared Ownership homes per week (based on a 52-week year). This has been calculated using the rent formula, CPI + 1% in line with the government's rent policy as set out in paragraph 4.1.1.

2.2 That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 HRA budget set out in Appendix A.

2.3 That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 growth options as set out in section 4.8, with supporting impact assessments in Appendix B. This includes new match funding for a Decarbonisation Grant application of £950,000.

2.4 That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix C.

2.5 That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 service charges.

2.6 That Council be recommended to approve the minimum level of reserves for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix D to this report.

2.7 That Members note the Rent Increase Equalities Impact Assessments appended to this report in Appendices E.

2.8 That the contingency sum of £250,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2022/23 (unchanged from 2021/22).

2.9 That Council notes the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meeting as set out in 4.10 in the report.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The HRA is a legally ring fenced account that records the income and expenditure relating to the operation of the Council's housing stock. The main costs in the HRA relate to management, maintenance, depreciation (used to finance capital works) and interest on loans. This is mainly funded from rents that make up the majority of HRA income. Any surpluses are held in the ring fenced area and are used to contribute towards capital and offset years where the account may be in deficit.

3.2 The sustainability of the HRA is mainly reliant on rent levels and last year saw a lower level of inflation than expected in the business plan (0.5% compared to 2.2%). This not only impacts the current year, but has a large cumulative effect on the 30 year plan. However, interest rates on borrowing were lower than forecast and the inflation in September 2021 has been much higher than anticipated, offsetting the lower income levels from last year.

3.3 For 2022/23 rent setting there has been no change to the government rent policy issued in 2020, this allows for social housing providers to increase rents by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) +1% for a five-year period. Guidance released in November 2020 does allow local authorities to breach this cap in circumstances of exceptional financial hardship. However, this would not currently apply to Stevenage Borough Council's HRA.

3.4 There are still developing policy issues in the HRA regarding the decent homes standard and regulation of the sector. Also environmental improvements, like decarbonisation of the housing stock and building safety regulations continue to evolve. Estimates for some of the potential impacts of changes in these areas have been included in the budget plans, but these will need to be refined as the position becomes clearer and updated in the 30 year business plan in the summer of 2022.

3.5 The Government have finally concluded their reforms of the 'Use of Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts'. The system has now been greatly simplified, requiring annual, rather than quarterly, returns and accounting. Councils have also been given 5 years to spend receipts, instead of 3 under the old rules. The percentage of receipts used in new acquisitions has been increased from 30% to 40%, reducing the additional contribution needed from HRA resources to use the receipts. However, a limit has been placed on acquisitions of existing properties through open market purchase, to be phased in over the next 3 years. While this could limit opportunities in the future, with current development plans this is unlikely to be an issue in the medium term and overall the changes have been beneficial for the Council.

3.6 Like other Council services the HRA continues to be impacted by the COVID pandemic. In particular, rent arrears have not substantially reduced from the height of the crisis and are still historically high. The potential for further issues resulting from the re-commencement of enforcement action and the continued roll out of Universal Credit, will be monitored carefully in the coming months. In some areas of the service there are still operational pressures caused by the pandemic. Most notably in Independent Living, due to increased COVID safety measures. The known impacts have been reflected in the budget proposals.

3.7 The total number of HRA homes in management on 14 October 2021 is summarised in the table below. The average rents for 2022/23 are based on current housing stock, any right to buys or new schemes after this date may change the average rent per property type.

Stock Numbers at 14/10/2021	Social	Affordable	Sheltered	LSSO	Homeless	Total
Number of Properties	6,819	35	837	80	174	7,945

3.8 The assumptions in the HRA Draft report to the December 2021 Executive are shown in the table below.

Financial Assumptions included in the HRA MTFS and December FS report	2021/22	2022/23
Rent & Service Charge Increases	CPI+1% or 1.5%	CPI+1% or 4.1%
New Build policy	50% Affordable 50% Social	
Right-to-Buys	35	35
Making Your Money Count Options	£366,440	£57,370
Growth bids	£224,444	£1,418,460
Growth bids Business Plan	£250,000	£0
Financial Assumptions included in the HRA MTFS and December FS report	**2021/22**	**2022/23**
New Build - Number of Units (HRA BP)	29	179
Repayment of Debt	0	0
New loans	26,602,339	15,640,000
Capital Deficit in the Business Plan	0	0

3.9 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in the Constitution prescribe the Budget setting process, which includes a minimum consultation period of three weeks. Under Article 4 of the Constitution, the Budget also includes: the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects; proposed contingency funds; setting the rents; decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirement; the control of its capital expenditure; and the setting of virement limits.

4 Reasons for recommended course of action and other options

4.1 Rents

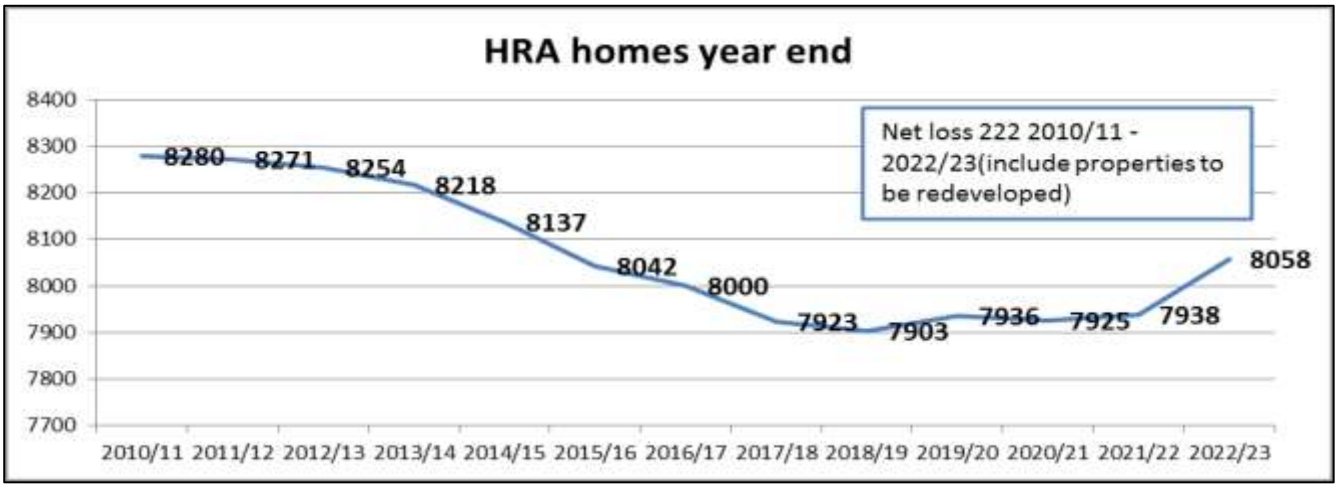
4.1.1 Rents are calculated on a formula of a CPI+1% increase for 2022/23. The CPI inflation increase is based on the September index which was 3.1%, this means the increase for 2022/23 for the council's housing stock is 4.1%.

4.1.2 The proposed average rents for 2022/23 are set out in the table below, there are currently 35 affordable rented properties (ranging from four bedroom-two-bedroom houses and flats). There is no change from the draft December HRA report.

Average Rents 2022/23	LSSO	Incr./ (decr.) %	social	Increase/ (decrease) %	Affordable	Incr./ (decr.) %
Average Rent 2021/22	£115.59		£99.01		£160.97	
Add rent impact 2022/23	£4.74	4.10%	£4.06	4.10%	£6.60	4.10%
Total 52 week Rent 2022/23	**£120.33**		**£103.07**		**£167.57**	

4.1.3 The net rental income increase for 2022/23 is estimated to be £2.1Million, which includes the impacts of estimated right to buys, a significant number of expected new properties and properties taken out of management (awaiting redevelopment).

4.1.4 The total number of properties available is estimated to have reduced by 222 homes between 2010/11 and 2022/23, (based on net impact of RTBs, new homes, homes awaiting development). The forecast numbers for 2022/23 are a the highest level since 2015/16 and reflect new schemes such as Kenilworth and Symonds Green.

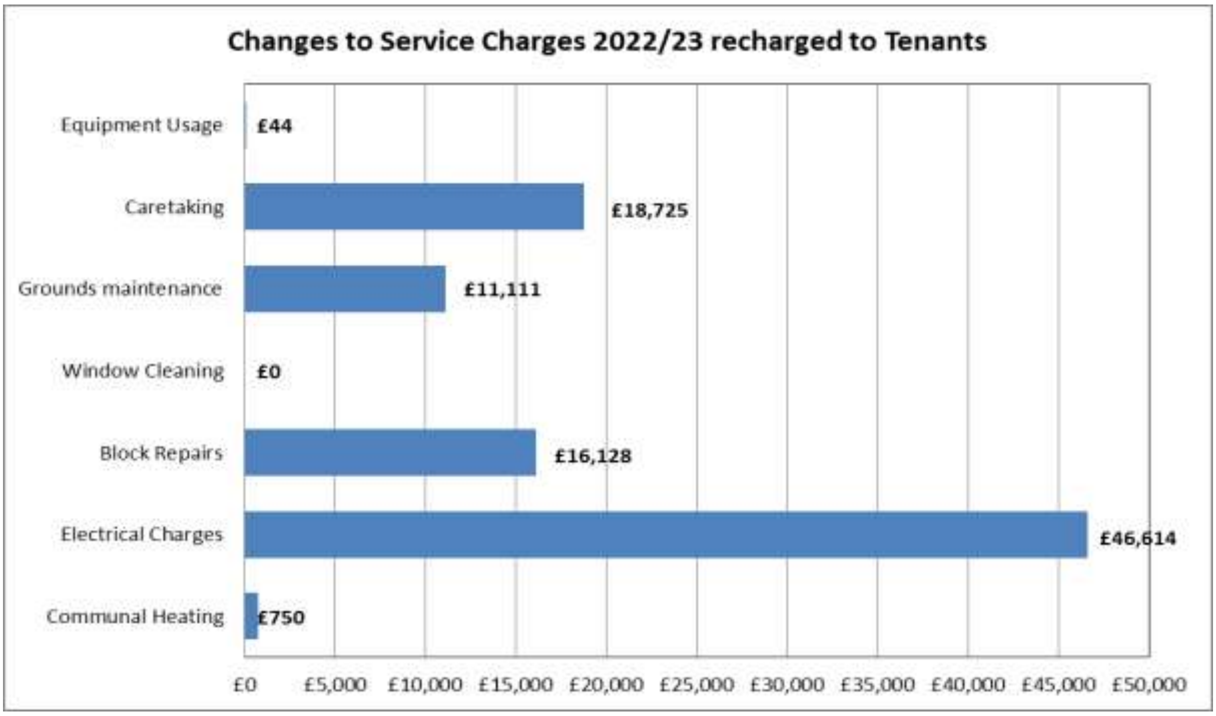


4.2 Service Charges

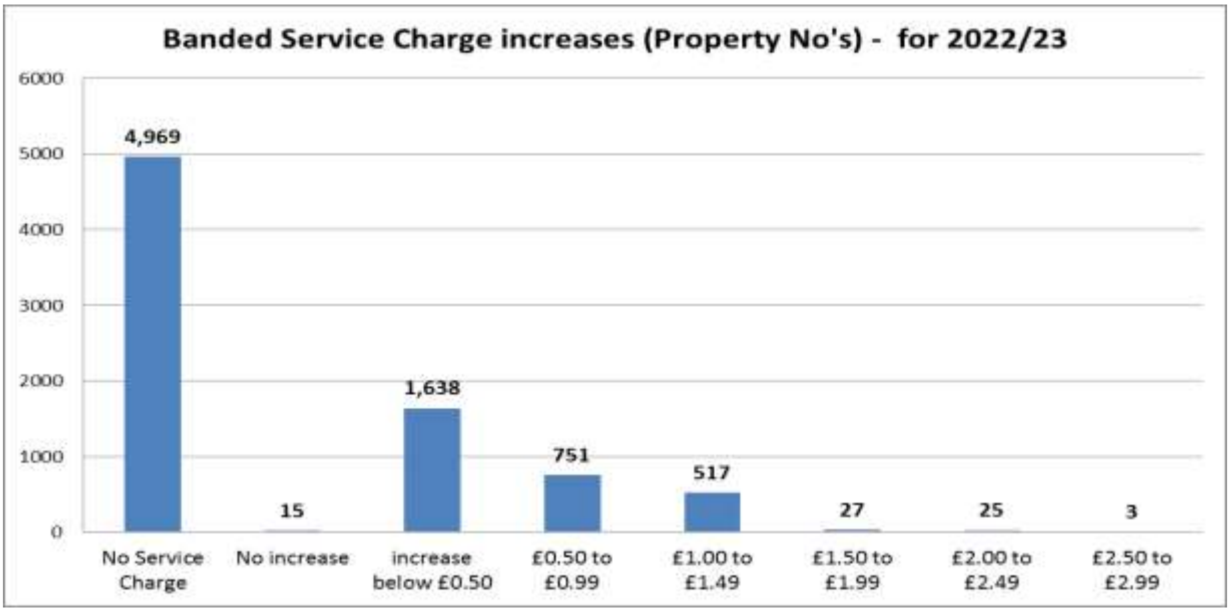
4.2.1 Service charges are calculated for each block individually for the 2976 properties, (2021/22, 2,956) or 37% of current SBC tenanted properties. Service charges currently provided, (eligible for housing benefit) are shown below.

Service Charges:
Caretaking
Grounds maintenance
Window cleaning
Block repairs (including pest control)
Electrical charges
Communal heating

4.2.2 Service charges are not subject to the rental increase of 4.1%, but are based on cost recovery. For 2022/23, service charge costs will increase with inflationary pressures and changes in usage. The chart below identifies the changes between 2021/22 and 2022/23 for service charges. The estimates are based on the projected budgeted costs for 2022/23, with the exception of block repairs, which is 'smoothed' over a five-year period to eliminate individual in-year spikes in repairs spend.



4.2.3 The spread of service charge increases for all tenants in 2022/23 is shown in the chart below. The impact of the changes means that 2,404, or 81%, of homes who receive a charge, will have increases below £1 per week. The highest increases are estimated to be below £3 per week for next year. There is no change from the December 2021 HRA report.

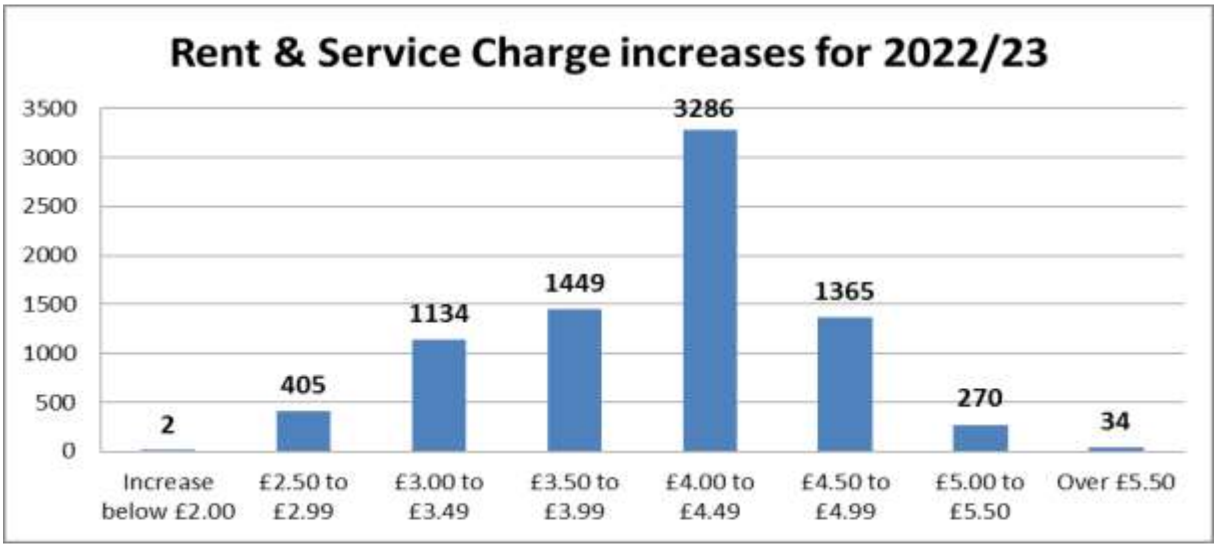


4.3 Rents and Service Charges

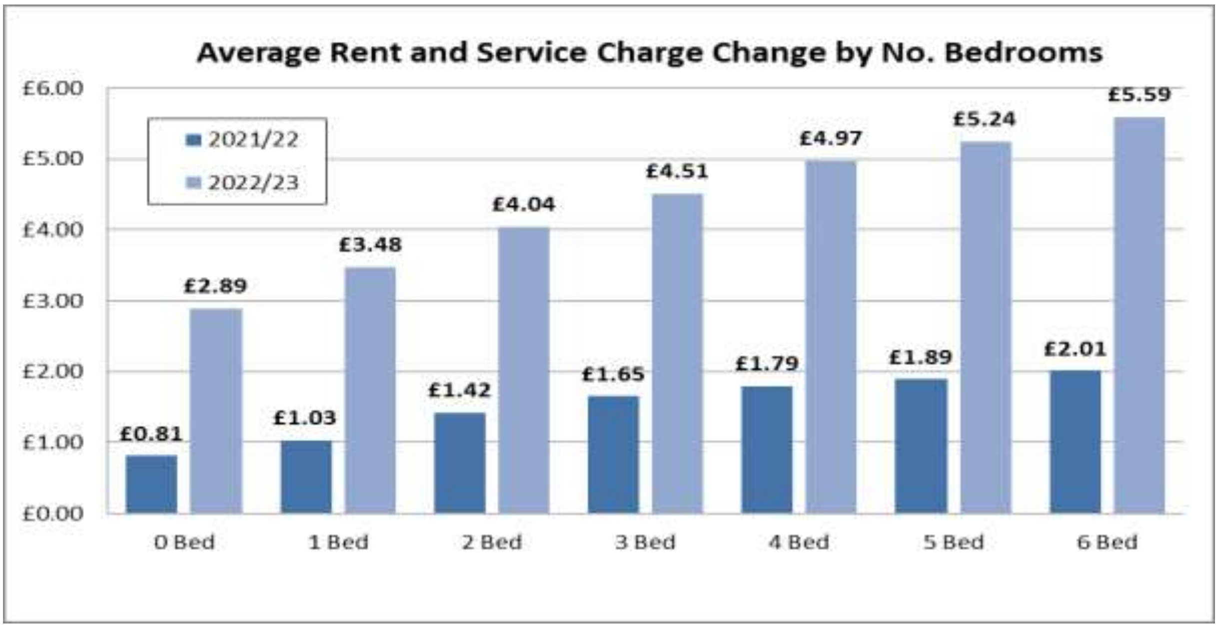
4.3.1 The impact of the 2022/23 rent increase and service charges is:

- 3,286 homes or 41% receive a weekly rent and service charge increase between £4.00 and £4.49, driven by the September CPI. However this is after lower increases for the 2021/22 financial year and rent reductions for the period 2016/17-2019/20.
- 1,541 homes or 19% of households will receive a weekly rent and service charge increase of less than £3.50 (based on 52 weeks).
- There are only 34 properties with an increase of more than £5.50 of which 25 are affordable homes with higher rents and the remaining social homes are larger properties.

4.3.2 The spread of the 2022/23 rent and service charge changes are summarised in the chart below.



4.3.3 The average rent and service charge increase/(decrease) by bedroom size has also been calculated and summarised in the chart below.



4.3.4 The comparison between HRA property rents per week and private sector rents per week, for one to four-bedroom properties, is shown in the table below. A three-bedroom private sector rental property costs an additional 131%, (2021/22,133%) more per week than a SBC council home and 30% more than the affordable let properties,(2021/22 32%).

	SBC Social Rent	SBC Affordable Rent	Median Private Rent	Local Housing Allowance (LHA) 2021/22	Median % v SBC Social	Median % v SBC Affordable
1 Bed Property	£91.87	£143.39	£171.14	£155.34	86%	19%
2 Bed Property	£106.56	£181.93	£226.94	£195.62	113%	25%
3 Bed Property	£118.68	£210.43	£274.30	£241.64	131%	30%
4 Bed Property	£131.13	£252.31	£331.27	£299.18	153%	31%

Private rent Data from ONS as at March 2021 updated by ONS rental inflation for East of England to September 2021. Please note the SBC rents are April 2022 prices and the private rents September 2021 prices.

4.3.5 The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) shown in the table above is the maximum amount of housing benefit payable by property size for private rented properties.

4.4 Borrowing

4.4.1 New loans totalling £29.5Million and £15.6Million are expected to be taken in the current and next financial years for 2021/22 and 2022/23 Capital Expenditure. However, the decision when to take the new borrowing will be reviewed, weighing up the cost of carry and the prevailing PWLB rates. The interest payable in 2021/22 and 2022/23 is estimated to be £7.489Million and £8.277Million respectively.

4.4.2 The HRA continues to invest in current and new stock, taking advantage of the new financial freedoms offered by the debt cap removal. These plans have been updated to reflect delivery timescales that have been impacted by the pandemic and material supply issues. However, the overall target investment and outcomes remains consistent with the last business plan.

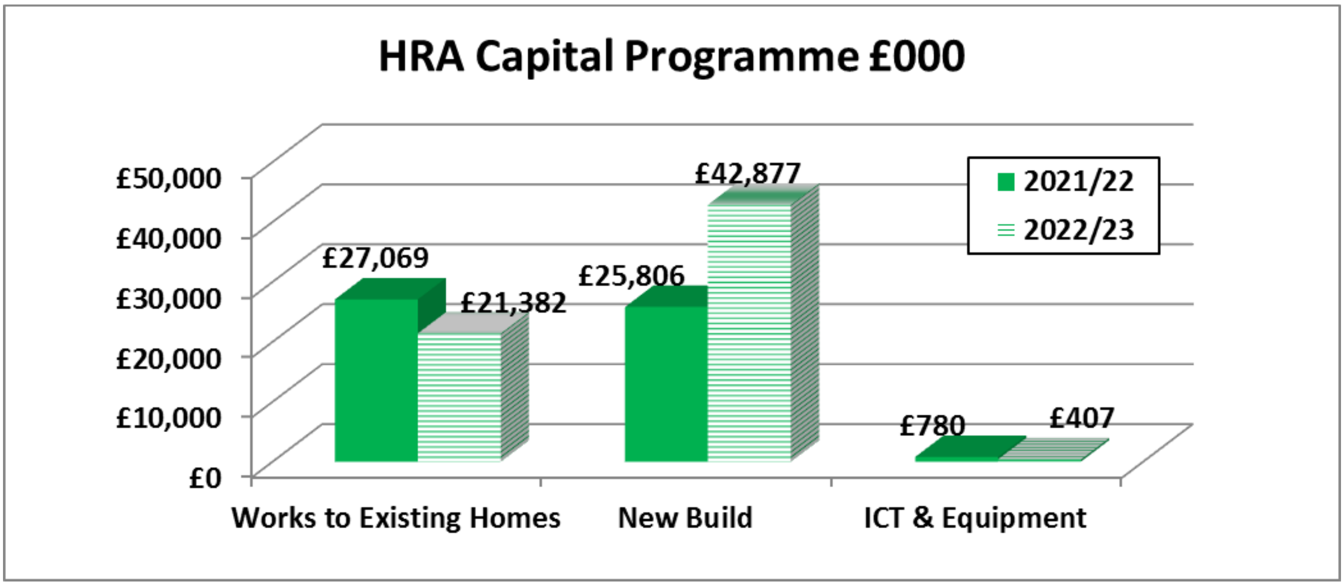
4.4.3 The Development team have identified a new pipeline of schemes and to ensure any schemes are within the Treasury Management levels for future borrowing (subject to business cases). An allowance of £15Million has been built into the treasury management authorised and operational limits to facilitate this.

4.4.4 These business cases will be developed by the Council's Housing Development and Finance teams with the leadership and oversight offered by the member led Housing Development Working Group. Where appropriate the construction schemes subject to these business cases (depending on size and budget requirements) will return to Executive for necessary approvals in connection with procurement and appointment of contractors or development partners depending on the particular needs of the scheme.

4.5 Contributions to Capital Expenditure

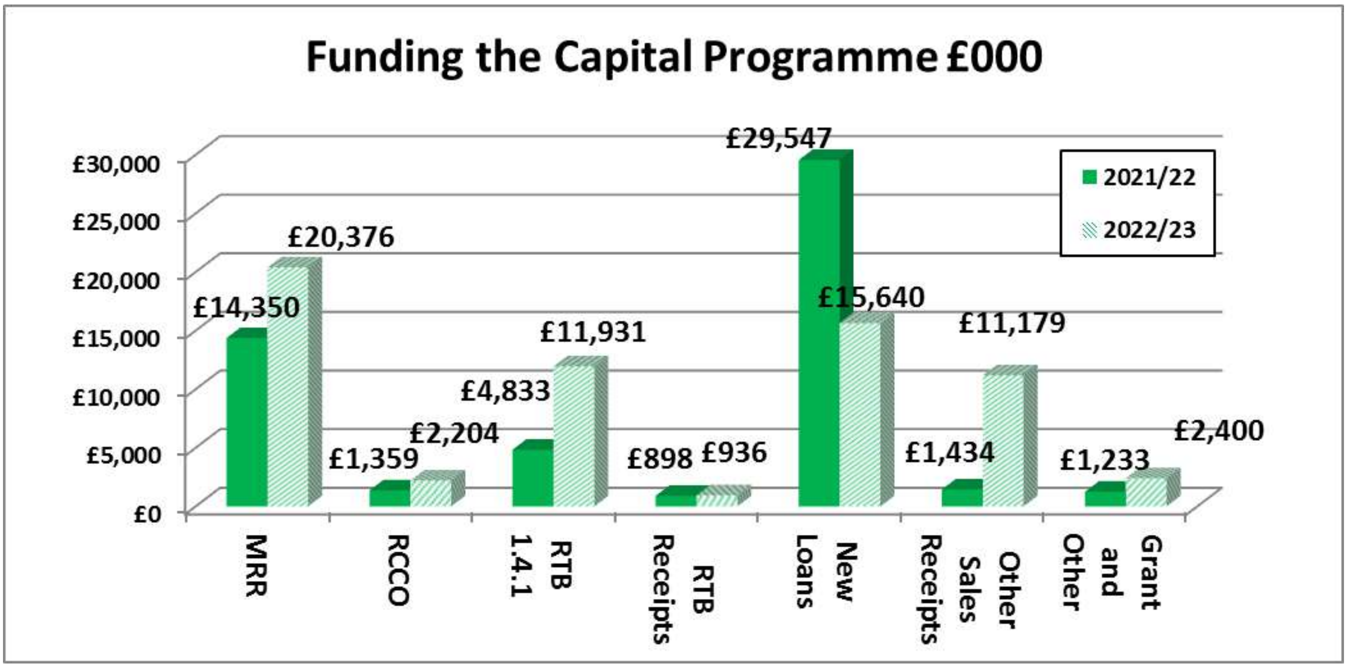
4.5.1 The Draft Capital Strategy Report 2022/23 assumes a £931K revenue contribution to capital (RCCO) to compensate for lower depreciation contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve, (than projected in the HRA BP). This will rise to £2.204Million in 2022/23 in order to keep capital funding for repairs in line with the current business plan and to match fund the new decarbonisation growth project detailed in paragraph 4.8.13, (change from December 2021 report.)

4.5.2 The 2022/23 budgeted depreciation allowance required by legislation to be transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) to fund the capital programme is £11.9Million, an increase of £416K on the 2021/22 amount. A summary of the 2021/22-2022/23 capital programme is shown in the chart below.



4.5.3 The increase in the value of the 2022/23 capital programme compared to the current 2021/22 programme is mainly due to rescheduling of new build schemes, the impact of the Kenilworth scheme and the commencement of work on major new schemes. Expenditure on the existing stock is expected to be lower and this is mainly due to the completion of the sprinkler installation and the scheduling of the Major Repairs Contract (MRC) works.

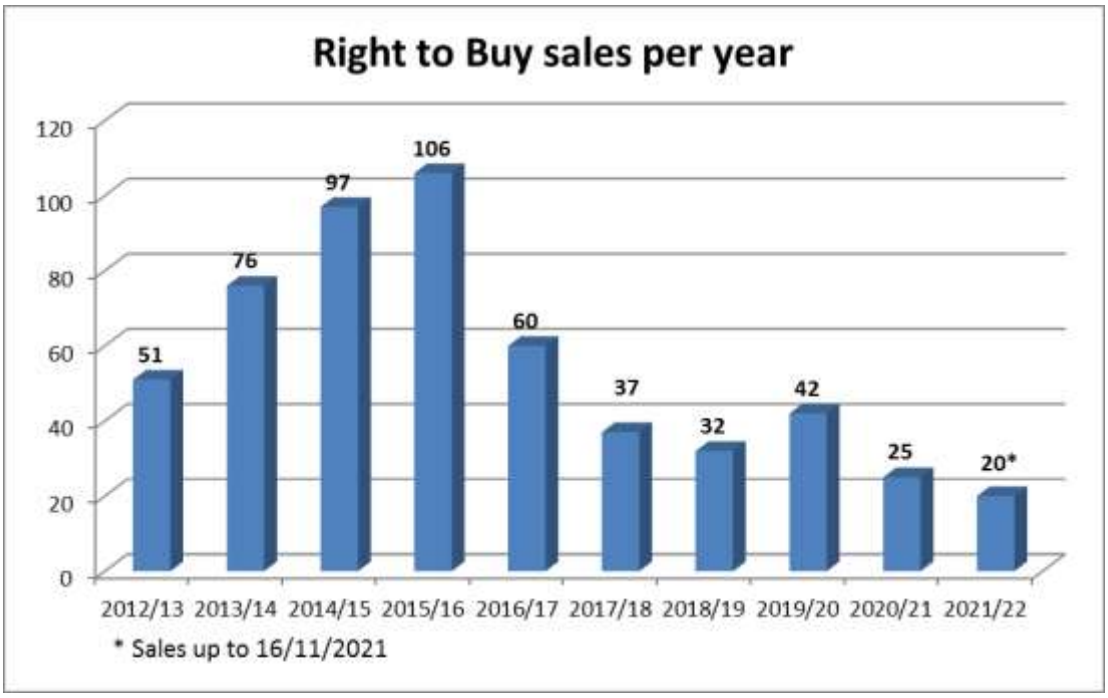
4.5.4 The capital programme funding for 2021/22 and the final HRA capital programme for 2022/23 is summarised in the chart below. This currently shows a shift in funding from new loans to the MRR in 2022/23. However, as stated earlier, this funding may be revised to achieve best value and take advantage of current interest rates.



4.6 Use of One for One Receipts

4.6.1 As mentioned earlier in the report, the Government has now amended the rules regarding the use of capital receipts arising from the sale of Right to Buy properties and the Council has entered into a new retention agreement that reflects these changes. Under the new rules, receipts will be accounted for annually rather than quarterly, the Council will be able to fund up to 40% of new property costs from RTB receipts and the time limit for using the funds has increased from 3 to 5 years. However, a limit on the use of these funds for buying existing properties on the open market is being phased in over the next 3 financial years. As the Council has many major new schemes under way, or planned, it is not expected that this will be a problem in the short to medium term, but depending on sales levels and future development opportunities it may cause problems in the longer term.

4.6.2 As previously reported, sales have reduced considerably from their peak in 2015/16 and this, in combination with the new rule changes, has lowered the risk of the Council needing to pay receipts to the Government. With the removal of the borrowing cap and record low interest rates on loans, the Council is also continuing to invest in new property and has an ambitious programme of new development that is expected to absorb the current level of receipts generated by sales. At the end of 2020/21 the Council had a balance of £10.364Million that would need to be spent by 2026/27. Current projections show that these should be fully spent and that no receipts will need to be paid to Government.



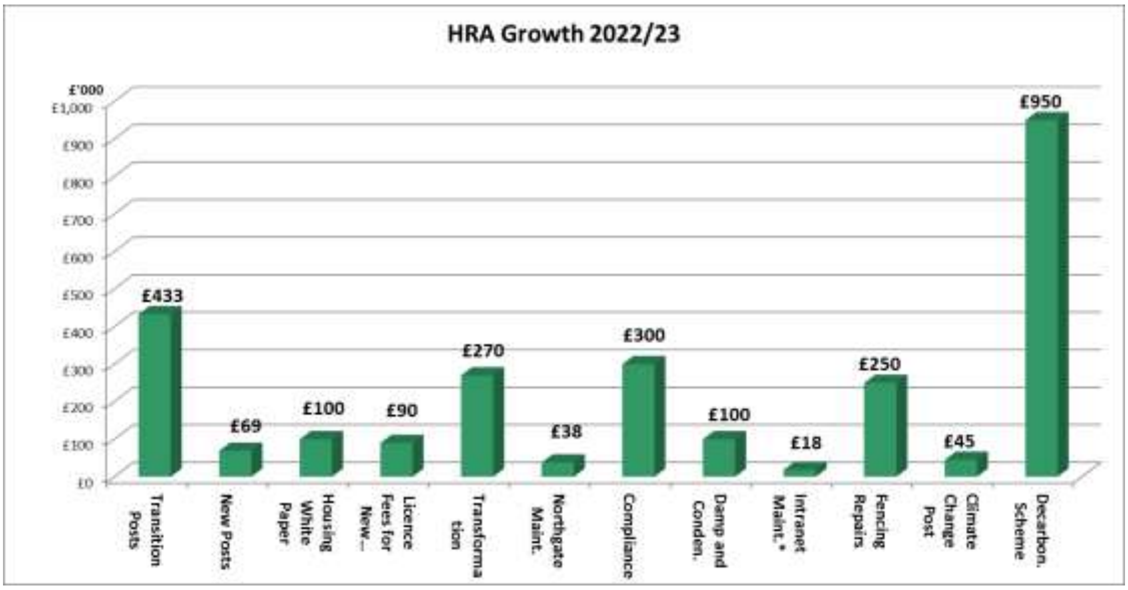
4.7 The 2022/23 making Your Money Count process for the General Fund and HRA

4.7.1 The 2022/23 savings included in the draft 2022/23 budget now total £39,370 and reduction of £18,000 for the HRA are subject to approval of the options as set out in the Draft General Fund report to this Executive. These options were supported by the Leaders Financial Security Group (LFSG) as part of their review during October and November.

4.7.2 Fees and charges totally £63,630 as set out in Appendix C have been included in the draft budget but were not part of the review by the LFSG.

4.8 Growth included in the HRA

4.8.1 The growth included in the 2022/23 HRA budget is summarised in the chart below.



**HRA share of General Fund expenditure*

4.8.2 **Transition Posts (19 FTEs) - £433K**.Following a comprehensive business unit review the establishment of the HRA was reduced, on the assumption that new business process improvements and transformation would lead to efficiencies. However, it was recognised that transition posts would be require to bridge the gap between the old and new structures. The Impact of the pandemic and accommodating new ways of working, has led to a request to fund the transition stage into 2022/23, while the permanent structure is reviewed, to be included in the new HRA Business Plan proposals in the summer.

4.8.3 **New Posts – £69K. (£38K on-going).** Four new permanent posts and one fixed term post have been proposed in the growth for next year. Four of the posts are either fully or part funded through existing capital schemes, or transfers from other budgets, with one new building safety post wholly funded from the revenue budget. Attached as Appendix B, is the detailed rationale for the continued employment of the original ‘transition posts along with necessary supporting data. It is important to appreciate that given the continued impact of the pandemic, and the need to recognise that change to existing complex systems and processes will take time to implement, it is not therefore time to make significant adjustments to the present staffing resources. It is however the intention to review the resources required as new housing systems are deployed and the process of refreshing the longer term HRA BP unfolds in the early part of 2022. The outcome of this refresh and anticipated positive impacts on staffing resource will be reported accordingly.

4.8.4 **Housing White Paper £100K.** Officers have requested that a budget of £100K is included in 2022/23 to address the implication of meeting the requirements set out in the recent housing white paper. The timing and extent of any regulatory changes is not currently known, but this will give officers flexibility to respond to this issue. The first consultation paper relating to the Regulators role and the indications in respect of the consumer standards has recently been published. Whilst the £100k has therefore been identified to support any initial response to forth coming legislation the timetable remains uncertain and additional funds may be required during 22/23 depending on the speed at which final legislation or regulatory reform is confirmed.

4.8.5 **Licence Fees £90K. (on-going)** This growth is required to implement three new systems relating to arrears recovery and income management on, customer service insight in line with the White Paper and right to buy administration, to augment the current limited Northgate module. While Northgate remains the primary system for housing services, some specialist functions are better served by separate housing focussed applications and auxiliary systems that have been proposed for these areas. The approval process will involve taking account of the necessary linkages to the Transformation objectives. The Interim Head of IT service is involved and aware of the emerging intentions.

4.8.6 **Transformation - £270K.** A housing transformation budget of £1.5m was used to invest in the business and improve services for customers. This programme has now concluded, with the last of this funding used in 2021/22. However, there are still areas of the Northgate system that are in development and this growth will be used to support this work, but it’s main use will be the HRA share of the Council’s corporate transformation programme.

4.8.7 **Northgate Maintenance £38K. (on-going)** The transformation and development work on Northgate, has increased the need for periodic maintenance and updates from the software provider and other specialists. This had been accommodated in the transformation funding, but a separate budget is now required for these costs.

4.8.8 **Compliance £300K.** As part of the last business plan review additional funds were invested in compliance work to ensure that building safety met the required standards. However, it is now recommended that further ongoing funds are needed to increase the volume of electrical testing carried out in line with best practic. The longer term impact of the testing regime will be included in the Business Plan re-write in the summer of next year.

4.8.9 **Damp and Condensation £100K.** This is a demand led area with an existing budget of £250k and there have been an increased number of requests for work to be carried out in recent years. In order to deal with the underlying issues contributing to damp and condensation fully the cost of individual repairs has also increased. These factors have led to the proposed budget increase.

4.8.10 **Intranet Maintenance £18K (on-going).** This is the HRA's share of a corporate growth item, required to maintain and develop the Council's intranet. A service that has become more important since the pandemic and many more staff working remotely,

4.8.11 **Fencing Repairs £250K.** During the pandemic repairs were limited to emergency provision and this had led to a backlog. A one off growth of £250k has been requested in order to address the outstanding jobs in 2022/23.

4.8.12 **Climate Change Officer £45,000.**. To meet the Climate Change agenda and deadline of zero emissions by 2030, a dedicated post is required (plus the continuation of time limited resources) to drive the priority forward across the Council. The additional growth bid was approved by the Executive in December and supported by the Overview and Scrutiny meeting also in December 2021.

4.8.13 **Decarbonisation Scheme - £950,000.** The Council have made a bid to the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The total value of the capital works to the housing stock would be £2,850,000 if the bid is successful, but a third of the scheme must be funded by the Council to meet the grant requirements. As these works were not anticipated in the business plan, an additional revenue contribution to capital of £950K has been included in the budget to secure the £1.9Million of grant. The Council has not been told whether the bid has been successful yet, but budget provision must be included in order to allow the scheme to proceed . This additional use of reserves will need to be re-balanced when the HRA Business Plan is reviewed in the summer, but will only be needed if the bid succeeds. Members are asked to approve the additional spend.

4.9 Final Budget Proposals

4.9.1 The Final 2022/23 HRA budget is estimated to be a net surplus of £1,956,200, which is a reduction of £1,280,030 to the Draft Budget. The table below shows the main movements in the budget and includes growth proposals for 2022/23.

Summary of 2022/23		
Draft HRA 2021/22 budget		**(£3,236,230)**
Changes from Draft to Final Budget		
Fencing backlog work	£250,000	
Climate Change Post	£45,000	
Decarbonisation Scheme	£950,000	
General Fund Recharges	£19,910	
Insurance Premium Increases	£17,680	
Other net adjustments	£15,460	
Removal of one off growth items	(£18,020)	
Total Changes:		**£1,280,030**
Final HRA 2022/23 budget		**(£1,956,200)**

4.9.2 All HRA balances, in excess of the minimum balance held for assessed risks in year, are required to fund the HRA 30-year capital programme.

4.9.3 A risk assessment of balances has been completed and is in Appendix D to this report. The HRA balances currently exceed this for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.10.3.

HRA Balances:	2021/22 £	2022/23 £
HRA Balance 1 April	(25,394,723)	(26,571,503)
Use of balances in Year	(1,176,780)	(1,956,200)
HRA Balance 31 March	**(26,571,503)**	**(28,527,703)**
Minimum Balances	(2,985,000)	(3,320,000)
Debt Repayments	(23,586,503)	(25,207,703)

4.10 Consultation

4.10.1 A Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meeting, to review the budget, was held on the 5Th January. A presentation was given by senior officers to highlight the main changes to the budget and several questions were asked regarding the recommended growth items and the level of balances.

4.10.2 The Assistant Director for Housing and Investment explained the rationale for the requested growth. The further growth bid for fencing of £250,000 in 2022/23 was welcomed by Members due to the level of customer feedback and of outstanding work.

4.10.3 The Strategic Director (Section 151) advised members that the HRA is required to keep a higher level of balances in the early years of the HRA Business Plan in order to ensure sufficient balances are available throughout the plan to repay the HRA borrowing. Members were also reminded that of the £279Million borrowing by 2023/24, the Council was required to pay the Treasury £199Million as part of the self-financing deal and that this forms the majority of the debt.

4.10.4 Members were also advised that, due to the levels of growth, the summer revision of the HRA Business Plan will require prioritisation of service expenditure in order to balance the plan for both revenue and capital areas.

4.10.5 Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting of the 14 December 2021 reviewed the draft HRA budget. The Strategic Director (CF) advised Members that the rent formula was government policy, which is a CPI+1% increase in 2022/23, or 4.1%.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 Financial implications are included in the body of the report.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 Legal implications are included in the body of the report.

5.3 Staffing Implications

5.3.1 The unions are being consulted on the options contained in this report. Human Resources staff are co-ordinating centrally the implementation of any staff related savings.

5.4 Risk Implications

5.4.1 Due to frequent Government policy changes, there are significant risks in setting the HRA budget. Historically the ring-fenced account has relied almost solely on rent income to finance both revenue and capital works. Many changes in policy, including the loss of £225Million from the Business Plan from four years of rent reductions, have made medium to long term planning difficult. These risks have increased with the removal of the debt cap in 2019, as the Council is making long term financing decisions, on capital investment, based on income streams set by the current policy.

5.4.2 Currently one of the continuing risks to the account is a large increase in arrears. These have increased, in part as a result of tenants switching from housing benefits to Universal Credit, but mainly due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic and the measures put in place by the Government, which included a suspension of evictions. To mitigate this position increased resources are still in place to help recover rent owed and the provision for bad debt has been increased to recognise that not all the outstanding debt will be recovered.

5.4.3 Current high inflation rates may put pressure on capital and revenue repairs budgets and may put further pressure on HRA resources.

5.4.4 The full operational implications of regulatory changes after the Grenfell tragedy are still being implemented. As policy and best practice across the sector is developed this could increase budget pressures on the HRA.

5.4.5 There is a risk of interest rates being higher than projected and leading to a reduction in the amount of expenditure for both revenue and capital. There is also a risk that the PWLB rate differential between gilts and borrowing rates might be adjusted (as happened in 2019/20). To mitigate this, the budget includes an interest rate reserve of £3.4Million to offset any future variances from expected rates.

5.4.6 The HRA has an annual Making Your Money Count target to achieve, which for 2023/24 onwards is £200,000 per year, linked to expected savings from the Transformation programme. There was an existing target of 2% per annum savings on responsive repairs linked to the investment in the major repairs programme.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.5.1 In carrying out or changing its functions (including those relating to the provision of services and the employment of staff) the Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 which is the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Act replaced three previous equality legislations – the Race Relations Act (section 71), the Sex Discrimination Act (section 76A) and the Disability Discrimination Act (section 49A). The Council has a statutory obligation to comply with the requirements of the Act, demonstrating that as part of the decision-making process, due regard has been given to the needs described in the legislation. These duties are non-delegable and must be considered by Council when setting the budget in January 2022.

5.5.2 To inform the decisions about the Budget 2022/23 officers have undertaken Brief Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for service-related budget proposals. Where there is a potentially negative impact, officers have identified further action needed to inform a final decision and to mitigate the impact where this is possible.

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23; Medium Term Financial Strategy (2021/22-2025/26); and HRA Business Plan Review 2021- December 2021 Executive

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Housing Revenue Account Summary

Appendix B – Growth Impacts

Appendix C- Fees and Charges

Appendix D – Risk Assessment of Balances

Appendix E - EQIA for HRA Rent