

# Public Document Pack



## EXECUTIVE

**Date: Wednesday, 11 March 2020**

**Time: 2.00pm**

**Location: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete**

**Contact: Ian Gourlay (01438) 242703**

**ian.gourlay@stevenage.gov.uk**

Members: Councillors: S Taylor OBE, CC (Chair), Mrs J Lloyd (Vice-Chair),  
L Briscoe, R Broom, J Gardner, R Henry, J Hollywell and J Thomas.

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## AGENDA

### PART 1

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**2. MINUTES - 12 FEBRUARY 2020**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 12 February 2020 for signature by the Chair.

Pages 5 – 20

**3. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

To note the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees –

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 28 January 2020

Environment & Economy Select Committee – 11 February 2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 17 February 2020

Pages 21 – 34

**4. DAMP AND CONDENSATION POLICY**

To seek approval of the proposed Damp and Condensation Policy and its implementation.

Pages 35 – 64

**5. AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS SERVICE POLICY**

To seek approval of the proposed Aids and Adaptations Service Policy and its implementation.

Pages 65 - 102

**6. VARIATIONS OF TENANCY AGREEMENT AND CONDITIONS OF TENANCY**

To consider a variation to the Tenancy Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy.  
Pages 103 – 172

**7. COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING**

To support taking forward the Council's approach to Community Wealth Building (CWB) by developing an Inclusive Economy Charter, line with the CWB motion passed by the Council on 29 January 2020.  
Pages 173 – 182

**8. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE 2019/20 - QUARTER 3**

To consider the Council's performance across key priorities and themes for Quarter 3 2019/20.  
Pages 183 – 222

**9. 3RD QUARTER REVENUE MONITORING REPORT - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2019/20**

To consider the 3rd Quarter General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Revenue Monitoring Report 2019/20.  
Pages 223 – 238

**10. 3RD QUARTER CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2019/20**

To consider the 3rd Quarter General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Monitoring Report 2019/20.  
Pages 239 – 262

**11. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

**12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) 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 they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

**13. PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 12 FEBRUARY 2020**

To approve as a correct record the Part II section of the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 February 2020 for signature by the Chair.

Pages 263 - 264

**14. PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 12 FEBRUARY 2020**

To note the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 12 February 2020.

Pages 265 - 268

**15. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

To consider any Part II business considered by the Chair as urgent.

**NOTE: Links to Part 1 Background Documents are shown on the last page of the individual report, where this is not the case they may be viewed by using the following link to agendas for Executive meetings and then opening the agenda for Wednesday, 11 March 2020 –**

<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/council-meetings/161153/>

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## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE MINUTES

**Date: Wednesday, 12 February 2020**

**Time: 2.00pm**

**Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete**

**Present:** Councillors: Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.

**Start / End**      Start Time:    2.00pm  
**Time:**            End Time:      4.26pm

#### **1      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence.

There were no declarations on interest.

#### **2      MINUTES - 22 JANUARY 2020**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 January 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

#### **3      MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

In respect of the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 8 January 2020, which continued its scrutiny review into sports and leisure provision, the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People & Leisure advised that he was working with officers to provide a response to the Committee's recommendations, as well as involving the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People in addressing the health and wellbeing issues raised.

The recommendations also referred to the "Locality Reviews". The Chair asked officers to re-name these as "Local Asset Reviews".

In relation to the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2020, the Strategic Director (TP) advised that the Executive's decision regarding the Kenilworth Scheme had been called-in by three Members of the Committee.

In respect of the comments made by the Committee regarding the relationship between footfall and car parking income, the Leader asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources to ensure that the Leader's Financial Security Group (LSFG) considered this matter in more detail as part of its work on the 2021/22 budget setting process.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the following meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –

Community Select Committee – 8 January 2020  
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 14 January 2020

#### **4 PARKING PROVISION AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport presented a report in respect of the proposed Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Public Consultation.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport advised that, following adoption, the SPD would become a material consideration for all planning applications. The Stevenage Local Plan committed the Council to regularly review the Parking Provision SPD to ensure it was in conformity with up to date policy. Since 2012, policy changes had included the publication of the SBC Mobility Strategy (2016); the adoption of Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (2018) and the SBC Transport Strategy (2019); and SBC's declaration of a Climate Emergency. An overarching theme of recent policy was to promote a modal shift in transportation away from the dominance of private-use motor vehicles towards sustainable modes of transport.

The Executive noted that the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD sought to amend the adopted Parking Provision SPD in a number of ways, most significantly by: remapping the "Accessibility Zones" where reduced levels of parking provision were encouraged to avoid facilitating an ever-increasing use of vehicles in areas with access to public transport and services; requiring provision of active and passive Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure; increasing cycle parking requirements so they were in line with the SBC Cycling Strategy recommendations; and providing support and considerations that must be taken into account when promoting certain major schemes included in the Transport Strategy.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) commented:

- There would be a requirement on new developments for the installation of underground cabling in readiness for electric vehicle charging points. The installation of the above ground charging points would take place in consultation with the County Council; and
- 20% of new communal parking spaces would contain electric vehicle charging points.

Members stressed the importance of lobbying the Government for appropriate resources to fund the installation of electric vehicle charging points.

In view of local issues raised by Members in respect of disabled parking, Officers were requested provide clarity in the Supplementary Planning Document on

enforceable disabled parking bays and informal disabled parking bays,.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the content of the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be noted.
2. That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft SPD prior to its consultation.
3. That the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD be published for consultation from 18 February 2020 to 22 March 2020.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## **5 STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration introduced a report in respect of an update on the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration advised that Climate Change had reached a point where immediate action must be undertaken. With its declaration of a climate emergency in June 2019, Stevenage Borough Council was committed to tackling this head on. SBC had a holistic vision which focused on cutting its own emissions to net zero and supporting businesses and residents to do the same by 2030.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration stated that the Emerging Climate Change Strategy document (Appendix A) and consultation would act as a starting point for the development of a resident-led, co-produced Climate Change Strategy for Stevenage. The Council would act as a community leader and facilitate local people and businesses during the decarbonisation process. Through consultation with academics and climate change organisations the Council had taken a first-step to consult with residents and businesses. This was a vital strategic task which would consider the role the Council must play as a facilitator for change and advocate for radical transformation of the transport and energy systems, as well as having a robust plan for reducing emission from the Council's own land, buildings, fleet and assets.

The Executive acknowledged that it was critical that the carbon footprint and wider environmental impacts of all new developments in the town were now considered through planning, and that residents were informed and empowered to be able to make the meaningful lifestyle changes required for Stevenage to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) referred to the documents appended

to the report, namely the Draft Climate Change Strategy, the Draft Climate Change Charter, the Draft Community Pledges, and a brief Equalities Impact Assessment.

The Executive was informed that internal engagement would continue with all Council Business Units on Climate Change initiatives. Initial public engagement, through social media, had resulted in 1,400 responses, twice the number received on the Stevenage Local Plan consultation.

The Chief Executive reported that the Hertfordshire Leaders' Meeting had agreed to the establishment of a Countywide Climate Change Group, in order to share best practice across the county and to consider high level county wide interventions. He commended the Local Government Association Climate Change Hub to Members as a useful source of information. He stated that the County Council's Climate Change Strategy was expected to be published in March/April 2020, and it was important that key issues in that Strategy were reflected in SBC's emerging Strategy.

The Leader asked the Strategic Directors to move the Climate Change agenda forward at a greater pace than hitherto. To this end, she saw the following four strands of work to be crucial:

- the climate change actions that could be carried out by the SBC (including housing, planning, energy, estates, transport and regeneration);
- the influencing of partners and businesses in climate change matters;
- the lobbying of the Government for powers to drive forward the Climate Change agenda, along with appropriate additional funding; and
- the community engagement with residents, including consultation and education, and involving as wide a cross-section of residents as possible.

The Leader noted that there were only a small number of "quick win" examples in the documentation. She therefore proposed an additional recommendation requesting a report to be submitted to the next Climate Change Working Group providing a comprehensive "quick wins" programme of projects for the next 12 months.

Members were given an assurance that the Climate Change Strategy consultation process would include young people, youth groups and local schools.

The Leader requested that an item be added to the agenda for the next Climate Change Working Group meeting on how the equalities impact of climate change could be assessed and how some of the potential negative impacts contained in the Equalities Impact Assessment could be mitigated.

Officers were asked to ensure that all future Executive reports contained a Climate Change Implications section.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the content of the draft Climate Change Strategy, Charter and Community Pledges be noted.

2. That the Climate Change Strategy, Charter and Pledges be published for consultation from 18 February 2020 for five weeks.
3. That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft documents prior to consultation.
4. That a report to be submitted to the next Climate Change Working Group providing a comprehensive “quick wins” programme of projects for the next 12 months.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 4. To quicken the pace of work on Climate Change.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## **6 LICENSING ACT 2003 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY**

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities presented a report in respect of the Licensing Act 2003: Statement of Licensing Principles/Policy.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities advised that local authorities were required to publish a Statement of Principles in accordance with section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003. The Statement would set out the general approach the Council would take when carrying out its regulatory role under the Act and promoting the licensing objectives. The Policy sought to strike a balance between the interests of licence holders, applicants and residents in the promotion of the licensing objectives defined by the Act. It outlined the licensing authority's expectations of licence holders, as well as its obligations under the Act. The Statement was designed to offer appropriate protection for residents and a streamlined approach to regulation that eased unnecessary burdens on businesses.

The Executive was informed that a number of additions and amendments to the existing Statement of Policy were consulted upon, reflecting the update in the Guidance published in accordance with Section 182 of the Act. There were no changes to the intent or direction of the Policy, which detailed how the Council would seek to regulate licensable alcohol and entertainment activities and provide a framework for consistent decision making.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities stated that the draft Statement of Policy was considered by the Council's General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 30 January 2020. The Executive was asked to agree the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Licensing Act Statement of Principles 2020-2025 and to recommend it to the Council for adoption.

The Senior Environmental Health and Licensing Manager advised Members of the content of the deliberations of the General Purposed Committee regarding the Policy.

The Executive noted that the fees relating to activities connected to the Licensing

Act 2003 were statutory, but had not been reviewed since 2005. The Local Government Association were continuing to lobby the Government for a review of the fees or allowing Local Authorities to set their own fees. For SBC, fee income in 2018/19 had been £78,000, against the cost of running the service of £91,000.

In respect of the recycling of empty bottles by licensees, the Senior Environmental Health & Licensing Manager was asked to investigate whether the Licensing Authority could impose conditions requiring such recycling on new licences. If not, he was further asked to lobby the Government requesting that licensing authorities were granted such powers.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy 2020-2025 (attached at Appendix A to the report) be agreed
2. That the Council be recommended to adopt the Stevenage Borough Council draft Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy 2020-2025 to the Council (attached at Appendix A to the report).

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## **7 HOUSEHOLD WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration introduced a report in respect of a proposed Household Waste Policy.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration stated that the Policy Objectives were geared towards improved recycling rates; contributing to the council's wider environmental objectives around climate change; future proofing the service with regard to the Government's emerging Resources and Waste Strategy; and contributing to the Council's financial security programme.

A summary of the changes to current practice were:

- Smaller bins would be issued as standard for residual waste (180L instead of 240L), as new bins were ordered;
- Charges would be introduced for replacement residual waste bins (approved as part of the financial securities programme);
- The qualifying criteria for larger bins would be increased;
- Bins reported as missed, but recorded as not presented for collection, would not be collected until the next scheduled collection day;
- Missed bins reported before noon would be collected on the same day; and
- Two additional sacks of residual side waste would be collected after Christmas instead of 3.

The Waste Operations Manager confirmed that the Council currently had no written policy document for Waste Management. The core service would remain unaltered, although the changes outlined by the Portfolio Holder were aimed at reducing waste

and increasing recycling. A new operations management IT system was due to go live from the end of March 2020. This would integrate with the new Customer Relationship Management system being implemented by the Council, and would increase the amount of information available to Customer Service Centre advisors and in turn residents. With real time information it would reduce avoidable contact and allow residents to self-serve.

Members supported the Leader's proposal for two additional recommendations requiring a waste strategy to be brought back to the Executive within 12 months setting out how the Council would achieve a recycling rate of 65% by 2035, in line with the Government's emerging Resources and Waste Strategy; and a reflection in the Policy that SBC remained committed to delivering waste management services in-house through a direct labour operation.

In considering the Policy, the following comments and suggested amendments were raised:

- Paragraph 2.8 should be amended to state that empty tetra paks should be placed in the blue recycling box;
- Clearer labelling should be provided on the various recycling receptacles;
- Further work should be carried out with the Community Centres, to encourage them to maximise their recycling;
- No plastic cutlery or crockery should be used at any future Mayoral/Civic functions; and
- Recycling receptacles should be provided for use by all Play Centres in the Borough.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the draft Household Waste Management Policy, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved.
2. That authority to amend the policy be delegated to the Strategic Director (RP), after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.
3. That a waste strategy to be brought back to the Executive within 12 months setting out how the Council would achieve a recycling rate of 65% by 2035, in line with the Government's emerging Resources and Waste Strategy.
4. That SBC remains committed to delivering waste management services in-house through a direct labour operation and this approach will be reflected in the policy and strategy.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report; and 3. To develop a strategy to improve recycling rates; and 4. To re-affirm a commitment to in-house delivery of the service.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## 8 FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2020/2021

The Portfolio Holder for Resources presented a report in respect of the Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting for 2020/21.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the Financial Security options were estimated to now total £847,000, which includes the additional £53,000 of commercial income which was reported in January 2020. The growth pressures in the report totalled £653,000, which included the additional stock survey growth, less an assumption that allotment charges were brought in half way through 2020/21, at a saving to the tax payer of £11,000.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources reported that the Government's final finance settlement had been received and totalled £2.67Million.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) gains reported at £1.105Million in the draft budget were estimated to be £35,000 higher. This still has to be realised and the recommendation was to increase General Fund balances by that amount, which was likely to be a one off if all gains were reset.

The Executive was informed that the General Fund budget 2020/21 net spend has reduced by £66,600, but that this includes additional Section 31 grants which mean more grant and less NDR so neutral (£300,000) - if this was excluded then the increase in General Fund spend would be £233,000, which included a one off contribution to Capital for 2020/21 of £250,000.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained that the budget also included the homeless award of £406,000, which had been transferred to a ring fence reserve until needed. There was also a further £117,000 awarded for rough sleeper. However there was an on-going pressure of £65,000 beyond 2020/21 which may impact on future savings targets.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources commented that the 2019/20 budget had increased by £14,000, largely as a result of pressure in the garage service.

The Executive noted that the net draw on balances for 2020/21 was £349,000, which included the additional one off £250,000 contribution to capital. General Fund balances were estimated to be £3.5Million by 1 March 2024, which is £423,000 lower than reported to the January 2020 Executive meeting, although the General Fund still was projected to make a contribution to balances in 2022/23 of £65,000.

In response to a Member's question regarding progress on the national review of Business Rates, the Leader commented that this may be included in a Government statement on Local Government finances to be given on 11 March 2020.

The Leader asked Officers to investigate the following matters:

- Council Garages – in view of below target income projected for 2019/20, enhanced advertising/marketing of the service be undertaken, and the introduction of innovations such as choice based lettings for garages, be

implemented as soon as possible; and

- Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) – conduct a review of the existing contract with SLL and identify potential benefits for Stevenage residents and taxpayers.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 26 February 2020:

1. That the 2019/20 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £9,678,680 be approved.
2. That a draft General Fund Budget for 2020/21 of £9,069,830 be proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £349,030 and a Band D Council Tax of £215.57 (assuming a 2.37% increase).
3. That the updated position on the General Fund and the Risk Assessment of General Fund balances, be approved.
4. That a minimum level of General Fund reserves of £2,920,935, in line with the 2020/21 risk assessment of balances be approved.
5. That the contingency sum of £400,000, within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2020/21 (unchanged from 2019/20).
6. That the 2020/21 proposed Financial Security Options of £846,964 and including fees and charges of £117,490 be included in the final budget.
7. That 2020/21 business rate gains totalling £1.14Million above the baseline need be allocated as set out in Paragraph 4.6.7 of the report.
8. That the 2020/21 Council Tax Support scheme be approved, as set out in Section 4.8 of the report.
9. That New Homes Bonus of £30,380 be transferred to the reserve to fund future potential shortfalls in funding (Paragraph 4.4.4 refers).
10. That the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## **9 FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20 - 2024/25**

The Portfolio Holder for Resources introduced a report in respect of the final Capital Strategy for 2019/20 – 2024/25.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the General Fund Capital Strategy had been revised to total £82.296M over the period.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained that capital bids scoring more than an average 1.5 out of 2 remained unchanged from the draft Capital Strategy. Bids scoring less than an average of 1.5 and not included in the programme now totalled £5.4Million, slightly reduced from the £5.7Million reported at the January 2020 Executive meeting. The total of 2020/21 low scoring bids was £486,000, of which £300,000 related to the golf course. A deferred works budget of £200,000 has been included in the Capital Strategy for 2020/21 to fund works that became unavoidable.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources commented that the bids that were not scored because they required further reviews or business cases totalled £4.2Million for the Strategy period. The largest area of spend across the Strategy period was Community Centres (£2.3Million) which should be addressed by the Locality (Local Asset) Reviews. The section on Locality (Local Asset) Reviews had been updated to set a target of capital receipts of £1Million.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the capital resourcing of the programme now totalled £85.5Million with an overall surplus of £3.3Million, which was a million higher as a result of the impact of the Kenilworth scheme.

Members were informed that the bus station position remained unchanged in the report, but the operational boundary for borrowing in the Treasury Management Strategy had been increased to allow for any temporary borrowing. The report also stated that there would be a need for more savings/potential reduction in services/putting on hold the capital programme should the GD3 monies not be released. The section on investment in commercial property had also been updated.

In respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, the Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that this was now projected to be £243Million for 2019/20-2024/25 (against £231.79Million in the draft Strategy). This had increased to reflect the changes to the Kenilworth scheme reported at the January 2020 Executive meeting.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained that the funding for the HRA capital programme had been adjusted for the Kenilworth scheme and also for an additional £262,000 of Section 106 affordable homes contributions. However, for the period 2019/20-2024/25 borrowing represents 37% of the overall funding, with 36% being funded from the Major Repairs Reserve. The table set out in Paragraph 4.13.2 of the report showed that HRA balances reduced to minimum levels in the middle part of the HRA Business Plan which meant that higher level of balances were required in the early years to fund future borrowing costs and the capital programme.

The Leader commented that the National Audit Office (NAO) had publically criticised local authorities for their level of investment in commercial property. She considered that such activity had been necessitated by the continual reduction in local government funding, and advised that the District Councils Network would be sending a robust reply to the NAO on this matter.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 26 February 2020:

1. That the final 2020/21 General Fund Capital Programme, as summarised in the report, be approved.
2. That the final 2020/21 HRA Capital Programme, as summarised in the report, be approved.
3. That the updated forecast of resources, as summarised in the report, be approved.
4. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets, as set out in Section 3.2 of the report, be approved.
5. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund capital programme, as outlined in the report, be approved.
6. That the actions required to ensure the General Fund programme is funded, as outlined in Paragraphs 4.9.3-4.9.9 of the report, be noted.
7. That the approach and progress on Locality Reviews and the target to realise receipts for 2020/21 be noted.
8. That the growth bids now included in the Capital Strategy be approved.
9. That the return of Right to Buy one for one receipts, as outlined in Section 4.14 of the report, be noted.
10. That the 2020/21 de-minimis expenditure limit (Section 4.15 of the report) be approved.
11. That the 2020/21 contingency allowance (Section 4.16 of the report) be approved.
12. That the work undertaken by Leader's Financial Security Group (LFSG) on behalf of the Executive in reviewing and challenging the General Fund Capital Strategy be noted.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## **10 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2020/21**

The Portfolio Holder for Resources presented a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21, including Prudential Code Indicators.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that, as at 31 December 2019, cash balances were £63Million, and were projected to be £50.7Million by the end of the year. The projection included nearly £20Million of restricted use receipts and provisions. The Capital Strategy also showed that Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserves needed to be held to fund the middle part of the HRA Business Plan and

the pie chart at Paragraph 4.3.7 of the report showed an analysis of the cash holdings. In addition, the cash balances were predicated on the realisation of savings targets for both the HRA and the General Fund.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that there had been no breaches of Treasury Management counter party limits during 2019/20. It was recommended that the counterpart limits be changed to allow up to £20Million (rather than £10Million) for loans over 12 months. This would be when balances were forecast over £30Million and would improve the investment interest rate achieved for the Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources further stated that the operational boundary or the limit to which the Council would normally borrow had been increased to allow for borrowing for the bus station (if required) and an amount had been included should there be a timing issue on land sales. The boundary also included the Queensway finance lease as, in accounting terms, this counted as borrowing.

The Executive noted that Council's treasury advisors had projected a base rate increase to 1% in March 2021 (however, since the Bank of England projections they were now projecting the 0.255 increase to 1% in June 2021).

The Executive further noted that the average HRA borrowing rate for existing loans was 3.38%, the majority of relating to the self-financing deal, when the loans had to be taken at a specific point in time.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations be made to Council on 26 February 2020:

1. That the Treasury Management Strategy (attached at Appendix A to the report) be approved.
2. That the draft prudential indicators for 2020/21 (attached at Appendix C to the report) be approved.
3. That the minimum revenue provision policy (attached at Appendix B to the report) be approved.
4. That an increase to the maximum level of long term (invested for longer than 12 months) investments from £10Million to £20Million when cash balances are higher than £30Million be approved.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

## 11 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

### (1) Town Fund

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Town Fund. He advised that the Town Fund Board had met for the first time on 31 January 2020, and had

involved a wide representation from partners and local businesses. Going forward, the Secretary of State had asked for Town Fund and Growth Deal 3 (GD3) matters to be merged into one Development Board. Accordingly, Officers would take steps to work with the Government and local partners to implement new Terms of Reference for a Development Board.

The Chief Executive stated that recruitment for an Independent Chair of the Board was being led by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and managed by PENNA, representatives from HCC, the Herts Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Government would support the interview process in due course. The aim was to conclude this process ahead of the next Board meeting, which was due to take place on a date to be agreed in March 2020. It was hoped that once the Board had met the GD3 funding would be released which would in part be used to fund the bus station re-location scheme. Options for inclusion as part of the Town Fund Investment Plan would also be worked up ahead of the March 2020 Development Board meeting.

(2) Storm Ciara

The Strategic Director (RP) provided an update on the impact of Storm Ciara on SBC services and Stevenage residents.

The Strategic Director advised that, during the early part of the week following the Storm, the Customer Service Centre had received 400 calls regarding repairs and 233 regarding other damage (eg. fencing). These were being worked through by officers. Environmental Services had received calls regarding refuse bins / refuse being blown away. 36 calls had been received in relation to damaged and fallen trees and these had been made safe and cleared.

The Strategic Director reported that the Waste Transfer Station had experienced a backlog of waste for landfill, and that this backlog was in the process of being resolved.

With the expected arrival of Storm Dennis during the next weekend (15/16 February 2020), the Executive asked the Strategic Director to ensure that housing officers were liaising with homeless hostels and social providers to deal with rough sleepers in the predicted inclement weather. It was agreed that a media release be prepared regarding sleeping rough in inclement weather.

In terms of the outcome of the effect of Storm Ciara on SBC services and Stevenage residents, the Strategic Director was asked to provide statistics to all Members and a media release on the matter (possibly combining it with further statistics following Storm Dennis).

(3) Coronavirus

The Strategic Director (RP) provided the latest news on the impact of the Coronavirus outbreak and plans for containment should it spread.

The Strategic Director advised that Public Health England had issued a range of advice to public bodies regarding the outbreak. The World Health Organisation had also declared it a public health emergency of international concern. The risk in the UK had been raised from low to moderate, enabling the Government to plan for possible major eventualities, including a pandemic.

The Strategic Director stated that the Government would be publishing Regulations designed to reduce further transmission. Public Health England had conducted over 1,350 tests on individuals, which had resulted in 8 being positive for the virus. Public Health bodies and local authorities would be notified if more cases came to light, and all health practitioners had received advice regarding the virus.

The Strategic Director explained that, within Hertfordshire, the Local Resilience Forum was monitoring the situation closely, and had a number of triggers in place should there be an escalation of the virus.

The Strategic Director would be sharing the Public Health England advice with all staff, and the SBC Pandemic Business Continuity Plan was in the process of being updated. NHS posters on the virus would be displayed in all Council buildings and community centres.

The Strategic Director undertook to provide all Members with regular updates on the outbreak.

(4) Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA)

The Leader was delighted to report that SADA had recently signed a 12 month contract with East Hertfordshire District Council to provide their Domestic Abuse services. She congratulated the Community Safety Manager and her Team on this achievement.

## 12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) 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 they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That, having considered the reasons for the following items being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

**13 PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 22 JANUARY 2020**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 January 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

**14 DEBT WRITE OFFS GREATER THAN £10,000**

The Executive considered a Part II report seeking approval to the writing off of Housing Benefit overpayment debts deemed irrecoverable and unpaid business rates liabilities which were properly due to the Council of more than £10,000.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendation contained in the report be approved.

*Reason for Decision: As contained in report.*

*Other Options considered: As contained in report.*

**15 URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

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## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 28 January 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair) , Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Laurie Chester, Michael Downing, Michelle Gardner, Andy McGuinness, John Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris.

**Start / End** Start Time: 6.00pm  
**Time:** End Time: 6.54pm

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Mead.

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 2 MINUTES - 18 DECEMBER 2019

In relation to Minute 3 – Part I Decisions of the Executive (Community Centres Review), the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) undertook to follow up the issue of the ongoing determination of the lease for the Old Stevenage Community Association and respond to the Member who had raised this matter at the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 December 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

#### 3 PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive meeting held on 22 January 2020:

##### **Minutes of the Executive – 16 December 2019**

Noted.

##### **Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees**

Noted.

##### **Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Rent Setting Report 2020/21**

The Committee was advised that the Executive had requested the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) to submit a report to the Executive in the Autumn of 2020 in respect of the outcome of Housing Service Charges Review to be conducted in

the Summer, prior to the charges being built into the 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account Budget.

The Committee was further advised that the Executive had approved an additional recommendation requesting officers to write to the Secretary of State (MHCLG) to request that new build right to buy receipts that are projected to be returned in the last quarter of 2019/20 (estimated at £790,000) are not returned to the Government, but used to increase funding for the Council's ambitious house building programme, such as Kenilworth or other pipeline programmes.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) commented:

- After a number of years of rent reductions for Council tenants, the Government had reverted back to its previous policy of rent increases of CPI +1% for the next five year period; and
- In relation to the retention of 1 for 1 right to buy receipts, it was confirmed that the eligibility criteria required the use of these receipts for replacement homes. At present, the funds needed to be spent within 3 years, but officers would be writing to the MHCLG to request that the time period be extended to five years, as suggested in the Government's consultation on "Use of Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts".

### **Draft General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2020/21**

The Committee was informed that the report contained Financial Security Options approved by the Executive in November 2019, and included the recommendations of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LSFG).

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) referred to Appendix B to the report, which included a Risk-based Assessment of the level of General Fund Balances 2020/21, including 3 new risks, namely the increased cost of bed and breakfast for homelessness; increased revenue repair costs as a result of the stock condition surveys; and increased costs of capital works requiring funding as a result of re-phasing/deferring other capital works. In this regard, the Executive asked officers to arrange an All-Member seminar on Financial Risks, to ensure that Members were fully aware of the challenging General Fund position going forward.

The Committee was further informed that the Executive had agreed to an additional recommendation amending growth options G20 and G21 relating to the cost of managing the allotments for one year only (£22,000 full year cost) and implementing increased allotment charges from 1 October 2020 and not 1 April 2021, as included in the report.

Although the levels of 2020/21 fees and charges were to be noted, as they had taken effect from 1 January 2020, a Member raised doubts that the small increase in charges in the Old Town car parks would realise the level of additional income projected, as these car parks were invariably under-utilised. The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) confirmed that the options to reduce spend and maintain current level of services were becoming more difficult.

In reply to a Member's question as to why the graph at Paragraph 3.2 of the report, which referred to Annual Government Grant Loss, commenced on 2011/12, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) commented that this was the year that the then Government's "austerity" programme had commenced. The Chair added that it was useful for Members to be shown the Grant Loss over the last 10 years in order to appreciate its cumulative impact on the Council's budget since 2011/12.

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) confirmed that all the savings options recommended by the Leader's Financial Security Group had been accepted by the Executive with the exception of the proposal to cease hard copy production of the Chronicle magazine. However, this had been offset by savings identified as a result of managerial changes within Stevenage Direct Services.

### **Draft Capital Strategy 2019/20 – 2024/25**

The Committee was advised that the General Fund Capital Strategy included Health and Safety items totalling £1.8Million, as well as previous commitments, including the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management Programme, ICT Strategy and Vehicle Replacement Programme. All Capital bids scoring 1.5 or over in the scoring system were recommended for inclusion in the Strategy, the one exception being the Bedwell Community Centre boiler works (£100,000).

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) drew attention to the section of the report concerning locality reviews. The locality reviews were looking to future proof the Council's assets and buildings; identify infill sites for potential disposal; and bringing down the revenue and running costs of buildings. A report on locality reviews was scheduled to be submitted to the July 2020 Executive meeting.

The Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) explained that the capital balance at the end of 2020/21 was projected to be £56,000, which she considered to be unsustainable. She would therefore be investigating possibilities to provide a sustainable solution, including the options set out in Paragraph 4.9.5 of the report.

In respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Strategy, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) reported that the position was more sustainable, as evidenced by the HRA Business Plan approved by the Executive in December 2019.

In response to a Member's query regarding why capital bid C59 (Improving the environmental credentials of the build at the Kenilworth Close scheme) had not been recommended for inclusion in the Capital Strategy, the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) explained that, though not agreed as an additional resolution, the Executive had requested that, should there be a financial overachievement of land and asset sales during the year, then priority should be given to some of this income being earmarked for improvement of the environmental credentials of the build at the Kenilworth Close scheme.

## **4 URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**5 URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

**6 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) 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 they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

**7 PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Part II decision of the Executive concerning the appointment of a Development Partner at Kenilworth Close.

The Assistant Director (Housing Development) answered a number of Members' questions regarding the report.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillors Robin Parker CC and Andy McGuinness wished their names to be recorded as not supporting the decision of the Executive in respect of the appointment of a Development Partner at Kenilworth Close.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II decision of the Executive made at its meeting held on 22 January 2020 be noted.

**8 URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 11 February 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Michael Downing (Chair), Adam Mitchell CC (Vice-Chair), Doug Bainbridge, Stephen Booth, Adrian Brown, Teresa Callaghan and Loraine Rossati.

**Start / End** Start Time: 6.00pm

**Time:** End Time: 7.10pm

#### 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Dave Cullen and Jody Hanafin.

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 2 **MINUTES 20 NOVEMBER 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Select Committee held on 20 November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

At this juncture, the Chair advised the Committee that there despite the Council having continued dialogue with a number of options being considered, there was no further update in relation to the support for Post Office provision in the Old Town. Any updates would be brought to this Committee as soon as they were available.

#### 3 **UPDATE ON PREVIOUS REVIEW INTO MAINTENANCE OF TREES HEDGES & SHRUB BEDS**

Members received an update on the recommendations agreed by this Committee in relation to the 2015 scrutiny review into the Maintenance of Trees, Hedges and Shrub Beds.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Mead to the meeting who advised that she was in attendance for this item to raise concerns on behalf of a number of local residents with concerns on this matter.

Members raised the following issues:

- In relation to shrub beds, officers advised that following a full survey of the shrub beds on Council land, the Council was ahead of its planned schedule

and many improvements had been made to shrub beds across the Town. In response to a request, Officers agreed to send Councillor Mitchell the survey results for the Longmeadow area;

- Members were disappointed to learn that no work had yet been undertaken on the promotion of gardening services to those residents unable to maintain their own gardens. Officers advised that this would be reviewed including as part of the Council's Commercial Strategy. Members also suggested contact with the voluntary sector as part of this review.

Councillor Sarah Mead's concerns included the seeming lack of response by the Council to residents where there were concerns about overhanging and potential nuisance or even danger being caused by trees; the problems caused by certain types of trees eg sycamores, in relation to leaf drops and flooding issues; the blocking of light from trees and the half pruning of shrubs and hedges.

In response, Officers informed Members that due to limited resources they had to make judgements to respond to what requests were considered reasonable and in the main to address safety issues, on top of the routine maintenance undertaken by the Team. A review of the Policy would be undertaken in due course.

- In respect of volunteering, the programme of Green Space volunteering activities was continuing and viewed as a success by all.
- Officers agreed to take up the issue of breaches of tenancy agreements in regards to trees and specifically the planting of leylandii trees, to find out how this issue is monitored by Housing colleagues and what can be done to help tenants who inherit the problem and have the prohibitive cost of their removal.
- In relation to Licences to Occupy, Members noted that although the new system had been in place for a while and the process had been simplified, officers would be undertaking a review of possible gaps and risks that had been identified.
- Members were pleased to see the wide range of species of trees that had been planted throughout the Town in recent years. In response to a question, officers advised that a number of native tree species such as holly, maple, birch etc were also planted. The challenge for the team was to plant the right size and type of tree in the appropriate location.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the update be noted;
2. That a further progress report be added to the work programme and brought back to this Committee in 6 months' time.

4 **REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES**

The Scrutiny Officer gave Members an update on the review of local neighbourhood centres and presented a report with some background information for the review.

It was noted that the first site visits by officers and Members had been made to Symonds Green and The Oval Community Centres. The next visits to the Neighbourhood Centre buildings included Oaks Cross and would end up back at the Oval and would help Members to gather evidence for the Review.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

5 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

6 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

7 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

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**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**

Date: Monday, 17 February 2020

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Laurie Chester, Michael Downing, Michelle Gardner, Andy McGuinness, Robin Parker CC and Claire Parris.

**Start / End**      Start Time:    6.00pm  
**Time:**            End Time:       8.30pm

**1      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Sarah-Jane McDonough, John Mead, Sarah Mead and Adam Mitchell.

There were no declarations of interest.

**2      MINUTES - 14 JANUARY 2020 AND 28 JANUARY 2020**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2020 and 28 January 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

**3      PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered the decisions on the following matters arising from the Executive meeting held on 12 February 2020:

**Minutes of the Executive – 22 January 2020**

Noted.

**Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny and Select Committees**

Noted.

**Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Public Consultation**

The Committee was advised that the public consultation for the SPD would be published on February 24 2020 and run until 22 March 2020.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director (Planning and Regulatory) commented:

- The suggestion that the size of residential garages should be increased to make them fit for purpose would be taken on board;
- developers would be required to make a financial contribution towards parking contributions in the area of any approved application;
- In relation to the Town Centre, although the provision of parking spaces was still important, the opportunity to reduce the numbers should be considered as all amenities could be reached without the use of a car;
- Consideration would be given to what was included in the S106 agreement for the development on land to the North of Stevenage to try to avoid any overflow parking issues from the Lister Hospital;
- The suggestion of a park and ride scheme and the issue of parking spaces being taken up by commercial vans would be looked at as part of the Transport Strategy.

### **Stevenage Borough Council Climate Change and Engagement Update**

It was noted that the first meeting of the Climate Change Working Group had recently taken place. Members asked that the importance of including young people, youth groups and local schools be highlighted as a crucial strand of work.

An on-line digital engagement programme with interested people had been started which had resulted in a high number of responses so far.

Members were advised of the programme of projects for 'quick wins' for the Council over the next 12 months including free water in the Town Centre, Orchard planting schemes and the reduction in fleet emissions. Officers agreed that the report back to the Climate Change Working Group on the programme of quick wins would also be submitted to this Committee.

### **Licensing Act 2003 – Review of Statement of Licensing Policy**

Officers advised that a limited number of additions and amendments to the existing Statement of Licensing Policy had been consulted upon. However, the format of the new Policy reflects that of the previous version and is in line with central government and Local Government Association guidance and best practice. In response to a question Officers advised that the consultation had been by way of the website, a press release, with Ward Members, licence holders and trade bodies.

It was noted that the Senior Environmental Health and Licensing Manager would be investigating the possibility of imposing conditions requiring the recycling of empty bottles by licensees.

### **Household Waste Management Policy**

Members were informed of the changes to Existing Practice for household waste which would help the Council deliver its environmental aspirations.

In considering the Policy the following issues were raised:

- Communications were key particularly with regard to
  - the changes around clinical waste collection;
  - the transition between the change from boxes to bags;
  - recharging for replacement wheelie bins and free additions/replacement of recycling receptacles. It was noted that the current cost of replacement bins was in the region of £10,000 per annum including admin and delivery;
  - the recycling of tetrapak was unclear to many residents;
  - missed collections and the reporting thereof.
- It was suggested that a future edition of Chronicle could be used to set out clearly the rules and changes around the waste policy;
- Concern was raised about the need to report missing or stolen bins to the Police as it was felt this could be a waste of time and Police resources;
- Difficulties around side waste, and that it should be made clear that refuse and recycling would only be collected if it was in the correct container.

### **Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2020/2021**

It was noted that the Executive had asked officers to investigate enhanced advertising/marketing for Council garages and to explore options with SLL to reduce the level of management fee.

In response to a question, officers advised that the budget included all the options agreed at the Leaders Financial Services Group. A rough estimate of the New Homes Bonus figure in relation to the land North of Stevenage would be sent to Cllr Parker.

Members asked about the percentage of unlet garages across the Town. Officers advised that there were currently in the region of 600 although some of these were not of a standard to be let.

### **Final Capital Strategy 2019/20 – 2024/25**

Noted.

### **Annual Treasury Management Strategy Including Prudential Code Indicators 2020/21**

Officers were congratulated on the clarity of the information presented in respect of the Council's reserves.

In response to a question officers confirmed that all Executive reports now had a climate change implication paragraph included.

### **Urgent Part I Business**

#### **(i) Town Fund**

The Town Centre Board had met at the end of January in line with the

Government requirements. Local Partners have initiated a recruitment process for an independent Chair for a new Stevenage Development Board.

**(ii) Storm Ciara**

Noted.

**(iii) Coronavirus**

Noted.

**(iv) Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA)**

Noted.

**Part II Minutes – Executive 22 January 2020**

Noted.

**Debt Write Offs Greater than £10,000**

Noted.

**Urgent Part II Business**

None.

**4 URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**5 URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

**6 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) 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 they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.

2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

7 **PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28 JANUARY 2020**

Noted.

8 **PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

Noted.

9 **URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

10 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**

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**Meeting** EXECUTIVE  
**Portfolio Area** Housing Health and Older People  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## DAMP AND CONDENSATION POLICY

### KEY DECISION

#### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive of the damp and condensation policy and the implementation thereof.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Executive approves the damp and condensation policy document at Appendix A.
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), having consulted the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, to approve any minor future revisions to the policy.
- 2.3 That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), having consulted the Portfolio Holder of Housing, Health and Older People, to approve appropriate processes and procedures in order to implement the policy, and to approve any future revisions to them.

#### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2016 the Business Unit delivering the Damp and Condensation service was moved from the Repair and Voids Service to Housing and Investment.

- 3.2 A Damp and Condensation strategy was developed in 2016 and a presentation made to the Community Select Committee in June 2016 and the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) in October 2016. The strategy set out:
- The council's legal responsibilities
  - Tenant's satisfaction through consultation, effective repairs and investment and managing moisture levels.
  - Operational service – Development of preventative, diagnostic, intervention and management procedures.
  - Dealing with Backlog cases.
  - Financial – Cost effective.
  - Develop an action plan
- 3.3 The action plan was put in place In August 2016, and developed following the Community Select Committee recommendations (January 2017) and Executive Member responses in March 2017. An update on the recommendations and the Action plan was presented to Executive in October 2018.
- 3.4 Following the transfer from Repairs and Voids there was a considerable backlog of unresolved / incomplete damp and condensation cases. This peaked at around 450 cases in March 2018. Through the implementation of the action plan and the development of new processes and procedures, this has been significantly reduced. The reduction can also be credited to re-assessment of the required staff levels necessary to delivery an efficient service.
- 3.5 There has been a marked decrease in the number of complaints received. In 2017/18 there were 101 complaints this was reduced to 61 in 2018/19 and there are currently only 33 complaints received up to January 2020.

## **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

### **4.1 Dealing with damp and condensation**

4.1.1 Dealing with damp and condensation is a reactive service and due to seasonal changes in the weather, the number of cases reporting damp and condensation can fluctuate throughout the year. The number of reports relating to condensation damp increase in the colder months.

4.1.2 The types of damp covered by the policy are:-

#### **a) Rising damp**

This is where moisture rises up through the building fabric.

## **b) Penetrating damp (incl. leaks)**

This is where water penetrates through weak spots in the building structure or the occurrence of internal leaks.

## **c) Condensation damp**

This will occur where moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface turning the moisture into water droplets that can also lead to the formation of black mould on surfaces and mould and mildew on clothes and possessions.

- 4.1.3 Appendix B shows pictures of the different types of damp and condensation.
- 4.1.4 On average there are around 530 cases of damp over a 12 month period, of these 25% relate to the presence of condensation damp alone i.e. where excessive moisture has not also been generated by external factors, for example water ingress through the structure or a water leak.
- 4.1.5 Working in partnership with tenants managing condensation damp and reducing the number of cases will have a dramatic positive affect on the service delivered and for our tenants, ensuring that they can live in a healthy environment.
- 4.1.6 With the help and support from the council providing information, guidance, assistance where needed, and working in partnership with tenant's on managing condensation damp in their homes, the number of visits and subsequent remedial actions are likely to reduce. This will enable the council to target its resources ensuring a damp and condensation service is provided to the maximum number of homes within the funds available.
- 4.1.7 Damp and condensation cases are taken into account during the survey work carried out to establish the scope of work for each of the flat blocks included in the Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC). Where necessary improvements to the thermal properties of the structure are carried out helping reduce the conditions that can lead to condensation damp / mould forming on internal surfaces.
- 4.1.8 In 2018/19 there were 210 condensation damp cases requiring the installation or replacement of suitable mechanical extract fans in the bathroom and/or kitchen as part of the remedial works required to assist the tenant in the management of condensation damp in their home.
- 4.1.9 There is a close working relationship with the Repairs and Voids team. Any property that becomes void and has damp and condensation issues is inspected by one of the damp and condensation surveyors and any rectification works are carried out before the property is released for re- letting.
- 4.1.10 Further consideration will also be given on how it may be possible to identify signs of damp and condensation during other regular house inspections, for

example during regular servicing visits (gas servicing), void inspection, repairs and maintenance etc.

- 4.1.11 Holding workshops engaging with tenants and providing advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation will also be explored.
- 4.1.12 The current processes and procedures will be reviewed and updated to ensure that they are in line with the proposed approved policy document. New key performance indicators (KPI's) and targets will also be set to ensure that the quality of the service can be maintained.
- 4.1.13 A priority based system will be introduced to ensure that all damp and condensation cases are delivered according to the severity and urgency of the problem, taking into account the tenant's situation. These will be triaged at various stages in the process from receipt of initial report, following site inspection, and during delivery process. The priority rating will set the timescales for each case ensuring that tenants are treated fairly and in a consistent way. This will be included in the newly reviewed process and procedures.

## **4.2 Policy**

- 4.2.1 To ensure that the damp and condensation strategy and the action plan improvements are delivered it is important that a robust policy is in force. This will ensure that a cost effective service can continue and assist officers to deliver the councils main aims when dealing with damp and condensation.

The proposed policy at Appendix A delivers the following aims:

- Ensuring that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way.
- Focus on working in partnership with tenants ensuring that their internal environment is safe and healthy living conditions are maintained.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp including, managing and controlling condensation.
- Ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.
- Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.
- Maximise the available funds and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and condensation problems.

- Ensure that the fabric of our property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.

4.2.2 The new policy will clearly identify what the councils responsibilities are, also the tenant's responsibilities and what service the council will or will not be able to provide in dealing with the managing of damp and condensation in council homes.

4.2.3 This is a partnership between the tenant and the council to ensure the efficient management and control of damp and condensation in council homes.

### **4.3 Council's responsibilities**

4.3.1 The Tenancy Agreement states that "Council" is responsible for the repair of the structure and exterior of your home and for its own standard fittings. These include the roof, walls, ceilings, floors, stairs, window frames, external doors, drains, gutters and outside pipes. Internally they include the heating system, bath, sinks and toilet, kitchen units, water pipes, gas and electric wiring, and other fixtures".

4.3.2 It is important that the council diagnoses damp correctly and the solutions are effective. Staff training and delivering the ethos of dealing with the cause of the damp not just the symptom and "fixing first time" will be positive and reduce any unnecessary inconvenience and stress to tenants and the need for return visits. However solving damp and condensation can sometimes be complex and it can be difficult to find the right solution. This can require a number of return visits.

4.3.3 In 2019/20 there have been 168 return visits. It is envisaged that this can be reduced following implementation of the policy through better management and control of condensation.

4.3.4 Under the Housing Act 1985, and the Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018 the council has a legal obligation to ensure that the condition of the property remains fit for human habitation. The council is not responsible for unfitness caused by the tenant; however the council will work with the tenant and provide advice and support on how to manage and control condensation damp.

4.3.5 Under the Housing Act 2004 the council has a duty to manage defects, these are described in the "Housing Health and Safety Rating System" (HHRS). This risk based rating system assesses the potential hazards and provides a method of categorising the severity and urgency for action to be carried out The classified hazards relating to damp and mould include:

- Damp and mould growth caused by damp and condensation
- Excess cold due to lack of insulation and thermal (cold) bridging

- Volatile Organic Compounds (mould) that may form in damp areas.
- 4.3.6 The council's responsibilities are detailed in the policy document. This document will be available for the public to view via the council's website and online housing account.
- 4.3.7 The council will communicate with tenant's providing advice and guidance on how to manage condensation damp. This is through the issuing of guidance leaflets the council web page and also through the surveyor's advice and guidance given when house inspections are carried out. This covers:
- Maintaining heating
  - Maintaining ventilation – opening windows when cooking, opening window trickle vents, use extractor fan
  - Reducing moisture – by simple measures of closing kitchen and bathroom doors, covering pans when cooking, allowing air to circulate around furniture.
  - Regularly checking and washing down mould when found.
  - Decorating with anti-fungal paint after mould wash.
- 4.3.8 Internal conditions within a home can have an effect on health and wellbeing of the occupants that may also lead to an increased risk of condensation damp, for example:
- Overcrowding  
Support and assistance will be provided by the council to review the tenant's options that may include moving to more appropriate and alternative suitable accommodation meeting their needs.
- Where overcrowding is the major factor resulting in excessive condensation damp and mould growth, this will be referred to the Housing Panel to consider the case as an exception to the Allocations policy for a higher priority banding that overcrowding would normally attract.
- Excessive hoarding of personal belongings.  
Support and assistance will be provided by the council to help the tenant manage the situation.
- 4.3.9 There are occasions where it may not be possible or reasonably practical for the council to undertake effective remedial action. For example,
- Poor construction / design (not meeting current construction and living standards) for example:
    - Cold spots in the fabric of the building cannot be completely eliminated leading to a risk of condensation damp / mould in these areas.
  - Non habitable rooms / structures. For example:

- Out –buildings / sheds that have been converted including linking buildings between the house and out building and other add-on structures.
- Unheated / uninsulated semi external toilets store rooms

Tenants require the council's written consent before converting / using non – habitable buildings and spaces/rooms and are encouraged to seek advice from the council.

4.3.10 Effective repairs and maintenance of the council's housing stock will significantly reduce the risk of defects occurring reducing the risk of damp and condensation problems occurring and therefore preventing further deterioration of the property condition.

#### **4.4 Tenants Responsibility**

4.4.1 The tenant's responsibilities are detailed in the policy document Appendix A.

4.4.2 In partnership with the council the tenant's actions in managing and controlling damp and condensation are also very important to ensure that the property remains in a safe and healthy environment.

4.4.3 It is also important that the tenant complies with the tenancy agreement conditions ensuring that they look after their home. This includes the responsibility to regularly inspect for damp and condensation and take the necessary action to control and manage condensation damp.

4.4.4 The tenant is responsible for carrying out regular inspection for damp and condensation, washing mould from surfaces and carrying out redecorations following remedial works and mould washes. The council will support and provide assistance where they can if the tenant is unable to carry out these measures/works and where necessary will undertake mould washes and redecoration.

4.4.5 An overcrowded property can also significantly increase the risk of condensation. Where mould is discovered in this situation solving the overcrowding will be considered in accordance with the upcoming Housing Allocations Policy review. Successfully resolving damp condensation will only be possible when the overcrowding situation has been resolved.

#### **4.5 Private Rented accommodation**

Where a council assists with placing an applicant into the private rented sector and damp and condensation issues occur, the council will provide support and assistance that may require carrying out a site inspection, identifying the cause of the damp and condensation and notifying the landlord of the findings. If the Landlord does not respond and carry out their responsibilities in

accordance with the relevant acts or in a satisfactory manner further support will be provided and legal advice will be sought.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

5.1.1 Delivering the damp and condensation service is very challenging owing to its reactive nature and the fluctuations in the number of cases received, increasing during prolonged colder winter months. It is difficult to accurately predict demand and the budget required to deliver the service.

5.1.2 The annual damp and condensation budget is currently set at £250K. It is considered that with the implementation of the policy and the partnership approach with the tenants on dealing with damp and condensation, that this will be adequate. The level of funding versus demand will be monitored throughout the year and any predicted increase will be reported as part of the Capital quarterly monitoring process and if required as part of any future revision of the HRA Business Plan.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

5.2.1 s11(1) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, provides that there is an implied covenant by the council in its Tenancy Agreement:

(a) To keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling-house (including drains, gutters and external pipes),

(b) To keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences, but not other fixtures, fittings and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas or electricity), and

(c) To keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for space heating and heating water.”

s11 (2) states that the landlord is not required to carry out repairs for which the tenant is responsible and S11 (3) provides that in determining the standard of repair required by the lessor's repairing covenant, regard shall be had to the age, character and prospective life of the dwelling-house and the locality in which it is situated”.

5.2.2. From 20 March 2020 the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 will apply to all the council's secure tenancies, implying a covenant that the property is fit for habitation and will remain so until the tenancy ends. This does not require the council to carry out works for which the tenant is responsible, nor is there any liability on the council if the unfitness is wholly or mainly attributable to the tenant's own breach of covenant.

### **5.3 Consultations with the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) and the Portfolio Holders Advisory Group (PHAG)**

5.3.1 The policy was presented to the HMAB on 16 January 2020. A number of issues were raised by members and officers responded to these at the meeting. Where appropriate these have been included in the updated processes and procedures or have been incorporated into the policy. HMAB were broadly supportive of the policy.

5.3.2 The policy was presented to the PHAG on 13 February 2020. Members highlighted the importance of providing regular updates to customers and members involved in damp and condensation cases.

5.3.3 Officers advised that the process and procedures will be updated in line with the policy and will include delivery timescales and also ensure that the policy will be available to tenant's, see clause 4.3.6 above.

5.3.4 The recommendations and advice have been taken on board and where appropriate incorporated in the policy.

### **5.4 Risk implications**

5.3.1 The approval of the proposed policy will help reduce the reputational risk to the council by ensuring that tenants are aware of their responsibilities and also what and how the council in partnership with the tenant will undertake to eradicate the presence of damp and condensation.

### **5.4 Climate change implications**

5.4.1 There are no climate change implications to this report.

### **5.5 Staffing and accommodation implications**

5.5.1 Housing and Investment is currently undertaking a Business Unit Review due to be implemented April 2020. The review has identified the need for surveyors with specialist knowledge and skills relating to diagnosing and delivering solutions relating to damp and condensation. The structure has two

Building Surveyors managed by a Principal Building Surveyor. It is considered that this will be sufficient to deliver the service on the basis of current knowledge.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

5.6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to service delivery (see Appendix C).

## **5.7 Service Delivery Implications**

5.6.1 New processes and procedures will be produced in line with the proposed policy ensuring that the aims of the policy are achieved.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**1.1 All documents that have been used in compiling this report, that may be available to the public, i.e. they do not contain exempt information, should be listed here:**

## **APPENDICES**

- A The damp and condensation policy.
- B Types of damp and condensation.
- C Equalities Impact Assessment.

<b>Damp and Condensation Policy</b>	
<p><b>Approved by:</b>  <b>Date of approval:</b>  <b>Author:</b>  <b>Owner: Andy Sowden</b>  <b>Live from: Jaine Cresser</b>  <b>Review date:</b></p>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Aim of the policy</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<p>This policy aims to set out to assist in the delivery of an aids and adaptation service that will be able to::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way.</li> <li>• Focus on working in partnership with tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is provided.</li> <li>• Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp including, managing and controlling condensation.</li> <li>• Ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.</li> <li>• Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.</li> <li>• Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and condensation problems.</li> <li>• Ensure that the fabric of our property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Scope of the policy</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<p>The scope of this policy covers how the council’s Investment team (damp and condensation) and our tenants are able to jointly control, manage and eradicate damp and condensation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All housing properties that are tenanted and communal areas. It</li> </ul>

	<p>also includes emergency / temporary accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the types of damp:- rising, penetrating and condensation damp, including internal leaks.</li> <li>• Identifying the council's responsibilities for dealing with damp and condensation.</li> <li>• Identifying the tenants' responsibilities for dealing with damp and condensation.</li> <li>• Offering guidance, advice and assistance throughout the process. to all tenants living in council properties</li> <li>• Identifies situations where the council will not be able to undertake works to rectify condensation damp.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>3.1</b>	The Assistant Director of Housing and Investment has overall responsibility for this policy and for ensuring that it is fully implemented.
<b>3.2</b>	<p>The Operations Manager (Investing in Homes and Properties) and the Investment Programme Manager is responsible for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effective implementation and delivery of this policy</li> <li>• Monitoring the performance and delivery</li> <li>• Reviewing this policy</li> </ul>
<b>3.3</b>	<p>The Principal Building Surveyor (Specialist Works) - Damp and Condensation is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing processes and procedures that are in line with the policy.</li> <li>• Ensure that the policy aims and terms are adhered to.</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Policy</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>TYPES OF DAMP</b>
4.1.1	<p>The types of damp covered by the policy:</p> <p><b>a) Rising Damp</b></p> <p>The movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action.</p> <p><b>b) Penetrating Damp (including internal leaks)</b></p> <p>Water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure. The cause can be the result of, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ingress due to defective or poor original design / workmanship of the structure</li> <li>• Defective components for example roof coverings, external wall doors</li> </ul>

<p>4.1.2</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p>and windows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defective or blocked rainwater gutters and pipes.</li> <li>• Defective or leaking internal waste pipes, hot and cold water and heating systems.</li> <li>• Flooding due to burst pipes</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Condensation Damp</b></p> <p>Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface and then condenses producing water droplets. This can take two main forms:</p> <p>a) Surface condensation arising when the inner surface of the structure is cooler than the room air.</p> <p>b) Condensation inside the structure (interstitial) where vapour pressure forces water vapour through porous materials (e.g. walls), which then condenses when it reaches colder conditions within the structure.</p> <p>The conditions that can increase the risk of condensation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate ventilation e.g. natural opening windows and trickle / background vents and mechanical extraction in bathrooms and kitchens</li> <li>• Inadequate heating e.g. undersized boilers and radiators, draught stripping</li> <li>• Inadequate thermal insulation. e.g. Missing or defective wall and loft insulation.</li> <li>• High humidity e.g. presence of rising and penetrating damp</li> <li>• Poor building design and construction – specific cold areas (bridging) which are integral with the building construction.</li> </ul> <p>Conditions that can lead to condensation are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor ventilation – not opening windows, blocking up vents not turning on extract fans, not allowing air to circulate around furniture</li> <li>• Poor heating – not heating the house which can be a result of fuel poverty</li> <li>• Defective insulation –dislodged insulation in lofts</li> <li>• High humidity - not covering pans when cooking and drying laundry inside the house can contribute to this.</li> <li>• Over crowding.</li> </ul> <p>Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. This is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present.</p> <p><b>The council’s responsibilities</b></p>
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4.3.1	The council shall investigate to determine the cause of damp and condensation and carry out remedial repairs and actions in accordance with the tenancy agreement.
4.3.2	Diagnose the cause of damp correctly and deliver effective solutions based on the ethos of dealing with the cause of the damp not just the symptom and wherever possible “fixing first time”
4.3.3	Promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage damp and condensation.
4.3.4	The council will ensure that all of our staff have training and are aware of and understand the delivery of the service that will meet the aims of this policy.
4.3.5	The council will ensure that only competent contractors will be employed to carry out any works and that the tenant’s possessions are adequately protected during the works.
4.3.6	The council will inform the tenant of the findings of the investigations following a house visit. This will include identifying the possible causes of damp, recommending effective solutions and all necessary remedial works / actions / enhancements and the estimated timescales to complete the works /measures. This will be communicated to the tenant keeping them up to date with their enquiry through the process from inception to completion.
4.3.7	When the council is satisfied that in partnership with the tenant all reasonable efforts in managing condensation damp has been carried out and this has not been successful, the council will visit the property and investigate the matter further.
4.3.8	The council is responsible for insulating the tenants home in accordance with Decent Homes Standard to help reduce the likelihood of condensation occurring.
4.3.9	The council is responsible for maintaining a tenant’s home to avoid penetrating and rising damp and for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
4.3.10	The council will undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation damp, for example installation of mechanical extract fans, fresh air vents, repairing existing insulation, etc.
4.3.11	Remedial works will only be carried out where it is reasonable and practical to do so. The council will have regard to the constraints of the existing building design and structure and will take a pragmatic approach in finding appropriate solutions.

4.3.12	The council will make good internal surfaces following any remedial work carried out ensuring that surfaces are prepared to a condition ready for the tenant to redecorate.
4.3.13	Mould wash will only be carried out where this is found to be persistent or extensive and cannot be controlled by the tenant.
4.3.14	In some cases remedial work may not be necessary requiring additional support and advice to be given to the tenant on managing and controlling the occurrences of condensation damp.
4.3.15	The council will make reasonable attempts to access the property to inspect and carry out the works.
4.3.16	<p>The council will not be able to control condensation damp where it is unreasonable or impractical to do so or if any remedial action would be ineffective for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor construction / design (not meeting current construction and living standards) for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cold bridging areas in the fabric of the building that cannot be eliminated.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non habitable rooms / structures. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Out –buildings / sheds that have been converted including linking buildings between the house and out building and other add-on structures.</li> <li>○ Unheated / uninsulated semi external toilets and store rooms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4.3.16	The council will respond to a report of damp and condensation and complete any remedial works/measures within a reasonable timescale in accordance with the processes and procedures. This will be dependent on the severity and urgency of the problem and on the complexity of the solution of the remedial works/actions required.
4.3.17	Under certain exceptional circumstances where the tenant is unable to carry out mould washes or redecoration the council will provide support and assistance.
4.3.18	Where Internal conditions within a home for example, overcrowding and excessive hoarding of personal belongs are having an effect on health and wellbeing of the occupants or are preventing inspections or remedial works being carried out, the council will provide support and assistance to review the tenant’s options that may include moving to more appropriate alternative suitable accommodation.
4.3.19	Effective remedial action will not be possible in these instances until the situation(s) has been resolved.
	If it is unsafe for the occupants to remain in the property while the works are

4.3.20	carried out, alternative accommodation arrangements will be made. This may be on a day by day basis or a temporary decant to an alternative property. The tenant will be supported through this process to find suitable accommodation.
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Tenants responsibilities</b>
4.5.1	The tenant shall regularly check for damp and immediately report to the council evidence of rising and penetrating damp and also faulty equipment that will hamper the management and control of damp and condensation (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating etc.) In accordance with the tenancy agreement conditions (3.9 – 3.12) This can be reported via the Stevenage Housing online account, telephone (01438 242242) or the council website:
4.5.2	<p>The tenant shall regularly check for mould and clean signs of mould as soon as they are discovered. Manage condensation damp following the council's guidance. Tenants can also help reduce the conditions that lead to condensation damp by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g. Covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside, keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.</li> <li>b) Adequately heating rooms – ideally between 18 and 21C and keeping humidity between 40-60%</li> <li>c) Keep the house well ventilated e.g. opening windows when cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan is working if applicable, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.</li> </ul>
4.5.3	Clean mould from clothes, fabrics, carpets and furnishings etc.
4.5.4	Follow all advice and guidance issued by the council on managing and controlling damp and condensation. This information can be found on Stevenage Housing Online account, or the council website.
4.5.5	If all reasonable efforts have been made to manage and control condensation and mould, and this has not been successful contact the council.
4.5.6	If following an inspection by the council's surveyor the outcome shows that all reasonable measures are in place for the tenant to adequately manage the condensation damp further advice and support will be given to the tenant.
4.5.7	If the tenant fails to take the advice and reasonable steps to reduce damp the tenant may be recharged for any resulting repairs required which are considered to be result of this neglect.

4.5.8	The tenancy agreement (3.8) recommends that the tenant arranges adequate household contents insurance which should include cover against flood damage.
4.5.9	Where tenants are considering converting / using non – habitable buildings and spaces/rooms they can seek advice and permission from the council in accordance with the tenancy agreement conditions  Redecoration:
4.5.10	Where remedial works and mould wash treatments have been undertaken by the council, the tenant is responsible for redecoration. It is recommended that anti - fungal paint is used.
4.5.11	Allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of remedial works (in accordance with the tenancy agreement)
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Leaseholders responsibilities.</b>
4.5.1	Leaseholders shall manage and maintain their properties including damp and condensation in accordance with their lease agreement. The council do not carry out damp and condensation remedial works to leasehold properties
4.5.2	Any neglect by the leaseholder to manage or carry out repairs for which they are responsible for that as a consequence has a direct impact on the condition of a council owned property will be dealt with in accordance with the lease.
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Private Rented Accommodation</b>
4.6.1	Where the council assists with placing an applicant into the private rented sector the council will provide support and assistance that may involve carrying out a site inspection, identifying the cause of the damp and condensation and notifying the landlord of the findings. If the landlord does not respond in a satisfactory manner further support will be provided and legal advice will be sought.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
	The Damp and Condensation Manager will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in terms of the delivery and whether the policy aims have been met. This will be reported to the Operations Manager on a six monthly basis.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Review</b>
	The policy will be reviewed every three years and also in response to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative changes.</li> <li>• Council strategy or policy changes.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineffective policy terms.</li> </ul>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Links (Internal)</b>
	<p>Equalities &amp; Diversity Policy          Tenancy Agreement</p>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Links (External)</b>
	<p>Housing Act 1985          Homes (Fitness for Human habitation) Act 2018          Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 Section 11 – Repairs and Maintenance          Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System.          Decent Homes standards</p>

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# Appendix B

## Types of Damp

### Rising Damp:

This is where moisture rises up from the ground through the building fabric by capillary action, caused by defective or lack of damp proof course, defective or missing damp proof membrane, bridging of damp proof course.

### Examples



Raised ground level bridging the DPC, allowing moisture to penetrate the wall above the dpc and rise, manifesting as damp internally. The solution is to reduce the external ground level to a minimum of 150mm below the damp proof course.



Tree roots too close to a building can cause damage and potentially breach the damp proof course

## Penetrating Damp:

This is water penetrating through weak spots in the structure such as roof leaks, gaps around windows etc. Escape of water (plumbing leaks), flooding.

### Examples



Obvious internal water damage



Visible wet area externally

The cause of the above example was a leaking pipe hidden behind boxing in the bathroom from the flat above.



Water penetrating when it rains



missing roof tiles allowing water to penetrate



Poor seal to bathroom floor perimeter, allowing water to penetrate leading to wood rot.

## Condensation Damp:

Condensation occurs when moisture laden air comes into contact with a cold surface turning the moisture into visible waters droplets. Sustained condensation can lead to mould growth forming on surfaces.

### Examples



Condensation occurring on cold surfaces, glass, window reveals.



Mould will typically form in corners as they will be the coldest areas.



If left untreated, mould will quickly spread.

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# APPENDIX C

## Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

<b>What is being assessed?</b>		<b>Damp and Condensation Policy</b>			
Lead Assessor	Andrew Sowden Housing & Investment Manager			Assessment team	John Farquharson (Damp & Condensation Manager)  Lydia Butcher (Coordinator)
Start date	October 2019	End date	April 2020		
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	April 2021				

Who may be affected by it?	Staff, Stevenage Borough Council Housing Tenants and Leaseholders
What are the key aims of it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our customers are treated in a fair and consistent way.</li> <li>• Focus on working in partnership with our tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is provided.</li> <li>• Where reasonably practical, ensure that homes are maintained to the required habitable standard and the internal environment is safe and in a healthy condition and the fabric of the property is protected from damage.</li> <li>• Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp including, managing and controlling condensation.</li> <li>• Ensure that our tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.</li> <li>• Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.</li> <li>• Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and condensation problems.</li> </ul>

What <b>positive measures</b> are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Ensuring all are treated fairly and in a consistent way	Promote equal opportunities	Demonstrating what service can be expected from the council for all tenants	Encourage good relations	Encouraging partnership working

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Fitness for habitation act 2018</p> <p>Landlord and tenant act 1985 (section 11, Repairs and Maintenance)</p> <p>Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System</p> <p>Decent homes standard</p>
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In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>This is a partnership between the council and tenants to ensure that damp and condensation can be effectively managed and controlled.</p>
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## Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	<p>Early identification and diagnosing damp and condensation.</p> <p>Providing assistance to remove mould growth and carry out decorations where tenants are elderly and unable to manage</p>	Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	<p>Promote how the council can provide assistance and guidance and the policy document</p>	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	<p>Identifying damp and condensation cases and how to promote the policy</p>		

<b>Disability</b>					
e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Early identification and diagnosing damp and condensation Providing assistance to remove mould growth and to carry out decorations where tenants are unable to manage due to disability.	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Promote how the council can provide assistance and guidance and the content of the policy	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Identifying damp and condensation cases and how to promote the policy		

<b>Gender reassignment</b>					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Race					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

<b>Sex</b>					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

<b>Sexual orientation</b>					
e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

## Socio-economic<sup>1</sup>

e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users,  
social value in procurement

Positive impact	Identifying financial difficulties and ability to heat properties (Fuel poverty)	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

## Other

please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts

Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

<sup>1</sup>Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

## What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?		Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	
Other stakeholders?	Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) and Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) are supportive of the policy		

## Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the <b>overall findings</b> of the assessment and <b>reasons for outcome (please choose one):</b>	
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified	This EIA demonstrates the proposed policy is robust and there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made
	2b. Continue as planned
	2c. Stop and remove

Detail the <b>actions that are needed</b> as a result of this assessment and how they will help to <b>remove discrimination &amp; harassment, promote equal opportunities</b> and / or <b>encourage good relations</b> :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Promote and include access to policy document on information and guidance leaflets	Yes	Andy Sowden	Sept 2020	Include in process and procedures.
Visits by council staff and contractors identifying possible damp and condensation issues	Identifying early signs of damp and providing guidance on the management and control of condensation damp	Andy Sowden	Sept 2020	Staff training and include in process and procedures.



Further consultations with internal services with regards communication and Housing Liaison Services	Promote equal opportunities across services by aligning policies	Andy Sowden	April 2020	Better communications between internal services
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**Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director:**

**Date:**

Please send this EqIA to [equalities@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@stevenage.gov.uk)

**Meeting** EXECUTIVE  
**Portfolio Area** Housing Health and Older People  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS SERVICE POLICY

### KEY DECISION

#### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive of the aids and adaptation policy and the implementation thereof.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Executive approves the aids and adaptation policy document at Appendix A.
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), having consulted the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, to approve any minor future revisions to the policy.
- 2.3 That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), having consulted the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, to approve appropriate processes and procedures in order to implement the policy, and to approve any future revisions to them.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In 2016 the Business Unit delivering the aids and adaptation service was moved from the Repair and Voids Service to Housing and Investment.
- 3.2 An aids and adaptation policy and procedure manual was written by external consultants PML in November 2017.
- 3.3 In March 2017 PML produced a draft 'End to End Process Mapping' for the Aids and Adaptation Service. Some of the recommendations were implemented however these will require developing and updating to align with the proposed new policy.
- 3.4 An independent review of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) undertaken with the support of the Department of Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government recommends that whichever funding source is used to access assistance with home adaptations DFG or Housing Revenue Account (HRA), it should be tenure neutral with all applicants given equal access to funding.

### **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

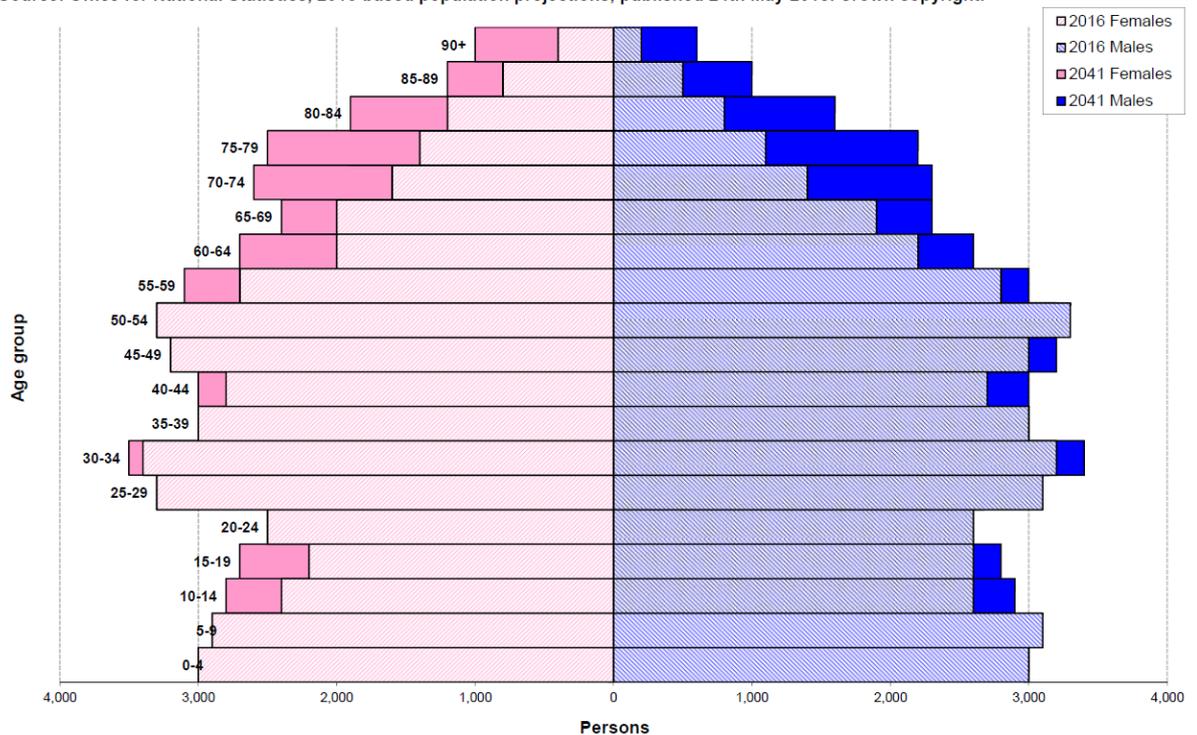
#### **4.1 POLICY**

- 4.1.1 The proposed Policy at Appendix A delivers the following aims:
- Providing focus on supporting people to consider how their future housing needs can be met and how they may live more independently, improving their day to day quality of life in and around the home.
  - Ensuring that the reasonable needs of the council's disabled tenants are prioritised and appropriate aids and adaptations are implemented. Also that adapted properties are let taking into account the needs of the tenant.
  - Ensuring integration between internal services and working closer with partnering organisations for example Hertfordshire County councils Adult Care and Children's Services departments and NHS Children's Services.
  - Complying with the legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations (e.g. the Equality Act 2010) and good practice guidance, including 'Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People'.
  - Maximising all available funding sources and ensuring that the available budgets are used effectively and efficiently to maximise best use of council housing stock and ensure that the needs of the tenants are appropriately prioritised

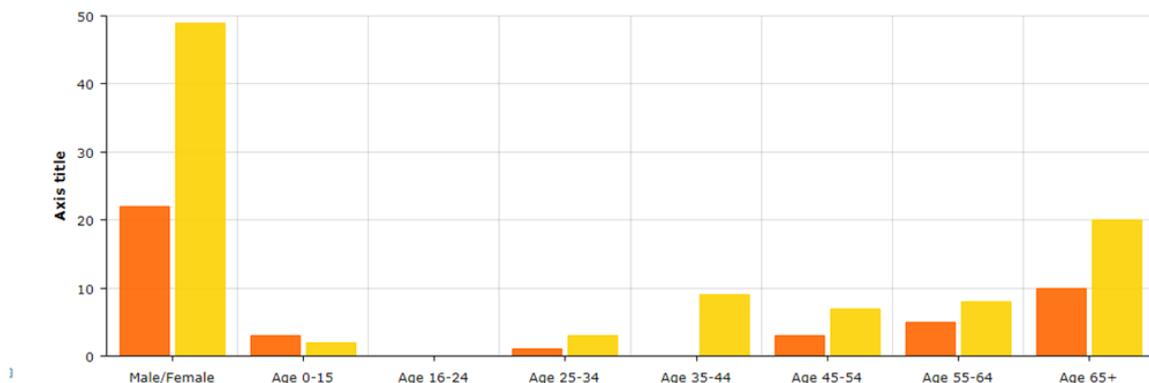
4.1.2 The age demographic in Stevenage shows a gradually ageing population. The Office of National Statistics have predicted that Stevenage will see the number of people living beyond 70 years almost doubling by 2041 (see age pyramid below), the council is therefore likely to see a proportionate year on year increase in the number of referrals for aids and adaptations. The council needs to ensure that it's policy takes this into account and considers futureproofing homes for tenants requiring adaptation assistance, now and in the future. The aim of the policy is to support more people to live in suitable housing so that they can stay independent for longer.

Age pyramid 2016 and 2041 - Stevenage

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2016-based population projections, published 24th May 2018. Crown copyright.



4.1.3 The table below shows the age demographics of the council's tenants where adaptation works have been carried out over the last 12 months. This indicates that the 65 + age group has received the greatest number of adaptations.



- 4.1.4 Advances in medicine and treatments also mean that there is now a higher prevalence of elderly and disabled tenants, this also translates to an increase in the number of referral requests for adaptations.
- 4.1.5 The council will also needs to consider the decreasing number of existing housing stock due to the Right to Buy (RTB) scheme (offset against new build properties designed to lifetime homes standards and improved technology to support people staying in their homes longer), against the demand, ensuring that it's assets are being used in the most effective way to serve the council's customers including those on the housing register.
- 4.1.6 The policy is in line with the HRA asset management strategy (excellent council homes for life) and officers are currently in consultation internally with other teams to ensure that current and future policies align with this policy.
- 4.1.7 Every effort will be made to ensure mutual exchanges and allocations to void properties are done in due consideration of the housing needs and adaptations required. This will be carried out in conjunction with the Mutual Exchange Process Review team and Lettings team and the use of the Housing Panel for direct offers where appropriate. This will ensure that referrals are made within the timescales and the suitability of the property is assessed for the tenants needs.

## 4.2 ADAPTATIONS

- 4.2.1 Adaptations are split into two categories, minor and major

### a) Minor Adaptations

Includes the provision of adaptations for example:-

- Ramps
- Handrails
- Grab rail
- Over bath shower

- Lever taps.
- Sanitary ware.

### **b) Major Adaptations**

These require more extensive and complex work, often designed for the specific need of an individual, for example:-

- The installation of stair lifts and special purpose equipment;
- Bathroom and kitchen adaptations, ground floor WC conversions
- Garage conversions, extensions and access alterations.

Appendix B shows the typical types of adaptations carried out.

## **4.3 DECLINED REFERRALS**

- 4.3.1 To ensure that the council can deliver a service to benefit those most in need and ensure that properties meet their current and future needs the council needs to consider the best use of available funds. It is necessary to review circumstances whereby aids and adaptation referrals might be declined. This will also ensure that the property will meet the tenant's current and future needs.
- 4.3.2 Where a referral has been declined the council will provide support and assistance to review the tenant's options that may include moving to more appropriate, suitable accommodation meeting their needs. It is not the intention to force tenant's to move but to encourage them to consider their future housing needs.
- 4.3.3 The tenant will be permitted to appeal any decision. This will be considered at the Housing Panel.
- 4.3.4 On occasions where referrals may be declined, and there are exceptional circumstances, this will be considered and referred to the Housing Panel.
- 4.3.5 Where tenant's needs are urgent, consideration will be given to undertaking suitable minor adaptations for an interim period while housing options are being considered.
- 4.3.6 There are circumstances where a referral may be declined or deferred:-

### **a) Personal Circumstances**

There are occasions where the tenant's personal circumstances may have changed either through their own choice or due to other circumstances.

- Under occupied or overcrowded properties

Tenants will receive support and advice to review their options and look for alternative accommodation. The move to more appropriate accommodation will release their home for those with appropriate requirements.

The Tenancy Agreements states: *"You must not allow your home to become overcrowded"*.

Where an adaptation cannot be carried out due to overcrowding they will be moved to a band B priority under the councils Allocations policy to assist earliest relocation.

- Applied for Right to Buy (RTB) or moving to another area

Tenants will not receive any assistance while they are wishing to move or have applied for the RTB.

- Rent in arrears

Tenants who are in arrears by three weeks or more or where recovery proceedings have commenced.

The tenant will receive additional support and financial advice from the council's Debt Advisors and it may be necessary to refer to the Housing Panel or look to move to a more affordable accommodation.

- Requiring further adaptations

Where the tenant's condition is likely to deteriorate and further adaptations may be required in the next five years (as recommended by the Occupational Therapist Services) the initial referral may be declined. The council will in partnership with the Occupational Therapist (OT) look to design alternative solutions that are future proofed for the tenant's medium term future. The tenant will not need to go through the referral process again, ensuring less disruption. Installing all the tenants medium term required adaptations at once will be more cost effective.

- Move within 12 months of adaptation works.

Tenants who move within 12 months after having adaptation work carried out and then request adaptations again in their new home, will not receive assistance unless the original property is confirmed to be no longer suitable by a health professional or council officer. The tenant will be advised of this when they receive the initial adaptation.

#### **b) Reasonableness / suitability**

This will ensure that the council maintains control of how housing assets are managed and used, retaining the stock that there is a demand for and ensuring tenants are accommodated in the most suitable accommodation for

their needs. This will also ensure that cost effective solutions are considered and implemented.

- Re-let ability

This is where the council is requested to carry out an adaptation that would result in difficulty re – letting the property, for example, where a bedroom is lost due to an installation of a through floor lift.

- Risk to others

This is where the proposed adaptation might put others at risk. For example the installation of stair lifts in communal areas causing obstructions that may impede access and/or restrict fire safety escape routes.

- Limitations of the existing building structure

This is where the building structure is considered integrally unsuitable for adapting. For example widening doors in non- traditional constructed houses with concrete walls, or level access/wet room in beam and block floors.

- Major Works

This is where major adaptations are required and it is difficult to provide a cost- effective solution in the tenants existing home, particularly in the context of the ‘reasonable and practicable’ judgements, alternative solutions will be considered in consultation with the OT.

- Unreasonable solutions

This is where the tenants needs can be met by a more reasonable solution, for example, utilising existing space within the property instead of building extensions. Further consultations with the OT and design team will take place to look at alternative measures that will meet the tenant’s needs.

### **c) Major Works**

Adaptations that are likely to cost more than £50K will not be carried out. This is based on the Hertfordshire County Council (Home Improvement Agency’s) DFG threshold which is set at £30K + £20K discretionary addition.

If the tenants needs cannot be met through consultations with the OT and/or alternative design solutions the tenant will be supported in reviewing the options and moving to alternative accommodation.

In 2019/20 there have been 4 cases where the cost of adaptation works exceeded £50K. This accounted for £245,000 costs 43% of the available

budget. These costs would have been significantly reduced if suitable alternative solutions had been found or tenants had been relocated to more suitable, adaptable home.

#### 4.4 FINANCIAL IMPACT - DECLINED REFERRAL'S

4.4.1 The table below shows the referral cases for 2019/2020 and the estimated reduction in spend if the proposed policy was in place. This will ensure that funding can be best used for all tenants needs.

Reason	Occasions	Average cost of works (£)	Estimated possible saving (Incl. carrying out other necessary works) (£)
Under occupied	7	5,500	33,000
Over crowded	1	6,400	6,400
RTB applications	8	3,800	21,500
Rehoused (within 12 months)	4	12,200	11,200
Mutual Exchange (within 12 months)	3	6,100	12,200
Moved outside the Borough	4	6,400	25,600
Re – Let ability	4	12,800	11,700
Risk to others	12	1,800	7,200
Structure limitations	4	5,500	6,600
Major Works	6	58,000	104,000
<b>Total costs</b>		<b>544,600</b>	<b>146,000</b>

#### 4.5 RECOVERING COSTS

4.5.1 Additional options for recovering revenue must also be considered in relation to ongoing maintenance and servicing costs including the potential for recovering costs where adaptations are deemed no longer suitable and require removal.

##### a) Specialist equipment servicing charges.

Where permissible, applying an additional service charge for ongoing servicing, repairs and maintenance e.g. stair lifts, hoists. This will also be covered in part or full if the tenant receives Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. This will not be charged retrospectively but will only be applied on adaptations under the new policy.

The table below shows the predicted charges that will be received based on 2019/20, including 20% administration costs:

Indicative weekly charges			
Equipment	Charge rate (£)	Quantity	total
Clos-O-Mat	3.75	4	780.00
Hoist	2.87	3	447.72
Stairlift	3.12	6	973.44
Through Floor Lift	10.92	1	567.84
Total for year			<b>2,769.00</b>

Over time the servicing charges will pay for extended warranties on new installations.

Service charge levied for the “Service, Maintenance and Repair” would be eligible for rebate provided it did not become the property of the tenant. This is in line with the Housing Benefit Regulations.

## b) Charges for Adaptations

In appropriate cases it is proposed to introduce a financial “test of resources” (means test) with the support of the councils Welfare Benefit and Debt Advisors, and Specialist Support Service Advisor to determine whether the tenant needs the adaptation to be fully funded by the council, are able to make a contribution towards the adaptations or are financially secure enough to pay for all of the adaptation works requested.

The “test of resources” is a combination of savings, income (including benefits), age and pension where the first £6,000 (this is in line with the DFG) is not taken into account.

The “test of resources” is used to calculate the financial contribution that the tenant may be required to make towards the cost of the adaptation. Adaptations for children (under 16) and qualifying (eligible) young people (i.e. those aged 16-20 attending school or college or in approved non-wage training for more than 12 hours a week) and Tenants in receipt of the following “Passported” benefits will be exempt from the test and will not be charged for the adaptation.

- Income Support
- Income based Employment Support Allowance.
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax credit (provided for these purposes income is less than £15,050)

The financial means testing proposed is in line with the current DFG. Nationally over 60% of councils currently means test their tenants, this increases to 100% for Housing Associations (HA) and the private sector.

Appendix C details how the “test of resources” will be applied

This will only impact tenants who are in a financial position to afford a contribution or pay for the installation of adaptations themselves. If the means test shows that the tenant can afford to pay for all of the adaptations they will be declined the adaptation. They will however still be required to request permission from the council to make alterations to their home. Permission may still be declined if the adaptation meets any of the grounds for refusal stated in the Policy.

No matter what the outcome of the financial “test of resources”, the council will assist in managing the works to ensure that the standards are met.

Financial information is collected from the tenant however they are not obligated to provide this. If the tenant declines to provide financial information, the council will not provide any further assistance, and the tenant will need to pay for the full cost of the adaptation.

It is proposed to only carry out the “test of resources” on adaptations above £8,000. This is based on evidence from other Local Authorities that shows only 5% of tenants would need to make any form of contribution towards an adaptation under the “test of resources” process. The resources required to administer the process and recover this cost is considered not to be cost effective to carry this out in every case.

### **c) Recuperation of adaptation costs**

It is proposed that the policy will allow the council to recoup costs for any adaptations works over £5,000 and this is paid back should the tenant move from their adapted home or complete a RTB application within 5 years of receiving the adaptation. This amount will be reduced by 20% per annum over the 5 year period. This is in line with the DFG

The aim is to substantially reduce the council’s burden and the costs associated with reinstating properties that have previously been adapted, and minimise situations where the council in the past installed adaptations in unsuitable accommodation that the tenant is likely to move from in the near future

Currently independent and Local Authority Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) and most Housing Associations and private landlords have similar policies in place and charge tenants if they sell / move out of the property within a period of time, covering the cost of reinstating or removing adaptations.

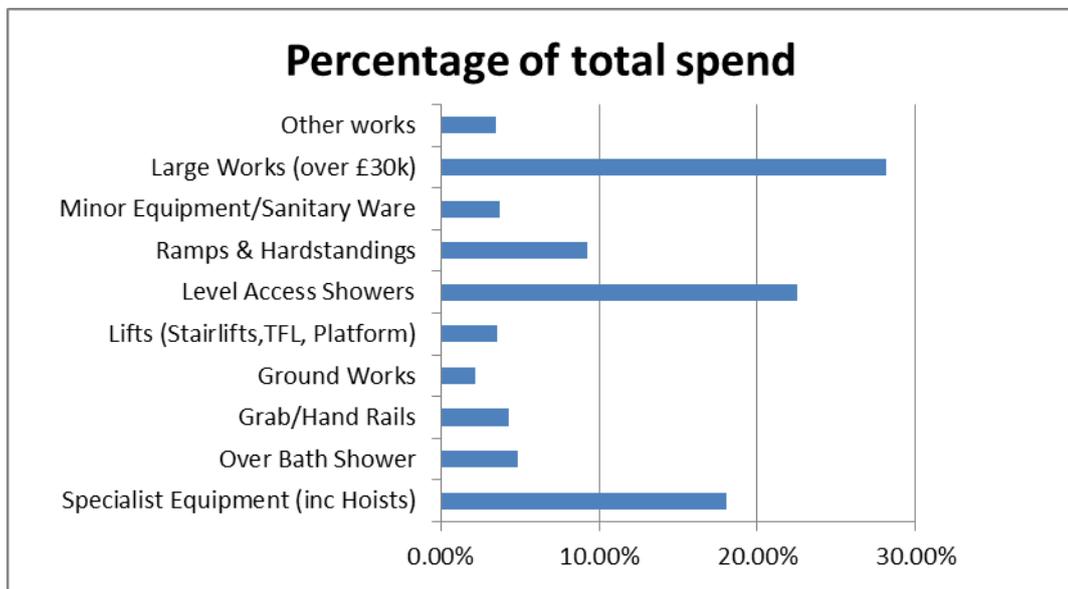
There have been no occasions this year where the tenant has moved out of their home within 5 years.

The Tenancy Agreement will be aligned with this policy allowing monies to be recuperated if a tenant moves out. Any move would not be allowed without ALL outstanding sums being paid in full.

Under very exceptional circumstances or where the council has instigated a move, the council may consider waiving some or all of this charge.

## 4.6 FINANCIAL POSITION

4.6.1 The Aids and Adaptation budget for 2019/20 is £563,966. The approximate percentage spend for the different types of work is shown in the table below.



4.6.2 In 2018/19 additional funds were committed to clear a back log of cases, as the annual budget was insufficient to meet previous year's demands. £40,000 of backlog cases was carried forward into 2019/20.

4.6.3 In previous years the aids and adaptations budget has not always been sufficient to meet the fluctuating demand. The proposals for the new policy will assist the council in meeting the current and future demand and deliver assistance to more households in need within the current budget by streamlining the services offered and by reducing high value works.

4.6.4 To meet the estimated adaptation demands over the next 20 years based on the statistics produced predicting an increase in the aged population. This will equate to approximately 4% year on year increase equating to an estimated £27,000 increase in the budget for 2020/21.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

5.1.1 The 2020/21 budget of £569,520 for aids and adaptations will be closely monitored against the actual spend, and reviewed taking into account the fluctuating demand and the impact following the introduction of the policy. If it is anticipated that an annual increase in the budget is required to meet additional demand this will be reported through the Capital quarterly budget monitoring report and considered for inclusion in the future revisions of the HRA business plan.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

5.2.1 The Council has obligations towards disabled tenants under a number of statutes and regulations.

5.2.2 Under s20 and Schedule 4 Equality Act 2010 the council as landlord has duties:

(i) where a provision, criterion or practice of the council puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, the council must take “such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage”

(ii) where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, the council must “take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid”.

5.2.3 s3 (2) (d) Housing Act 2004 requires the council to establish the likely need for adaptations and develop plans for delivering them.

5.2.4 s23 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 imposes a statutory duty on the council to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations (Disabled Facilities Grants) where the works are “necessary and appropriate” to meet the needs of the disabled applicant and the council is satisfied that it is “reasonable and practicable” to carry out the works, having regard to the age and condition of the property. The maximum amount that can be granted is £30,000.

5.2.5 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) England and Wales) Order 2002 enables authorities to give (discretionary) assistance to tenants to adapt or improve their living accommodation

### **5.3 Consultation with the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) and the Portfolio Holders Group (PHAG)**

5.3.5 The policy was presented to the HMAB 16 January 2020. Members raised a number of issues and recommended to rephrase some of the wording in the policy. Officers provided responses to these at the meeting. Where appropriate these have been incorporated in the policy and will be included in the updated aids and adaptations processes and procedures.

5.3.6 The policy was presented to PHAG on 13 February 2020. Members were broadly in agreement with the policy. They raised a number of comments, and recommended that the following be considered:

- a) Indicate that under occupiers are not forced out of their homes (policy 4.5.3)
- b) Amend definition of “disabled” in line with the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act (policy 4.2.2)
- c) Change wording to “...eligible young people...” (policy 4.7.2)
- d) Dormant adaptations - include RTB (policy 4.8.1)
- e) Dormant adaptations – dissolve recharge if council instigate a move or withheld at the council’s discretion (policy 4.8.2)

Officers clarified a number of points and have incorporated the recommendations in the policy.

#### **5.4 Climate Change Implications**

5.4.1 There are no climate change implications to this report.

#### **5.5 Staffing and Accommodation Implications**

5.5.1 Housing and Investment is currently undertaking a Business Unit Review. The review has identified the need for surveyors with specialist knowledge and skills relating to design and delivery of aids and adaptations. The structure comprises two Building Surveyors managed by a Principal Building Surveyor. It is considered that this will be sufficient to deliver the current service.

#### **5.6 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

5.6.1 See attached Appendix D - Equalities Impact Assessment

#### **5.7 Service Delivery Implications**

5.6.1 New processes and procedures will be produced in line with the proposed policy ensuring that the aims of the policy are achieved.

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

### **APPENDICES**

- A The Aids and Adaptations Policy
- B Types of adaptations
- C “test of resources”
- D Equalities Impact Assessment

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<b>Aids and Adaptation Policy</b>	
<p><b>Approved by:</b>  <b>Date of approval:</b>  <b>Author:</b> Andy Sowden  <b>Owner:</b> Jaine Cresser  <b>Live from:</b>  <b>Review date:</b></p>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Aims of the policy</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<p>The policy aims to assist in the delivery of an aids and adaptation service that will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide focus on supporting people to consider how their future needs can be met and live more independently, improving their day to day quality of life in and around the home.</li> <li>• Ensure that the reasonable needs of the council's disabled tenants are prioritised and appropriate aids and adaptations are implemented. Also that adapted properties are let taking into account the needs of the tenants.</li> <li>• Ensure integration between internal services and closer working with partnering organisations for example Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care and Children's Services departments and NHS Children's Services.</li> <li>• Comply with the legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations (e.g. Equality Act 2010) and good practice guidance, including 'Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People.</li> <li>• Maximise all available funding sources and ensure that the available budgets are used effectively and efficiently to maximise best use of council housing stock and ensure that the needs of the tenants are appropriately prioritised.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Scope of the policy</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<p>The Policy scope covers how the council's Investment team (Aids and Adaptations) are able to provide aids and adaptations to assist in meeting the needs of the council's tenants. This includes:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The types of aids and adaptations that can be reasonably carried out.</li> <li>• The definition of disabled and the situations where the council will and will not be able to assist in providing aids and adaptations.</li> <li>• Provide clarity in identifying the councils responsibilities</li> <li>• The type and level of service that tenants may reasonably expect from the council.</li> <li>• The tenants financial expectations and possible charges for ongoing maintenance of specialist equipment and adaptations</li> <li>• What the council will and will not be able to assist with in terms of adaptations to their home.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>3.1</b>	The Assistant Director of Housing and Investment has overall responsibility for the policy, ensuring that it is fully implemented.
<b>3.2</b>	<p>The Operations Manager and Investment Programme Manager is responsible for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effective implementation and delivery of the policy</li> <li>• Monitoring the performance and delivery</li> <li>• Reviewing the policy</li> </ul>
<b>3.3</b>	<p>The Principal Building Surveyor(Specialist Works) aids and adaptation is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the processes and procedures that are in line with the policy.</li> <li>• Ensure that the policy aims and terms are adhered to</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Policy</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Legal Requirements</b>
4.1.2	In determining this policy consideration has been given to the integration with the council's Lettings, Allocations and Mutual Exchange polices together with the statutory provisions of the relevant acts.
4.1.3	The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) states that adaptations should be consider if they are: Necessary, Appropriate, Reasonable and Practical.
4.1.4	Under the Equality Act 2010, councils must ensure that their adaptations service is equally accessible to all. Under the act councils as landlords, do not have to make changes which affect the structure or which would substantially and permanently alter their housing stock, however where

	<p>a disabled person requests and would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, the council must “take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid”.</p>
4.1.5	<p>The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) states that grant aid must be provided for adaptations that are “necessary and appropriate” to meet the needs of the disabled applicant and where the council is satisfied that it is “reasonable and practicable” to carry out the works, having regard to the age and condition of the property adaptations should be consider if they are: Necessary, Appropriate, Reasonable and Practical.</p>
4.1.6	<p>Under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 the councils have wide reaching discretionary powers to provide financial assistance for repairs, improvements and adaptations to living accommodation. This includes help with the cost of moving and adapting or improving another property where it is deemed to be a more cost effective option.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<p><b>Eligibility</b></p>
4.2.1	<p>A person will be considered for adaptations in their home under the Equality Act 2010 if they are a Stevenage Borough Council tenant and they, their partner or a member of their immediate family who is permanently resident in the household has an impairment that is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the remainder of the person’s life, that substantially affects their ability to carry out normal day to day activities or access facilities in or around their home.</p>
4.2.2	<p>Under the terms of this policy a person is regarded as ‘disabled’ as defined under the Housing, Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) if they have any of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired</li> <li>• Mental disorder or impairment of any kind</li> <li>• Physically substantially disabled by illness, injury, impairment present since birth, or otherwise.</li> </ul>
4.2.3	<p>The council is responsible for considering adaptation referrals to the properties they own and that are occupied by their tenants. If you do not live in a Council owned property and are not a tenant of the council, your referral should be directed to the Home Improvement Agency at Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), who deal with all adaptation referrals for owner occupiers, leaseholders, Housing Association (HA) and private landlord tenants. If the council receives a referral for a property they do not own, this referral will be passed to the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) at HCC.</p>

<p><b>4.3</b></p> <p>4.3.1</p> <p>4.3.2</p> <p>4.3.3</p> <p>4.3.4</p> <p>4.3.5</p> <p>4.3.6</p>	<p><b>Adaptations</b></p> <p>Adaptations are split into two categories – minor and major. These distinctions are based on the nature of the work required in order to implement the adaptation and do not correspond to the impact the adaptation will have on the individual requiring such work. It is understood that both minor and major adaptation work can impact significantly on an individual’s quality of life.</p> <p>Minor Adaptations</p> <p>Includes but is not limited to the provision of adaptations such as :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps</li> <li>• Handrails</li> <li>• Grab rail</li> <li>• Over bath shower</li> <li>• Lever taps.</li> <li>• Sanitary ware.</li> </ul> <p>Major Adaptations</p> <p>These require more extensive and complex work, often designed for the specific need of an individual, and including, but are not limited to the provision of adaptations such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The installation of stair lifts and special purpose equipment;</li> <li>• Bathroom and kitchen adaptations, ground floor WC conversions</li> <li>• Garage conversions, extensions and access alterations.</li> </ul> <p>Where adaptations are carried out these will assist the tenant to carry out normal day to day activities in and around their home and enable them to access essential facilities within their home.</p> <p>On occasions where the tenant moves to more suitable accommodation due to the nature of adaptations required, any adaptations must be agreed, and ideally installed, prior to the tenants moving in to the new property.</p> <p>Every effort will be made to ensure mutual exchanges and allocations to void properties are done so in due consideration of the housing needs and</p>
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	adaptations required. This will be carried out in conjunction with the Mutual Exchange team and Allocations team and the use of the Housing Panel for direct offers where appropriate.
4.3.7	The council is committed to facilitating the provision of aids and adaptations in its housing stock and will endeavour to deal with requests for assistance as quickly, effectively and sensitively as possible.
4.3.8	The council will ensure that staff and contractors engaged in activities related to property adaptations are suitably qualified, trained and supervised such that their staff conduct and behaviours adhere to this policy, Safeguarding Policy, GDPR and the Equalities & Diversity Policy of the council.
4.3.9	In all cases the tenant will be notified of the actions that will be taken and the decision to proceed, or not, and where necessary the assistance and support that will be provided. The tenant will be advised of the process from start to finish, informed of the anticipated timescales will be and updated with progress.
4.3.10	The tenant will be permitted to appeal any decision. This will be considered at the Housing Panel.
4.4.11	The council will, as part of its Asset Management Strategy and Planning, work with Hertfordshire County Council, and other agencies to consistently measure and assess current disability adaptation needs, and from this, effectively assess and forecast future disability adaptation needs. The maintenance of effective joint working and information sharing protocols will assist this planning and will include agreeing formats and data storage with other agencies such as to aid overall efficiency in communication and value for money in service provision, as well as ensuring current adherence with Data Protection regulation and good practice guidance.
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Referrals and prioritisation</b>
4.4.1	The council receives external requests for adaptations directly from suitably qualified healthcare professional, from Hertfordshire County Council (Adult Care Services and Children's Services departments) and the local NHS Trust (Children's Services and Hospitals), these can include referrals from Occupational Therapists (OT), Community Care Officers or Trusted Assessors.
4.4.2	Internal referrals for adaptations are also received, typically from, Housing Officers, Lettings Officers, Specialist Support Officers, etc. for those tenants who require adaptations to their homes to assist them with living more independent lives.
4.4.3	The OT will prioritise applications dependent on medical need or life limiting prognosis using the classification "Urgent" or "Routine"
4.4.5	The council cannot override the classification of an application unless

	<p>'exceptional circumstances' have been determined and agreed by a senior manager or the Housing Panel.</p> <p>4.4.6 An appraisal of the referral/request will take place and an adaptation will be carried out unless the referral is declined following consideration of the conditions referred to in this policy</p> <p><b>4.5 Circumstances where an adaptation referral may be declined.</b></p> <p>4.5.1 Under the following circumstances aids and adaptation referrals may be declined. Any exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Housing panel:-</p> <p>a) Where the property is under occupied by more than one bedroom, taking into account a the need for an additional room to store medical equipment, in accordance with 'bedroom tax' provision</p> <p>b) Where the property is unsuitable for adaptations due to overcrowding (in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement), except in exceptional circumstances, for example where there is a demonstrated need for a live in or temporary carer.</p> <p>c) Where the tenant is currently on the Housing Register. The referral will be reassessed if the tenant removes themselves from the list. Tenants will not be able to re-submit a property transfer application for 12 months after any substantial adaptation has been carried out.</p> <p>d) If the tenant has submitted an application under the Right-to-Buy (RTB) scheme. The tenant will be signposted to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). The Referral will be reassessed if the RTB is withdrawn.</p> <p>e) Where the tenant is in arrears by more than three weeks or recovery proceedings have commenced, or they are unable to prove that a steady repayments scheme has been agreed with the council until this has been maintained to the satisfaction of the tenants designated Debt Advisor.</p> <p>The tenant will receive additional support and financial advice from the council's debt advisors and it may be necessary to refer to the Housing Panel, or look to move to more affordable accommodation.</p> <p>f) Where the tenant has transferred from another property which had adaptations within the last 12 months, and is now requesting those adaptations again; unless the previous property was confirmed to be no longer suitable for their needs by a Health Professional or council officer.</p> <p>g) Where the building structure is considered integrally unsuitable for technical and practical reasons, for example widening doorways in prefab buildings, wet floor showers in beam and block floors.</p>
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	<p>h) Where the adaptation is considered unreasonable or unsuitable for the tenants needs, for example installing a level access shower to a flat above ground level where there is no lift to access the flat.</p> <p>i) Where the result of the adaptation will have an adverse effect on the 're-let ability' or have a detrimental impact on the housing stock:- for example, if a bedroom will be lost due to the installation of a through floor lift or if storage cupboards need to be removed to create more space in a room.</p> <p>j) Where the tenants needs may be met by a more reasonable solution. For example where the OT has recommended an extension or major works the tenants needs will be assessed and consideration given to applying alternative solutions, for example utilising a ground floor dining room as a bedroom, instead of building an extension, building a smaller extension or rehousing.</p> <p>k) Where the proposed adaptation might put others at risk, for example fitting stair lifts in communal areas where this could restrict access and safe fire escape routes.</p> <p>l) Where the tenant's condition is likely to deteriorate as indicated by a medical professional such that the adaptation may not be suitable for them, or they may need further adaptations within the next five years. In this instance the referral will not be refused out right but the council in consultation with the OT will endeavour to ensure that any solution is future proofed in the medium term. This will ensure that the tenant will not need to go through the referral process again in the medium term.</p> <p>m) Where the cost of the adaptation is likely to exceed the maximum amount of £50,000. This limit is in line with the DFG, as designated by Hertfordshire County Council (Home Improvement Agency) is currently £30,000 + £20,000 discretionary = £50,000. This shall remain in line with DFG policy and subject to possible regional adjustments. The council will work with the OT to look at other alternative cost effective solutions within the £50K limit. If this is not possible the council will look for alternative suitable accommodation.</p>
4.5.2	Where a referral has been declined under a) b) g) h) i) k) or m) the council will provide support and assistance to review the tenant's options. These may include moving to more appropriate, suitable accommodation meeting their needs.
4.5.3	It is not the intention to force the tenant to move but to encourage them to consider their future housing needs. This will also release their current home for those with appropriate requirements.
4.5.4	Where an adapted property has become void the property will be advertised giving preference to those requiring adaptations, alternatively the Lettings team will liaise with the aids and adaptation team to seek a direct let via the Housing Panel.

4.5.5	There may be occasions where aids and adaptation referrals may be declined, any exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Housing panel.
4.5.6	Where tenant's needs are urgent, consideration will be given to undertaking suitable minor adaptations for an interim period while housing options are being considered.
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Servicing Charges</b>
4.6.1	<p><b>Specialist Equipment</b></p> <p>Where specialist equipment is installed, that requires ongoing servicing and maintenance, for example, stair lifts and hoists, an additional service charge may be applied to cover the cost of regular servicing, repairs and maintenance. Under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 Art.3 (4) the council will recover these costs provided that the person is able to pay. Where the tenant is unable to pay then this charge will be covered in part or in full if the tenant is in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. This charge will not apply to equipment fitted for children (under 16) and "qualifying" (eligible) young people (aged 16-20 attending school or college or in approved non-wage training for more than 12 hours a week). Where these adaptations are required it is likely that the tenant would be in receipt of supplementary benefits to increase their income. (Higher rate Disability Living allowance and personal independence payment)</p>
4.6.2	Service charges will be limited to two per property and will be applied to the two highest value items.
<b>4.7</b>	<b>Adaptations Charges</b>
4.7.1	Where appropriate the council will operate a "test of resources" (financial means test) in line with the current Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations above £8K.
4.7.2	<p>The "test of resources" is used to calculate the financial contribution that the tenant may be required to make towards the cost of the adaptation. Children (under 16) and "qualifying" eligible young people (aged 16-20 attending school or college or in approved non-wage training for more than 12 hours a week) and tenants in receipt of the following "Passported" benefits will be exempt from the test and will not be charged for the adaptation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income Support</li> <li>• Income based Employment Support Allowance.</li> <li>• Income based Jobseekers Allowance</li> <li>• Guaranteed Pension Credit</li> <li>• Housing Benefit</li> <li>• Universal Credit</li> <li>• Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax credit (provided for these</li> </ul>

	purposes income is less than £15,050)
<b>4.8</b>	<b>Recuperation of adaptation costs</b>
4.8.1	It is proposed that the policy will allow the council to recoup costs for any adaptations works over £5,000 and this is paid back should the tenant move from their adapted home or complete a RTB application within five years of receiving the adaptation. This amount will reduced by 20% per annum over the five year period. This is in line with the DFG
4.8.2	Under very exceptional circumstances or where the council instigates a move, the council may consider waiving some or all of this charge.
<b>4.9</b>	<b>Performance and Delivery</b>
4.9.1	Processes and procedures will be developed aligned with this policy to ensure that the service delivered will be efficient and cost effective and that customers future needs can be met, ensuring they are able to live more independently, improving their day to day quality of life in and around the home.
4.9.2	Performance indicators will set and reviewed, with specific, clear and attainable targets to ensure that the service is delivered effectively and in a timely manner for individuals.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
	The Aids and Adaptation Manager will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in terms of the delivery and whether the policy aims have been met. This will be reported to the Operations Manager on a six monthly basis.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Review</b>
	The Policy will be reviewed annually and also in response to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative changes.</li> <li>• Council strategy or policy changes.</li> <li>• Ineffective policy terms.</li> </ul>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Links (Internal)</b>
	Tenancy and Tenancy Agreement Conditions Allocations Policy Mutual Exchange Policy Safeguarding Policy

	<p>Equalities &amp; Diversity Policy</p> <p>Under- occupation Policy</p>
	<p><b>Links (External)</b></p>
	<p>Equality Act 2010</p> <p>The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996</p> <p>Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002</p> <p>GDPR</p> <p>Housing Benefits Regulations</p>

DRAFT

# Appendix B - Types of Aids and Adaptations

## Minor Works

Ramp



Stair Handrail (Mopstick)



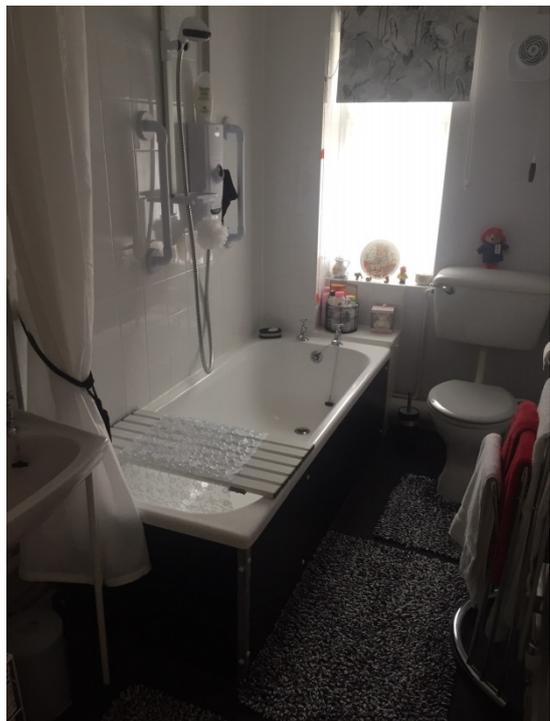
Grab Rail



Lever Taps



Over Bath Shower



Sanitary Ware



# **Major Works - Special Purpose Equipment**

**Bath Lift**



**Care Assist Bath (Rise & Fall)**



**Stairlifts**



**Hoists (Ceiling Track)**



**Through Floor Lift**



## Clos-O-Mat Toilet



### how it works



#### Flushing

Press either elbow pad whilst standing for conventional flush.



#### Washing

Press elbow pad whilst seated and hold down for approximately 10-15 seconds, flushing and warm water washing will then take place.



#### Drying

Warm air drying automatically follows when elbow pad is released.

## Bathroom Adaptation (Wetroom)



## Kitchen Adaptations

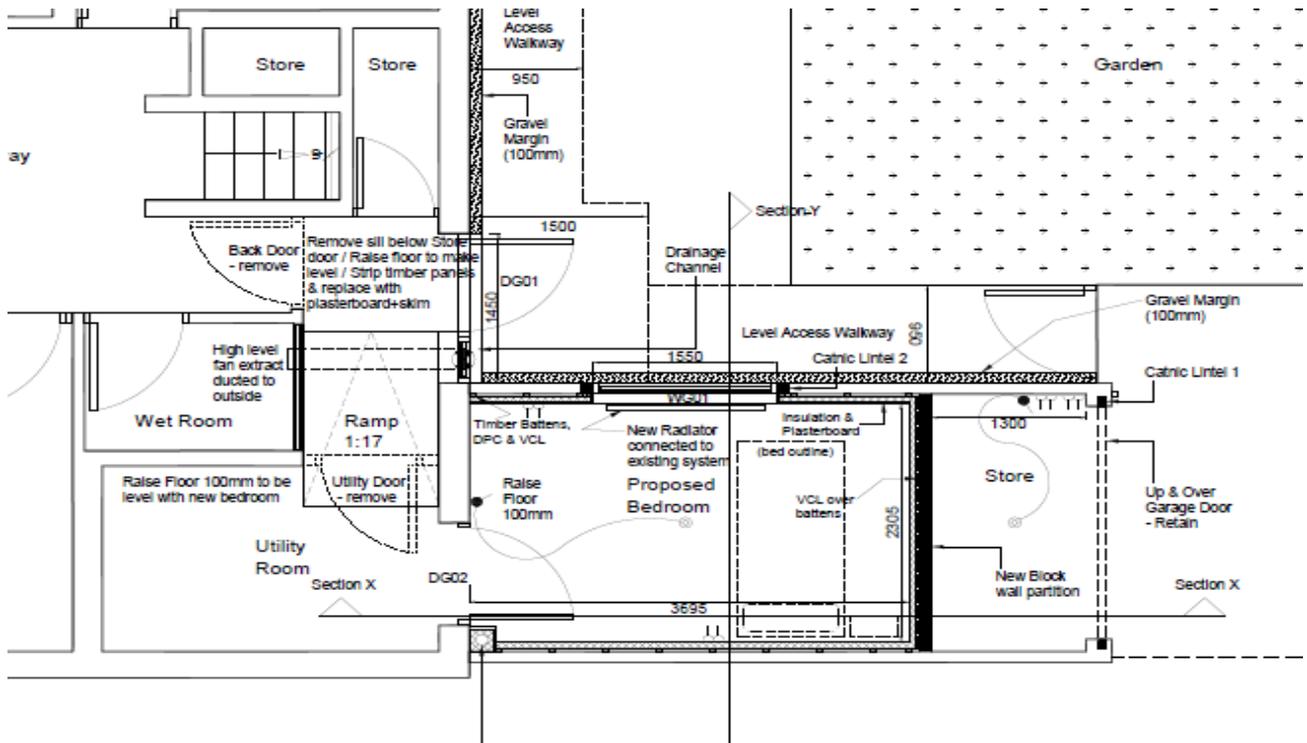
### Rise & fall Cupboards



### Rise & Fall Sink



## Garage Conversion



## Extensions



## Appendix C - Test of Resources (Means Test)

The test largely mirrors the system of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit.

The assumed weekly needs of the household (the “applicable amount”) is calculated taking into account the number of people, their ages and other circumstances. This is then compared to actual income, and where income is greater than the applicable amount, a "loan generation factor" is applied to the 'excess income' to arrive at a notional "affordable loan". This is the amount by which the grant is reduced or the contribution expected from the applicant. The reduction in grant caused by this test is lower for Tenants because it is assumed that loans will be available on less favourable terms than owner-occupiers. The underlying calculation assumes that owners will be able to acquire loans repayable over 10 years, while for Tenants the period is assumed to be five years.

The formula used for calculating grant entitlement for those with incomes over the level of their needs is:

Amount of grant = cost of work – (actual income – applicable amount) x loan generation factor.

The loan factor makes use of four bands, which ensure that the contribution assessed for those with low excess incomes is lower, for each pound, while for those with higher levels of excess income, the contribution is greater.

### Passporting Benefits

Those in receipt of certain means-tested benefits are 'passporting' to a full grant and will not have to make a contribution towards the cost of work. These 'passporting' benefits are:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance (not contribution-based ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contribution-based JSA)
- Guarantee Pension Credit (not Savings Pension Credit alone)
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit (where your annual income for the purposes of the tax credits assessment was below £15,050)
- Housing Benefit

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## APPENDIX D - Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

<b>What is being assessed?</b>		<b>Aids and Adaptation Policy</b>			
Lead Assessor	Mr Andrew Sowden Housing & Investment Manager			Assessment team	Mr Stephen Archer (Aids and Adaptation Manager)
Start date	October 2019	End date	April 2020		Lynne Huggins (Project Manager)
When will the EqlA be reviewed?	April 2021				Lydia Butcher (Coordinator)

Who may be affected by it?	Staff, Service Users and the wider community
What are the key aims of it?	<p>Compliance with changes to Legal and Statutory requirements in relation to aids &amp; adaptations (Equality Act 2010) and best practice guidance.</p> <p>Integration and alignment with other SBC policies and external 'partner' organisations (HCC &amp; NHS).</p> <p>Supporting Service Users to consider their future housing needs, improving independence and day-to-day quality of life.</p> <p>Ensuring best use of housing stock by matching adapted properties to those whose needs match thereby maximising funding available.</p> <p>Ensuring that the reasonable needs of the Council's less abled residents are prioritised and appropriate aids &amp; adaptations are implemented.</p>

<b>What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:</b>					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Ensuring consistency in adaptations offered and/or declined	Promote equal opportunities	Widening the scope of service users who may now qualify for adaptations.	Encourage good relations	Partnership working with HCC and NHS Services

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People (Home Adaptations Consortium – 2013)</p> <p>Housing and Disabled People: The role of Local Authorities (Equality and Human Rights Commission (Research report 115-May 2018)</p>
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In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	The demographics in Stevenage is aging, the Office of National Statistic have predicted that Stevenage will see the number of people living beyond 70 Years almost doubling by 2041. We are therefore likely to see a proportional year-on-year increase in referrals for aids and adaptations, this policy aims to future proof the implementation of aids and adaptations to reflect the foreseen increase in demand
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## Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	Future housing needs more likely to be met and additional support services offered.	Negative impact	More Tenants likely to be declined adaptations due to under-occupation	Unequal impact	Longer wait for more suitable homes mitigated by 'direct offer' through Housing Panel
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Population Pyramids for Stevenage 2016-2041 (Office of National Statistic) Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) –(The Elderly Accommodation Council). – Councils Safeguarding Policy			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To promote independent living	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further consultations with internal services and partnering organisations		

Disability					
e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Better use of existing adapted properties allowing more adaptations to be carried-out elsewhere	Negative impact	In more complex cases new housing options will need to be considered	Unequal impact	Longer wait for more suitable homes mitigated by 'direct offer' through Housing Panel
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) –(The Elderly Accommodation Council) Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People (Home Adaptations Consortium – 2013) – Councils Safeguarding Policy			

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To promote independent living.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further consultations with internal services and partnering organisations.  Forecasting will assist identifying future requirements
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<b>Gender reassignment</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	No specific impact identified	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The individual assessment of the residents needs is a statutory requirement of Social Services (Adult & Children's Services)			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Nothing		

<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	No specific impact identified	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The individual assessment of the residents needs is a statutory requirement of Social Services (Adult & Children's Services)			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Nothing		

<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	Potential resident and Council Agent wellbeing issues	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The individual assessment of the residents needs is a statutory requirement of Social Services (Adult & Children's Services)  Councils Safeguarding Policy			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further consultations with internal services and partnering organisations	
<b>Race</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	Potential resident and Council Agent wellbeing issues	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The individual assessment of the residents needs is a statutory requirement of Social Services (Adult & Children's Services)			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further consultations with internal services with regards communication and Housing Liaison Services  Forecasting will assist identifying future requirements	

<b>Religion or belief</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	Cultural differences in relation to specific days and rites of observance	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Equality Act 2010			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Further consultations with internal services with regards communication and Housing Liaison Services	

<b>Sex</b>					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	Potential resident and Council Agent wellbeing issues	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Equality Act 2010 HSE & Councils Lone Worker Policy			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

<b>Sexual orientation</b>					
e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	No specific impact identified	Negative impact	No specific impact identified	Unequal impact	No specific impact identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	No specific opportunities identified		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Nothing	

<b>Socio-economic<sup>1</sup></b>					
e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	Evaluation of Tenants ability to contribute/pay. Increased proportion of reclaims for cost of works if tenants move. Reduced likelihood of	Negative impact	Reduced ability to relocate/exchange properties. Increase in rent charges for those able to pay and those	Unequal impact	Referrals for aids & adaptations for Children.

<sup>1</sup>Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	negative discrimination due to specialist equipment provision.		requiring more than 2 pieces of specialist equipment.		
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Housing Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 Equality Act 2010 Other Local Authority Aids and Adaptation Policies			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Consult with SBC Budget holders as this will impact across Capital and Non-Capital budgets	

<b>Other</b>					
please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

**What are the findings of any consultation with:**

Staff?	Additional post identified to assist in supporting Tenants whose adaptations may be declined under the changes recommended in this Policy review.	Residents?	
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	HCC Adult Care Services & NHS Children's Care Services both in agreement with proposed Policy
Other stakeholders?	HMAB in approval		

## Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the <b>overall findings</b> of the assessment and <b>reasons for outcome (please choose one)</b> :	
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified	This EIA demonstrates the proposed Policy review is robust and there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made
	2b. Continue as planned
	2c. Stop and remove

Detail the <b>actions that are needed</b> as a result of this assessment and how they will help to <b>remove discrimination &amp; harassment, promote equal opportunities</b> and / or <b>encourage good relations</b> :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Consult with SBC Budget holders as this will impact across Capital and Non-Capital budgets	Encourage better internal funding and cost efficiencies, leading to increased opportunities to process more referrals	Mr Andrew Sowden/ Andrew Garside	April 2020	Seamless Integrating of services with minimal impact on Service users
Forecasting will assist identifying future requirements	Encourage best use of housing stock thus promoting better opportunities	Mr Stephen Archer	April 2020	Futureproofing services and budgets
Further consultations with internal services and partnering organisations	Promote equal opportunities across services by aligning policies	Mr Stephen Archer	April 2020	Partnering organisation will have clear parameters to work by and will be able to inform Tenants on initial assessment



Additional Housing Options advisor role	Providing additional support will improve relationship with Tenants	Mr Stephen Archer	June 2020	Support currently being offered on an interim basis by SBC staff.
Further consultations with internal services with regards communication and Housing Liaison Services	Promote equal opportunities across services by aligning policies	Mr Stephen Archer	April 2020	Better communications between internal services

**Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director:**

**Date:**

Please send this EqIA to [equalities@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@stevenage.gov.uk)

**Meeting** Executive  
**Portfolio Area** Housing, Health and Older people  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## VARIATION OF TENANCY AGREEMENT AND CONDITIONS OF TENANCY

### KEY DECISION

Author: Denis Kinyera Ext. 2059  
Resident and Estates Manager

Contact Officer: Jaine Cresser Ext. 2028  
Assistant Director, Housing and Investment

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To obtain approval from Executive that the revised tenancy agreement be agreed.

To note the informal and formal consultation exercise carried out and what action has been taken as a result.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the changes within the proposed tenancy conditions be agreed.

2.2 That the revised tenancy agreement and conditions, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The last review of the tenancy agreement was conducted in 2013.

Since the last review there have been changes in guidance on The Housing and Planning Act 2016, Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, General Data Protection Regulation and others.

Consultation took place with tenants, elected members and service areas across the Council.

The proposals were benchmarked against other neighbouring local authorities and registered social landlords.

Overall responses were positive and there are no major objections to the proposed changes.

### **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

4.1 Stevenage Borough Council requires tenancy conditions that are fit for purpose; the current agreement is seven years old and is no longer fit for purpose.

The review has provided officers an opportunity to look at how the council operates and what is best practice in the tenancy management sector of housing.

These proposed changes address enforcement issues and other problems that have come to light over the past few years. Making these changes will strengthen the tenancy agreement in the key areas below:

- Access to properties
- Antisocial behaviour
- Fire safety
- Health and safety
- Independent living
- Maintaining a pleasant neighbourhood
- Payment and charges
- Repairs and improvements
- Tenancy fraud
- Terminating your tenancy

- 4.2 The alternative option available is not to agree the proposed changes and maintain the existing conditions. However, this course of action is not recommended as consultation with residents and benchmarking with local authorities and registered social landlords evidence strengthened tenancy conditions allow for better management of tenancies for the council.

## **CONSULTATION**

- 4.3 Consultation took place with the following service areas of the Council:

- Community Safety
- Income Services
- Independent Living
- Lettings and Temporary Accommodation
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Stevenage Direct Services
- Tenancy Services

Consultation took place with Councillors and residents at the following forums:

- Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) – 19 July 2018. It was resolved that the Customer Scrutiny Panel and resident forums be consulted on the tenancy agreement; and that the tenancy agreement clarify that in relation to birds and vermin, the Council would not take action unless there was a real nuisance created
- Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) – 24 January 2019. Having considered the draft changes, PHAG highlighted the following areas for follow up:
  - The need to improve clarity relating to additional occupants in Council properties (particularly for Independent Living properties).
  - Consistency of the Council's response to antisocial behaviour or rent arrears in cases involving children.
  - Challenges around evicting tenants with children.
  - Clarification of the number and types of pets that tenants can keep in their property.
  - Issues around parking permits and enforcement.

- Ensuring that the final Tenancy Agreement is clear and can be easily understood by our tenants who need to understand their responsibilities and the Council's responsibilities.
- Customer Scrutiny Panel - 15 February 2019

Strategic Leadership Team considered the draft on 11 February 2020. At this meeting, a recommendation was made for a comment on climate change and online services to be included as part of the mail out when it takes place. It was also resolved to liaise with the Communications Team to publicise the mail out prior to distribution.

An All Members' Briefing on this proposal took place on 18 February 2020. At this meeting, a request was made for consideration to be made around residents requesting permissions to keep pets, facilities to store bicycles and mobility scooters for residents who reside in flat blocks.

A further update on the formal consultation and its outcome was presented to HMAB on 20 February 2020. HMAB supported the proposals and agreed with the suggested amendments. A question was raised about duplication of visits, specifically the 8 month visit and the annual gas servicing visit. Officers clarified that the 8 month visit was a one off visit during first 12 month period of a introductory tenancy to inspect the property and tenancy before an introductory tenancy is confirmed, whereas the gas servicing visit was an annual visit for compliance checks as required by law. Technology will help to support alignment of these visits to ensure that customers are no inconvenienced.

The formal consultation process required that a Preliminary Variation Notice is sent to all secure and introductory tenants giving them a reasonable period of time to respond. The notice set out the proposed changes within the contact. The Preliminary Notice was sent out on the 25 September 2019, tenants were invited to comment on the proposed changes by the 25 October 2019 by way of a pre-paid return envelope or via email. 65 responses were received.

A dedicated e-mail address was set up where tenants could comment on the proposed changes. Tenants could also call directly to speak to the Resident and Estates Manager with any questions.

The final stage of the process will be to send out the final variation notice with an explanation of the changes to every tenant. The terms of the new conditions will come into force 28 days from the date of the final notice. Tenants will not have to sign and return the contract as the formal consultation is the legal process for bringing the revised contract into force.

## **TENANT RESPONSES AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

The total number of formal responses received from the consultation is 65 in addition to 482 calls received by the Customer Service Centre and Tenancy Services from residents regarding the Tenancy Agreement in the immediate weeks after mail out.

Each of the 65 responses was carefully considered and it was found many comments were service related questions to which each tenant has been contacted and had their query answered. Responses sought clarification on points in the proposed conditions detailed below:-

- Your commitments to us (1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12)
- Fire safety (4.5)
- Gardens, trees and fences (4.12, 4.13, 4.18)
- Flammable gasses or liquids (4.21)

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial Implications**

5.1 Total cost of this project to date is £16264.33 against a budget of £20,000.

There is sufficient budget to cover the remaining estimated cost of £11,000 for mailing out the notice of variation in line with legal requirements once approved. The variance will be reviewed at third quarter budget monitoring.

### **Legal Implications**

5.2 The proposed variations to the tenancy agreement have been reviewed by the shared Legal Service to ensure its compliance with relevant legislation such as the Housing Act 1985 and the Localism Act 2011.

The council are legally required to carry out consultation with tenants and to consider any comments before the proposed changes are implemented. These have been duly followed.

### **Risk Implications**

- 5.3 There are no significant risks identified in relation to this report's recommendation.

### **Policy Implications**

- 5.4 Future changes to the existing Housing Allocations Scheme will mean need to consider these tenancy conditions – in particular clauses stipulated in 'Passing on your tenancy' as this relates to legislation on succession of secure tenancies.

### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.5 To mitigate climate change implications, the proposed changes encourage correct disposal of waste and recycling. This is because recycling helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy consumption; saves energy and prevents extraction of raw materials; and helps to combat climate change as it also helps reduce waste, and therefore pollution.

The council will not issue this tenancy agreement to existing tenants however they will be able to access a copy of this on our website. The revised conditions will also be available to all tenants through the online housing portal when it goes live during 2020.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.6 The contract has been reviewed and written in clear English.

The council provided large print copies of the Preliminary Variation Notice to tenants that require it and will also provide large print contracts and Variation notices.

Arrangements were made and any tenant(s) requiring assistance to read and under the proposed changes in order to make an observation was visited at their home by a member of Tenancy Services.

The proposed tenancy condition has clauses which mitigate equality and diversity issues.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out which identified actions that are needed as a result that will help: remove discrimination and harassment; promote equal opportunities; and encourage good relations.

### **Community Safety Implications**

- 5.7 It has been reviewed by the shared Legal Service to ensure that the proposed conditions comply with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

## **Information Technology Implications**

- 5.8 It will be necessary for the document to be accessible on the existing and proposed website under development. The designers commissioned to deliver this have taken steps to ensure it will be a live interactive document accessible on our corporate website.

## **6 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TENANCY AGREEMENT AND CONDITIONS OF TENANCY**

### **6.1 Access to property**

There are a number of cases where residents have refused access for tenancy audits, investigation of complaints or for repairs/improvements. Proposed change will clarify under what circumstances the council can enter a property.

### **6.2 Antisocial behaviour**

Proposed changes clarify that tenants do not need to seek permission for pets. Where a pet is proven to be a nuisance to staff and neighbours or breach any environmental protection the council will take action.

Advising residents where they can and cannot park, to comply with any parking conditions issued by the council and not to cause a nuisance or obstruction as parking permits are not enforceable.

### **6.3 Health and safety**

Proposed changes will advise that operatives are entitled to work within a smoke free environment under Public Health Act 2006, residents will be required to stop smoking for a sufficient period of time before an operative visits and refrain from smoking for the duration of the visit. Legal action will be taken against residents who threaten, abuse or assault staff or operatives.

Residents should not be keeping any items in the communal areas or close to the building. This includes mopeds, motorbikes, mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs. Fire safety remains a concern and it is proposed that any residents in flat blocks need to keep the communal area free of mats, carpets, rugs etc. If items are found in the communal areas they may be removed without notice and stored. They will be a charge to have these items returned. If the items are dangerous they will be disposed of immediately.

#### 6.4 Independent living

The proposed change will advise permission for relatives/family members to stay with a resident in Independent living schemes will only be given in exceptional circumstances and only for a certain period of time. If the service user in an Independent living schemes with additional care (flexicare) leaves the property on a permanent basis the council will work with the remaining person to find suitable alternative accommodation if they do not have the care need for the property and want to move.

#### 6.5 Maintaining a pleasant neighbourhood

Residents are responsible for maintaining their individual gardens and any trees or shrubs within them. It is proposed that if the council is made aware of a tree being a Health and Safety issue the council will carry out the work required without consultation and charge the full cost to the customer.

All residents are responsible to dispose of rubbish in bags or containers provided by us and not overfill them. This includes rubbish chutes as overfilling can cause blockages. It is proposed that if rubbish accumulates in a garden or home we may need to clear and treat vermin or pests. Customers will be recharged for the cost of this work.

#### 6.6 Payment and Charges

Rent charges are due every week and should be paid in advance. The council will send rent statements out every year so that customers can see payments that have been made. Customers will be encouraged to self-serve by using the online accounts facility. If a customer is due money for example in the way of compensation, disturbance or home loss this can be paid directly to rent accounts or any other housing related debt.

Tenants who receive the care support element are the only people who can get direct payments. All claims for financial assistance need to be made by the customer.

#### 6.7 Repairs and Improvements

The council wants to keep our properties and neighbourhoods in a good state of repair and customers need to help us with this.

The council will clean communal areas, keep any disturbance to a minimum and tenants are expected to be responsible for minor repairs and keeping

their home in a habitable condition. If they do not do this the council may take action. Tenants are also expected to report any repairs that are necessary and involve the police if it is criminal damage. If damage is caused by neglect, visitors or a deliberate act the responsible tenant be recharged the cost of the work. If the damage or disrepair is our responsibility the council will work with the tenant to carry the repairs out.

Residents should ask permission before making any improvements to their property and the council will charge for retrospective permission requests. If tenants make improvements and they require repair or maintenance the council will charge for this work.

#### 6.8 Tenancy Fraud

The council will continue to ensure that its properties are allocated to only those in need of housing from the start of the tenancy until the end. This includes strengthened measures to investigate people who provide false information and the council will take possession action if necessary.

#### 6.9 Terminating your tenancy

Proposed changes make the termination process clearer, the condition properties are expected to be left and when residents will be recharged, and how to terminate a joint tenancy. It also explains what information is required to end a tenancy from the customer's perspective and the documents the council are required to use to end a tenancy.

The proposed changes clarify that if the tenancy is ended alternative accommodation will not be offered. The proposed changes explain the rights the council have to repossess a property. These include if someone is decanted and will not return to their principal home, the property is unsafe and if the property is specially adapted for a physically disabled person.

Any day termination - currently the tenancy can only be ended on a Sunday. This move will allow greater flexibility on the date a tenancy can end and allow us to enable customers to move in more quickly and plan our void management tasks better.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

BD1 Existing tenancy agreement

## **APPENDICES**

- A Proposed tenancy conditions.
- B Proposed tenancy agreement for introductory and secure tenants.
- C Preliminary notice of variation to the tenancy agreement

# Your Tenancy Conditions

Your Tenancy Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy set out the rights and responsibilities of Stevenage Borough Council as a landlord and of you as a tenant.

When you sign this agreement you are agreeing to all the terms of the Tenancy – the terms are known as the Conditions of Tenancy.





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# About this tenancy agreement and conditions

Your tenancy agreement and conditions is the legal contract that describes your rights and responsibilities (as the tenant) and our rights and responsibilities (as your landlord). These tenancy conditions set out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of Stevenage Borough Council and our duties as your landlord.

These tenancy conditions form part of the tenancy agreement between you (the tenant) and us (Stevenage Borough Council). The tenancy agreement is a legally binding contract between you and the council. By signing the tenancy agreement you are agreeing to these conditions.

We have made it easy to read and understand but if there is anything you would like to discuss or have explained please let us know so that we can help you. You can also seek independent advice from a professional housing advisor, solicitor, the Citizens Advice or from other reputable agencies or organisations.

## Your landlord

Your landlord is Stevenage Borough Council.

Any notices to be served on us as your landlord should be addressed to:

Stevenage Borough Council  
Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
Hertfordshire  
SG1 1HN

As your landlord, we must tell you about serving notices on you as the tenant. A notice can be anything from a letter to a formal legal document.

Section 196, Law of Property Act 1925 shall apply to the service of any notices by officers or agents of your landlord under the tenancy agreement and conditions. This means that any notices are validly served upon you if they are left at or sent by post to your usual or last known address.

If we plan any changes to these tenancy agreement and conditions we must first ask you for your views and if we decide to make any changes you will be informed in writing if these changes are to go ahead, and will be given at least 28 days' notice.

## Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999

Please note that a person or party who is not a party to this contract has no rights under the contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any term of this Contract.

# Your rights about how we use, share and keep your information

## Your rights regarding your information

You have the right to request:

- access to personal information we hold
- having any incorrect information amended or removed
- having your information deleted, subject to certain restrictions that may prevent us from doing so

Further details about your rights and how we use your information are available on our website at

**[www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/access-to-information/200156](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/access-to-information/200156)**

To request copies of your information,

please call us on **01438 242666**

or email: **[enquiries@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@stevenage.gov.uk)**

## Using your information

For the purpose of data protection laws, the Council is the 'data controller' and registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

The information you have provided will be used in accordance with data protection laws and relevant legislation. We will use your information for the purposes of processing the tenancy agreement and managing the tenancy. We may share your information with other departments of the Council, and only where necessary for the purpose of meeting our legal obligations with the following third parties:

- Judicial agencies e.g. Courts
- Police
- Health agencies
- Education providers
- Other local authorities
- Immigration service
- Government departments e.g. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
- Safeguarding boards
- Approved contractors providing housing services (e.g. plumbing, electricians, gas operatives etc.) and IT services
- Elected members & MPs (as your representative)
- Funding bodies
- Solicitors

## Sharing your information

We may disclose your information to third parties to comply with a legal obligation, or where permitted under data protection laws, such as for purpose of fraud and crime prevention, or for other lawful purposes.

Where we seek to disclose sensitive information, such as medical details to third parties, we will only do this with your prior consent, or where we are legally required.

We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for marketing purposes.

## How long we keep your information

We will endeavour to keep your information accurate and up-to-date and not keep it for longer than is necessary, in accordance with the Council's Retention policy.

To help us keep your information up-to-date please provide us with accurate information and tell us:

- as soon as possible about any changes to your personal information.
- You can update this yourself on your online customer account
- if you notice mistakes or inaccuracies in the information we have about you.

## Making a complaint

We will always try to help you with queries and respond appropriately to all requests regarding your information. However, if you are not satisfied with how we handle your request, please let us know to allow us to investigate.

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of our investigation, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at [ico.org.uk](https://ico.org.uk)

All documents and forms referred to in the Tenancy Conditions are available on the Stevenage Borough Council website.

## Glossary

Some of the terms that we use in these tenancy conditions are explained below.

**Communal areas** – also known as shared or common parts. These are the areas of an estate or building used by all tenants. Most communal areas are found in blocks of flats and or Independent Living schemes, but the stairs and walkways in maisonettes and the shared alleyway paths to rear gates and front doors are also examples.

**Community** – all the people living in a common building or street, on an estate, in a neighbourhood or in the town as a whole.

**Dangerous animals** – an animal that is not permitted under UK law, e.g. Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa.

**Estate** – a group of properties. An estate includes the greens, roads, paths, garages, cycleway, play areas, shops and other facilities. Your property forms part of an estate.

**Home / Property** – the dwelling itself, together with any private garden, yard, outbuilding, shed, parking space, carport or attached or linked garage which you have exclusive possession of. This is usually referred to as ‘your home’ or ‘the property’ in these conditions.

**Household** – everybody living or staying in your home (called the property) including lodgers and guests.

**Neighbourhood** – a defined area of the town, which may include all or part of one estate or several estates.

**Our** – Stevenage Borough Council

**Overcrowding** – This is defined by Statute. Please see sections 324-328 and 330-331 of the Housing Act 1985.

**Principal home** – main home or where you live most of the time.

**Registered provider** – social housing provider, e.g. local authority or housing association.

**Rent catch up weeks** – these are weeks that you will not need to make a payment providing that you do not have any arrears.

**Rent** – the sum of the net rent and charges, revised and changed from time to time, as set out in these conditions and in accordance with the law and service charging or other policy.

**Tenant** – the person(s) named in this tenancy agreement. If it is more than one person, ‘you’ and ‘your’ applies to each and every tenant equally.

**Tenancy** – possession or occupancy of a Council home owned by Stevenage Borough Council on payment of rent.

**Us** – Stevenage Borough Council

**Vehicle** – a means of transport which can include a car, bus, lorry, motorcycle, moped, bicycle, boat, trailer, caravan, motor-home or mobility scooter.

**We** – Stevenage Borough Council

# 1 Your tenancy

You become a tenant of Stevenage Borough Council when you sign the tenancy agreement and you occupy the named property as your only or main home.

Your tenancy includes the property and any:

- gardens, boundary fences, walls, hedges
- garage, stores, outhouses, sheds, extensions, greenhouses, lean-tos, hard standings or shared-access footpaths attached to or included within the boundary of the property.

## Introductory Tenancies (New Tenants)

You will be an 'introductory tenant' unless you are transferring from a secure tenancy or an assured tenancy with a registered social landlord (but not an assured shorthold tenancy).

An introductory tenancy is usually for a probationary period of 12 months. During this time we'll monitor your tenancy and a member of the housing team will visit you at home between 4 and 6 weeks after your tenancy has started and then again after 8 months.

As an introductory tenant you:

- have fewer legal rights than you do as a secure tenant.
- can be evicted much more quickly and easily than a secure tenant.
- are not permitted to carry out any alterations to your property.

If you successfully complete the probationary period your introductory tenancy will convert to a secure tenancy if:

- there have been no breaches in your tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy
- we have not taken any action that could lead to us extending the trial period or having to take possession of your property.

The secure tenancy will start on the date shown in the front of the agreement. You will not need to sign a new tenancy agreement.

If you do not stick to the terms of your tenancy during the probationary period we may extend it by a further six months, or end your tenancy. We will:

- tell you of our intention and reasons for this.
- give you the right to ask for a review before we extend it.

People who do not have the right to succeed to a tenancy will not become introductory or secure tenants even if they continue to live in the property following the death of the current introductory or secure tenant(s).

### Secure Tenancies

A secure tenancy means that you can keep your property for as long as you want, unless there is a legal reason for us to repossess your property. These legal reasons are called 'Grounds for Possession' and are set out in legislation. For us either to gain possession of your property or to make you move to another property, a County Court must agree with our request, except in cases where a property is abandoned.

Your tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy with us will be a secure tenancy if you are:

- already a secure tenant and you are moving to another property owned by us.
- an assured tenant of a registered social landlord, such as a housing association, and you are transferring to one of our properties.

### Demoted tenancies

The Council can apply to the County Court for a Demotion Order under the Housing Act 1985 as amended by Grounds 2a and 2b of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. A Demotion Order may be granted if the court is satisfied that the person who is the secure tenant, or any person who lives in or visits the property, takes part in anti-social behaviour, or threatens to do so or has used your property for an unlawful purpose.

If a Demotion Order is granted you will have a Demoted Tenancy and you will no longer be a Secure Tenant.

### Additional conditions

Some additional conditions may apply to particular properties, or types of properties, from time to time. This includes housing for older people, tower blocks, flats and new build schemes. These will form part of your tenancy conditions.

If you are offered a property where such conditions apply, you will be informed of these additional conditions before you sign your tenancy agreement. By signing a tenancy agreement you also agree to comply with these additional conditions and you acknowledge that they have been drawn to your attention.

You may not be housed in the future if you:

- are evicted
- abandon your property
- continue to owe money for housing related charges or any other payment due under this agreement and conditions of tenancy when you move out.

### Your rights and responsibilities

- 1.1 We will treat you with courtesy and respect and expect you to conduct your business with our staff in the same manner.

- 1.2 As a tenant you have rights in law:
- if your relationship breaks down with your partner or spouse both parties may have the right to remain in the property. Further details of your rights are available from us, or you may obtain legal advice from an independent solicitor, housing adviser or the Citizens Advice.
  - to see certain information that we hold about you, but not information about other tenants.
  - to start and/or join a local tenants' or residents' group.
  - to choose a different landlord; this is called 'Tenants' Choice' and applies only in certain circumstances and according to certain rules and procedures. Please ask us for further details.
  - to the 'quiet enjoyment' of your property. Other residents also have the right to 'quiet enjoyment' of their properties.
  - to be consulted about important changes in our housing service. We will ask for your views about any changes to the tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy or any of our housing plans if they substantially affect you, such as modernisation or improvement work that is planned for your property or your area. If changes are approved you will be told in writing and be given a least 28 days' notice. Separate rules apply to changes in your rent which are explained in the section on 'Rent'.
  - to seek independent professional advice on any aspect of your tenancy, and to ask any person to act on your behalf regarding your tenancy. If you wish to have another person act on your behalf you will need to provide us with their details in writing. This is required to comply with data protection legislation.
- 1.3 You have other rights given and protected by law, as do we as your landlord. These are mentioned elsewhere in these conditions of tenancy .
- 1.4 If you are a secure tenant you also have the right to take in lodgers.
- A lodger is someone who pays rent to live with you but does not have exclusive right to any part of your property.
  - You must get our permission in advance and you are required to provide details of the person(s) that will be your lodger(s).

## Compliments and complaints

- 1.5 We are always trying to improve the services we provide so please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve them.
- 1.6 If you are not satisfied about a service provided by us or a response that you received from an enquiry, you may feel that you wish to make a complaint. A complaint is when:
- we have failed to do something we should have done
  - we have done something badly or in the wrong way
  - you feel that you have been treated unfairly or discourteously.

We operate a formal complaints procedure and further details are available on our website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints/](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints/)

### Your commitments to us

1.7 You must look after your property and:

- behave responsibly and keep to the rules of these conditions of tenancy.
- use the property as your only or main property. If you don't, we will take action to end your tenancy.
- tell us in writing if you will be away from your property for more than 28 days so that we know that you have not abandoned it. You must let us have contact details of someone we can get in touch with in case of an emergency and they must have a key to your property.
- pay your rent on time.
- if there are any changes to your name, provide us with acceptable proof such as a marriage certificate or statutory declaration.

1.8 You must not:

- allow your property to become overcrowded.
- tamper with gas or electricity supplies, meters or fittings.
- steal communal electricity or interfere with electricity paid for by neighbours.
- keep or store (even temporarily) mopeds, motorbikes, mobility scooters or electric wheelchairs inside your property, within 3 meters of the building or in any communal areas such as:
  - stairs or lifts
  - landings or walkways
  - entrance halls
  - drying areas
  - bin stores
  - paved areas
  - shared gardens.

1.9 If you wish to keep a mobility aid such as a scooter or motorised wheelchair in an area of your property which is not a communal area, and you do not have an allocated pod, you must obtain written permission from us before doing so.

1.10 We want our communities to be great places to live and for you and other residents to feel safe. To achieve this, you, any person living with you or visiting your property or communal areas (such as stairs, lifts, landings, walkways, entrance halls, drying areas, bin stores, paved areas or shared gardens) must not:

- behave in an anti-social manner.
- cause a nuisance which includes behaviour that is:
  - harmful
  - offensive

- disagreeable
- or interferes with the quiet enjoyment of the property or the health of any visitor to your property or the communal areas.
- harass, threaten, use language that causes offence, verbally abuse or assault other people or any member of staff employed by us, our agents or contractors. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - using or threatening to use violence
  - using abusive or insulting words
  - damaging or threatening to damage another person's property or possessions
  - causing damage to another person's property including by writing any graffiti
  - engaging in public disorder
  - doing anything that interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of other people
  - displaying any sign, writing or other visible representation of a threatening, abusive or offensive nature
  - malicious vandalism.
- inflict or use mental, emotional, racist, sexual or domestic abuse toward other people or any member of staff employed by us, our agents or contractors. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - race
  - religion
  - gender or gender preference
  - sexual orientation
  - marital status
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - age
  - disability.
- allow any illegal activity such as:
  - use, possess, manufacture, cultivate or sell illegal substances or drugs (e.g. cannabis)
  - create drug-related litter (including needles)
  - store stolen goods
  - burglary or theft from any premises
  - theft of any vehicle or property
  - install aerials or allow aerial access points for purposes associated with pirate radio.
- create noise such as:
  - loud music or high television volume
  - shouting or arguing
  - banging doors

- allowing burglar or fire alarms to be activated without a means for them to be turned off in your absence.
- undertake vehicle repairs in a manner that causes:
  - a nuisance to your neighbours
  - the creation of noise and debris
  - excessive revving of engines.
- park an illegal or unroadworthy vehicle on the land around your property or on roads within the locality of your property.
- do excessive DIY work or do it at unsociable hours.
- make false or malicious complaints about the behaviour of any other person.
- allow dogs to regularly bark, foul or cause annoyance to others in the neighbourhood.
- drop or throw any items from multi-storey blocks of flats, maisonettes or any other property.
- interfere with security or safety equipment in multi-storey flats or communal blocks of flats or maisonettes or Independent Living scheme.
- dump or fly-tip rubbish.
- allow your property to be used
  - to store scrap, scrap metal, vehicles or tyres.
  - as commercial storage.

If we are made aware of any of the above we may:

- restrict your access to our staff, contractors or offices
- start legal proceedings against you including for possession of your property.

1.11 You agree to allow us access for:

- prospective tenants to view the property during the final 28 days before the expiry of any:
  - 'Notice of Intention to Terminate'
  - 'Notice of Intention to Seek Possession' served upon you.
- carrying out tenancy audits
- investigating allegations of illegal occupation
- dealing with complaints including responding to complaints about anti-social behaviour or neighbour disputes
- any other management purpose.

1.12 You agree that:

- we can enter your property (whether or not you have been away for 28 days or more) where it reasonably appears that you have abandoned your property.
- following an inspection of your property, if it still appears to us that you have abandoned it, we may:
  - change the locks
  - take any other appropriate steps to protect it
  - dispose of all property found in the premises.

- you will pay us for the reasonable cost of:
  - changing the locks
  - making the property safe
  - disposing of any rubbish or property found in the premises.
- you will accept liability towards any other person for the loss of any property belonging to such a person and disposed of by us following your abandonment of the premises.

1.13 You will be asked to repay in full any costs or liabilities incurred by us resulting from your breach or failure to perform any part of these conditions of tenancy.

Examples of things that we may charge for include:

- putting right any work to your property that you have carried out without first having sought written permission from us.
- putting right damage caused by you for not complying with your repairing duties including your failure to maintain your own equipment.
- changing the locks of your property and otherwise securing if it is abandoned by you.
- your misuse of the emergency repair service for non-emergency repairs.
- the repair or replacement of any safety or security equipment at blocks of flats or Independent Living schemes which you, any person living with you or anyone visiting your property have damaged.
- clearing up or undertaking repairs required if you, any person living with you or anyone visiting your property damages our property.
- misuse of emergency alarm equipment.
- replacing missing or broken keys.
- tree and garden works and garden clearance.
- calling at your property for a pre-arranged appointment and you (or someone authorised to act for you) are not there.

## Other people in your property

1.14 If you want someone to become part of your household, who was not part of it when you moved in you must get our written permission. For example, children born since the start of the tenancy for whom you must provide us with copies of their birth certificates.

1.15 We will not give permission if the additional person you want to become part of your household if it:

- would cause overcrowding in contravention of sections 324-328 and 330-331 of the Housing Act 1985
- is likely to cause a nuisance.

1.16 If you are a tenant living in specialist accommodation including an Independent Living property you must not sub-let your property or allow other people to live with you without the prior written permission of the landlord. Permission will only

be given in exceptional circumstances for a specific duration of time. For example, family members or friends might be permitted to stay for up to 2 weeks.

### Tenancy agreements for anyone under 18

- 1.17 We will only give a tenancy agreement to someone under the age of 18 if a responsible person signs the agreement on their behalf as an authorised guardian or trustee. Until the tenant reaches the age of 18, the guardian or trustee accepts that:
- they take full responsibility for the tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy
  - any notices or demands for payment served under the agreement and conditions of tenancy can be served on them.

### Making improvements to your property

- 1.18 If you are a secure tenant you have the right to make your own improvements such as installing central heating, a shower or gas fire. However, you must:
- get our written permission before doing any work of this kind.
  - make sure that any work is carried out by a competent person who must comply with all relevant rules and regulations.
  - supply us with certificates to prove the work (where appropriate) was carried out by a competent person.

You may need to apply for planning and building regulation approval first where applicable.

- 1.19 Following your own improvements you are responsible for the repair and maintenance of any:
- installations
  - appliances
  - materials
- 1.20 We have:
- the right to inspect any installation to ensure that it is safe.
  - a legal responsibility to check, service and maintain gas fires and heaters, pipe work and flues even if they have been fitted by you.
- 1.21 We will charge you for all costs incurred including the current administration charge for:
- repairing and/or maintaining any of your improvements.
  - inspection of works carried out in your property
  - for retrospective permission if you carry out works to your property without prior permission

## Buying your property

- 1.22 The law says that certain secure tenants have the right to buy their properties if they have been tenants:
- of a Council
  - of any other public sector landlord (e.g. a housing association)
  - who have lived in armed forces accommodation.
- 1.23 The length of the qualifying period for right to buy will depend on the date the tenancy started (it does not need to have been a continuous period), and what the law prescribes.
- 1.24 In some cases there is no right to buy. For example if your property has been adapted or specifically built for older or disabled people.
- 1.25 If you would like more details about your right to buy, please contact us at **homeownership@stevenage.gov.uk**

## Moving to another property

- 1.26 If you are secure tenant you have the right to swap (called an exchange) your property with another tenant of:
- ours
  - another Local Authority
  - a Registered Provider (RP)
- You must get our written permission first and the written agreement of any other landlord involved.
- 1.27 We will take legal action to take possession of your property if you:
- exchange without our written permission, you will not be able to return to your original property and will not be offered alternative housing.
  - offer or accept money or other financial incentives to exchange your property (even if we have approved the exchange).
- 1.28 In certain circumstances we may:
- not give permission
  - impose conditions on an exchange.
- 1.29 You have the right to apply for rehousing (although this does not guarantee that you will be rehoused) by:
- us
  - another Local Authority
  - a Registered Provider (RP)
- You will have to make an application in accordance with the rules of the landlord involved.

## Passing on your tenancy

- 1.30 If a secure tenant dies, the tenancy will automatically transfer to any remaining joint tenant. If you die and there is no remaining joint tenant, the tenancy can only be passed on once to your husband, wife, partner or civil partner. This is called a statutory succession under the terms of the Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

The statutory successor must have been living continuously in the property and been using the property as their main and principle home, unless they have notified the landlord in writing of a reason prior to the death, otherwise they will lose that right to succeed (for example a relationship breakdown).

- 1.31 If there is no rightful successor, the law requires us to serve a Notice to Quit on persons responsible for dealing with your property after death. These people are sometimes called your executors, administrators or personal representatives, who must act in accordance with the law and surrender your property to us.

- 1.32 Under certain circumstances, we will consider a request from someone else to succeed to a tenancy if a secure tenant dies. This is called a non-statutory succession.

- 1.33 Our Succession Policy is in line with current legislation including the Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 which explains the qualifying circumstances when a non-statutory succession will be considered.

- 1.34 If you die while you are:

- an introductory tenant, any person who takes over your tenancy will also be an introductory tenant. They will only become a secure tenant if they fulfil all the terms and conditions of the introductory tenancy
- as a secure tenant, the person who takes over your tenancy will be a secure tenant immediately.

If the property is not suitable we may give them another council property more suitable to their needs. We also have the right to ask for possession if the property has special features adapted for a person with disabilities or the property is one of a group of properties held for persons with special needs

- 1.35 If you are secure tenant, in certain circumstances you may be able to assign (transfer) your tenancy to someone else - this is called an assignment. You are only entitled to assign your tenancy to someone who would have the right to take over your tenancy if you died (right of succession). This can only happen if no succession has already taken place.

- 1.36 If you are a secure tenant, in certain circumstances you may be able to swap properties with another council or housing association tenant.

- We may apply to the court for possession of your property if you assign your property to someone else without our consent as your landlord or you assign your property with consent, but to someone who is later found to be ineligible for a tenancy.

- 1.37 If a tenancy is left in a will, we have the right to take possession of the property if the person inheriting does not satisfy the criteria for succession.
- 1.38 If you would like information about passing on your tenancy to another person please contact us.

## Ending your tenancy

- 1.39 You, or if you are joint tenants, any one of you (unless the law provides otherwise), have the right to end your tenancy at any time.
- 1.40 If you want to bring your tenancy to an end you must complete a 'Termination of Tenancy' form. If you would like us to help you complete it, let us know. Alternatively you can write to us.
- 1.41 The termination form or letter must:
- give four weeks' notice which will take effect from the day that we receive your form
  - include your unique tenancy reference number
  - make sure that the letter is signed by person/persons on the tenancy agreement
  - provide a forwarding address and contact details
- 1.42 You must give us four weeks' notice in writing and your tenancy can end on any day of the week. This is called the 'notice period', which is a legal requirement that also applies to anyone acting for you. If you do not give proper notice, your tenancy will not end.
- 1.43 Please note that if you do bring this tenancy to an end:
- the full rent will still be due during the notice period even if the tenant has died.
  - we do not have to offer you alternative accommodation.
  - the Termination notice will end the tenancy of any joint tenants.
  - you must not allow any person to remain living in the property when your tenancy ends. If you do, we will charge you for the property until the person moves out. You will also have to pay our legal costs of taking action to remove that person.
  - you must remove all rubbish from your garden, garden shed and any garage or storage space you have used.

## Checking your property

- 1.44 You must allow us access to check your property once we have received your notice to end your tenancy which will take place within the four week notice period.

## Returning your keys

- 1.45 The keys to and electronic fob keys (if provided) for the property must be returned to the council office no later than 12 noon the day after the tenancy ends (unless this is Saturday or Sunday, then these must be returned by Monday) If we do not receive your keys and fobs on time, you will continue to be responsible for paying the rent and charges for the property. You will also have to pay for any damage caused if you leave the property unsecured.

## Leaving your property

- 1.46 If you leave the property without telling us that you intended to end your tenancy, you will be responsible for the full rent due until the date the tenancy ends.
- 1.47 When you move out you must give us vacant possession of your property. This means that:
- no one else can be living there.
  - you must take all pets with you.
  - we will consider as abandoned any belongings left in the property on the date your tenancy ends and charge you the full cost of disposal including admin fees and VAT.
- 1.48 You must leave the property in a clean and tidy condition and in accordance with our leaving standards and conditions. This means that:
- we will hold you responsible for any damage to the structure of the building or to fixtures and fittings that is not caused by fair wear and tear.
  - the structure of the property and any fixtures and fittings must be left in a reasonable condition subject to fair wear and tear.
  - if any repairs are required to the property or fixtures and fittings that are not caused by fair wear and tear you must undertake any repair work requested. If you do not we will arrange to have it done and we will charge you for all costs incurred including the current administration charge.
- 1.49 If you remove any fittings that belong to you, you must:
- make good any damage caused (e.g. to the plasterwork).
  - replace any items that you remove with goods of a reasonable quality.
- 1.50 If you remove or damage any fittings including any alterations we may hold you responsible for:
- any costs incurred by us for the damage to these alterations and the cost of reinstalling them including current administration charge.
  - any rental loss while carrying out the works required.

## Leaving your property under exceptional circumstances

- 1.51 In certain circumstances such as a:
- long illness
  - lengthy stay in hospital
  - lengthy period of work abroad
- we may grant consent for you to leave your property unoccupied or looked after by another person.
- 1.52 Our housing staff will always give advice, but you have the right to seek independent advice from a solicitor, the Citizens Advice or from other reputable agencies or organisations.

## Flexicare schemes

- 1.53 These are Independent Living properties with the additional care services on site. If the person who was assessed for the Flexicare service leaves the accommodation (1 or 2 bedroom property) on a permanent basis the remaining person will need to move to alternative suitable accommodation based on their current needs.

## Money owed to you or us at the end of your tenancy

- 1.54 Within 28 days of your tenancy ending, we will let you know if there is any money that is still owed to us. For example, this could be for:
- rent
  - arrears
  - rechargeable works
  - other charges.
- 1.55 We will hold onto any rent credits or other amounts owed to you and offset these against any amounts owed to us at the end of your tenancy.
- 1.56 Once all sums owed have been settled we will send any remaining credit amount to you.

## If we have to repossess your property

- 1.57 We can apply to court for a possession order for the property, if:
- you, or anyone living with you or visiting you, do something that breaches the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy,
  - you have given false information in your housing application. In these cases we might not offer you another property.
- 1.58 This may result in you losing your right to live in your property and we will not

be under any duty to offer you alternative accommodation if a court grants us a possession order.

- 1.59 The grounds as to why we may repossess your property are defined by law.
- 1.60 We can also apply to a court to repossess the property if we need to move you and anyone living with you out of your property for a special reason relating to the building itself. Examples of such reasons are:
- We are planning soon to demolish or rebuild the property or to carry out work which we cannot do unless the property is empty.
  - The property is specially adapted for a physically disabled person, or is part of a group used for persons with special needs, there is no longer such a person living there, and we require the property for such a person.
  - The property has become unsafe for some reason and we need to move you for your own safety.
  - You are only living in the property because we are doing work to your property, and your property is now ready for you to move back into.
- 1.61 If we need you to move out of your property for such reasons, we will offer you a suitable property to move to.
- 1.62 If we want to repossess your property we have to end your tenancy by first serving you one of the following documents:
- 'Notice of Intention to Terminate'
  - 'Notice of Seeking Possession'
  - 'Notice of Intention to demote your Tenancy'
  - 'Notice to Quit'
- which will explain why we have sent it to you. You have the right to request a review of these reasons.
- 1.63 If after serving the documents in 1.60 we have not been able to resolve the issues at hand we can apply to a court where a judge will decide whether we have a good enough reason:
- to change your secure tenancy to one with fewer rights – called demoting your tenancy.
  - for a Possession order if you do not give up your property voluntarily.
- 1.64 You have the right to go to court and defend any possession action against you and we can only evict you with a Court Order if there are statutory grounds for repossessing your property.

### **Running a business from your property**

- 1.65 If you want to run a business from your property you should seek permission from us before doing so.
- 1.66 Permission, once given, can be withdrawn and could result in you losing your property if you run a business:

- that causes nuisance or annoyance.
- that damages the property or any emergency alarm equipment.
- breaches planning enforcement regulations by changing the use of the property from residential to commercial.

1.67 If you run a business from your property without our written permission and there are complaints about your activities, we may apply to court for possession of your property.

## Smoking

1.68 You, any person living with you or anyone visiting your property are not allowed to smoke, vape or use electronic cigarettes in any of the enclosed or substantially enclosed communal areas to blocks of flats or Independent Living accommodation.

1.69 To help us undertake our obligations as set out in the tenancy agreement and these tenancy conditions you are required to provide us with a smoke free environment when a member of our staff, our agents or contractors are due to attend or are in attendance.

1.70 You must ensure that you, anyone living with you or anyone visiting your property do not smoke, vape or use electronic cigarettes for a sufficient amount of time to ensure that any enclosed or substantially enclosed part of your property or communal part is smoke free prior to an arranged appointment.

1.71 Failure to comply with these obligations could result in us taking action against you under the Public Health Act 2006.

## 2 Paying your rent and other charges

### How we calculate the amount due

- 2.1 We calculate the rent and other charges due on each property for the next financial year and divide the total into:
- 50 equal payments if it is a 52 week year
  - 51 equal payments if it is a 53 week year.
- Two weeks each year are called 'catch-up' weeks, and we will tell you each year when they are.
- If your account is in arrears you must pay in the 'catch-up' weeks so that any outstanding amount can be reduced.
  - If you keep your rent up-to-date you will not be required to pay rent in the 'catch-up' weeks.
  - You can continue to pay in the 'catch-up' weeks and build up a credit on your rent account to use when you wish.
- 2.2 Your rent and any other charges may be increased or decreased annually (usually in April) or from time to time. We will write to you at least 4 weeks before any change.

### Paying your rent and other charges

- 2.3 Your tenancy is a weekly tenancy that runs from Monday to Sunday. This means that:
- you will owe rent from the first day of your tenancy start date.
  - your rent is due every Monday unless there is a rent catch-up week and you have no arrears.
- 2.4 You are required to pay your rent and any other charges on time or in advance so that your account is fully paid up or in credit at the end of each week. You can choose to pay:
- weekly
  - fortnightly
  - monthly.
- 2.5 Your first payment is due when you receive your keys at the letting appointment.
- 2.6 We will send you a rent statement at least once a year.  
You can see the current balance of your rent account online by logging into your account at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay)
- 2.7 If you started your tenancy on any day other than a Monday, your first rent payment will be due from that day. It will be worked out as a proportion based on the number of days to the next Monday.

- 2.8 If you are joint tenants you are both responsible for the rent, arrears and other charges owed for your property. We can recover this from either or both of you even if one of you no longer lives in the property.
- 2.9 If one of the joint tenants has moved out without giving notice to us, all joint tenants, including those that have left or moved out and consider they no longer live in the property, will remain liable for the rent and other responsibilities of the tenancy until the correct notice or notices has or have been given to us on behalf of all tenants.
- 2.10 If any money is payable to you by us as compensation for damage to your property, or for property loss and disturbance, we reserve the right to pay some or all of that money into your rent account if you are in arrears or credit it against any housing related debt.

### **Water charge**

- 2.11 Your rent may include a charge for water rates which you must pay as part of your inclusive rent each week.

### **Ways to pay**

- 2.12 Our preferred method of payment is by direct debit.  
Other ways to pay are shown on our website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay)

### **Help with paying rent and other charges**

- 2.13 If you cannot pay your rent you should:
- in the first instance contact us as soon as possible.
  - make an offer to pay any arrears at an affordable rate and start paying immediately while waiting for financial assistance.
  - ask for advice from the Citizens Advice or from other reputable agencies or organisations.
  - See if you can get assistance in paying your rent through Universal Credit or Housing Benefits.
- 2.14 If you think you are entitled to financial assistance to pay your rent it is your responsibility to make a claim.  
You must make sure that you provide all the information requested to process your claim and if your circumstances change, you are required to tell the Department of Works and Pensions immediately. There may be financial penalties if you do not.
- 2.15 You can only get direct payments for the care support element if you've been assessed by Social Services as needing care and support services and only the following people are eligible:
- disabled people aged 16 or over (with short or long-term needs)
  - disabled parents for children's services

- carers aged 16 or over (including people with parental responsibility for a disabled child)
- older people who need community care services.

### **Missing or late payment**

- 2.16 If you do not pay your rent or persistently pay it late, we may go to court to get legal permission to take possession of your property and seek a County Court Judgment for the rent and enforce it through the court.
- 2.17 We will send you reminders and / or warnings before we take any legal action for not paying.

### **Charging for additional services**

- 2.18 We have the right to provide additional services which you will have to pay for as part of your rent. These are called service charges.
- 2.19 We will:
- consult with tenants and tenant's groups before we introduce new charges that may apply to you.
  - contact you in writing at least 4 weeks before we introduce a new service charge.
- 2.20 There will be some communal service charges for Independent Living Schemes that are included in the rent and are payable whether or not you use the service.
- 2.21 Service charges which are currently included within the rent may, in the future, be shown as a separate charge and will be based on the actual cost of the services shared between tenants.
- 2.22 Some tenants are provided with support services as part of their tenancy and there will be an extra charge due with their rent to cover the cost of these services. You will be told about this if you are one of these tenants. If you are liable for such a charge, you must:
- pay it, even if you do not use all or any of the services provided.
  - pay any such charge in advance on the Monday of each week with any rent that is due.
- 2.23 If you are receiving partial or full financial assistance / benefits to pay your rent, you are still responsible for the payment of water charges or any other charges that are not covered by the financial assistance you receive. These must be paid in advance.

### **Recovering our costs**

- 2.24 We reserve the right to charge you for letters we send or for visits we have to make if your account is in arrears.

## 3 Repairs, improvements and major works

We aim to keep our properties and neighbourhoods in a good state of repair and provide an excellent service.

You can find lots of information about repairs and maintenance as well as report a repair online on our website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs)

### Our responsibilities

3.1 We are responsible for the repair (and testing where applicable) of the structure and exterior of your property and for standard fittings which:

externally include the:

- roof, walls
- ceilings, floors, stairs
- window frames, external doors
- drains, gutters and outside pipes.

Internally include the:

- heating system
- bath, sinks, toilet
- kitchen units
- water pipes
- gas pipes
- electric wiring
- other fixtures.

3.2 When a property is empty we will check to make sure that it meets the lettable standard and if any major works are required they will be completed before the property is let. Some minor repairs may have to be carried out after you have moved in.

3.3 Safety checks will be carried out in line with current regulations and you will be provided with a copy of the safety certificate(s).

3.4 We will:

- carry out scheduled cleaning and take reasonable care to maintain in good order the communal areas (including the stairs, lifts, fire doors, lighting and the rubbish chute) in blocks of flats and Independent Living schemes.
- do certain small urgent repairs within a reasonable time as set out in government guidelines. This is called your Right to Repair and you may be able to get compensation if these repairs are not done on time.
- make sure that while repair work is being done that any disturbance is kept to a minimum.

- ensure that following any repair work the area is left clean but please note that we will not decorate any areas affected by the works.

## Your responsibilities

3.5 Your responsibilities include (The list is not exhaustive):

- carrying out minor repairs, maintaining and keeping your property secure.
- the filling of minor cracks in internal plasterwork including preparatory work for redecoration.
- decorating your property internally.
- keeping keys to your property in a safe place.
- changing locks when keys are lost.
- replacing lost or broken keys.
- replacing fuses.
- changing light bulbs.
- replacing toilet seats.
- keeping electrical installations working properly.
- replacing broken windows.
- replacing plugs and chains to sanitary ware.
- replacing clothes lines in your individual garden.
- keeping your property and any allocated gardens clean, tidy and free from vermin and pests.
- keeping communal areas free of litter, obstructions and hazards.

3.6 In addition to the scheduled cleaning, if you live in a block of flats you are also responsible for cleaning any communal areas including:

- floors
- walls up to hand height
- other surfaces
- shared access paths and entrances.

3.7 If you do not keep your property in a safe, secure, clean and habitable condition including adequate ventilation, or in good repair, we may apply to court for possession of your property.

3.8 We recommend that you arrange adequate household contents insurance which should include cover against flood damage. Please note that we do not insure the contents of your property.

Call us if you would like:

- to arrange a property visit to check that all exposed pipes are lagged and that your loft has sufficient insulation
- free advice on how to reduce the risk of pipes freezing and bursting during spells of cold weather.

## Telling us when a repair is needed

- 3.9 You must report to us any disrepair or damage, including criminal damage, to your property or any other property belonging to us caused by:
- your own fault or neglect
  - the fault of any person living with you or visiting your property
- You can do this reporting by telephone on 01438 242242 or by reporting your repair online at [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk).
- If necessary, we will arrange an appointment with you to assess what needs to be done.
- If you are not happy about the repairs we say we will or will not carry out, you can make a complaint under our complaints procedure however, before you can complain or bring a claim for disrepair, you must ensure you do report your repair to ensure you have given us the opportunity to carry out the repair first of all.
- 3.10 If the repair is required as a result of criminal damage, you should report this repair to the police and get a crime reference number.
- 3.11 You must arrange, and if necessary pay for, the repair or replacement of any part of the property that is damaged deliberately, carelessly or neglectfully by you, any member of your household, visitor or animal. If, for reasons of safety or security, we have to do the repair, we will charge you the full cost of the work
- 3.12 If the disrepair or damage is your responsibility, we will give you the opportunity to put it right within a reasonable time. If we carry out the repairs to put it right you will be liable for the full costs incurred including administration fees.
- 3.13 If the work is not required under health and safety grounds you may be required to pay the full amount in advance of the work being carried out.  
We may also apply to court for possession of your property.
- 3.14 If disrepair or damage is our responsibility, we will discuss with you the nature of the repairs that need to be carried out. If necessary, we may have to:
- temporarily cut off services
  - temporarily stop all rights of access to the property
  - permanently divert rights of access (such as paths or water pipes) as long as it is no less beneficial to the property.

## Improvements, additions or structural alterations

- 3.15 You must get our written permission before you, anyone living with you or visiting your property, make improvements, additions, structural alterations to the property.
- 3.16 You may also be required and responsible for:
- getting necessary planning permission and / or building regulation approval before work starts
  - any costs associated with these works.

### 3 Repairs, improvements and major works

- 3.17 If you make an improvement, addition or a structural alteration to your property without getting our written permission first, we can, if necessary, tell you to:
- return your property to the way it was before
  - do works to a satisfactory standard or make your property safe and charge you for any associated costs.
- 3.18 You must not make any installations which are unsafe or dangerous to anyone.
- 3.19 If you have installed a pond during your tenancy you must fill it in before you move.
- 3.20 If you have made an improvement to your property, and the work meets safety standards and planning requirements, you may be able to claim compensation in accordance with government guidelines for any improvements when you end your tenancy.
- 3.21 You can ask us to take responsibility for repairing and maintaining any improvement you have made. If we agree, and the improvement significantly increases the value of your property, your rent may be increased to reflect the improvements – subject to government rules for rent restructuring.

#### **Laminate or hardwood flooring**

- 3.22 You must get written permission from us if you wish to install laminate or hardwood flooring to your property. You will be required to use noise insulating underlay.
- 3.23 We will not give you permission if the flooring is likely to cause a noise problem and if you have already installed flooring that is causing a noise problem you will have to remove it.
- 3.24 If your flooring needs to be taken up due to any repairs such as leaks or wiring faults, we will not be responsible for the condition or relaying of the flooring.

#### **Major works and temporary accommodation**

- 3.25 If major works are needed to your property and it is not possible for you to stay in the property while the works take place:
- you will have to move
  - we will offer you a suitable alternative property which, depending on the circumstances, may be either temporary or permanent. This is called a decant.
- 3.26 If you are offered a temporary property during repair works, you must return to your original property when the repairs are completed. You must make sure that your temporary property is left clean and in a condition set out in the Lettable Standard.

## Allowing access

- 3.27 You are required to allow us access for the following purposes:
- To inspect the state of repair and condition of the property and garden, if any.
  - To carry out repairs or other necessary works such as alterations and improvements to the property, or to the block or estate of which the property forms a part, whether or not we have (or assumed) responsibility for such works.
  - To carry out repairs or other necessary works to common areas (such as stairs, lifts, fire doors, landings, walkways, entrance halls, drying areas, bin stores, paved areas, shared gardens or parking areas) or neighbouring properties owned by us.
  - To carry out regular safety checks; including servicing of gas appliances, whether or not for the annual gas safety inspection, as we may be prosecuted if we do not do this.
  - To allow prospective tenants to view the property during the final 28 days of your tenancy when you have served a Notice of Termination or during the 28 days immediately before the expiry of any Notice of Intention to Seek Possession served upon you.
  - For constructing, installing, inspecting, repairing, renewing, maintaining and removing pipes, conduits, wires and cables or to test and repair alarm equipment.
  - For the modernisation and upgrading of amenities and facilities, which is now standard in kitchens and bathrooms.
- 3.28 Whenever possible, we will give you at least 24 hours' notice for you to allow our officers, agents, appointed contractor or utility service representatives to come into the property at reasonable times. They will show you an official identification card. If you do not let us have access:
- you could be putting yourselves and your neighbours at risk.
  - we can take legal action to obtain a court order that will allow us to enter and you may have to pay the costs.
- 3.29 You may need to allow neighbours and anyone working for them to come into your property at reasonable times to allow work or services to their own property. They may need to come in to carry out:
- reasonable inspections
  - repairs
  - alterations
  - improvements
- They must:
- give you at least 48 hours' written notice (except in an emergency).
  - put right any damage caused.
  - have our permission to do so.

### **Allowing access in an emergency**

3.30 You must allow immediate access in emergencies such as gas, water or sewage leaks or where buildings or electrics are unsafe.

3.31 You agree that we can enter your property:

- to inspect the property and carry out any repairs required to deal with the emergency
- by force if there is a fire, flood or danger to Health and Safety
- without giving you written notice
- whether you are there or not.

If we have to force entry we will make sure your property is left secure but we may charge you for the costs of forcing our way in.

## 4 Maintaining a pleasant neighbourhood

4.1 Each tenant has a responsibility to help maintain a pleasant neighbourhood.

### Common parts and areas

4.2 You must keep the common areas outside your property and adjacent to the property clean, free from obstruction and tidy at all times.

You will be charged, including our current administration fee, for:

- the cleaning of lifts and communal areas if fouled by you, your household, visitors or pets.
- the clearing of:
  - refuse deposited in the common parts (fly tipping).
  - rubbish chutes blocked by inappropriate disposal of rubbish
  - by you, any person living with you or visiting your property.
- This is in line with the Clear Corridor policy ([hyperlink available in the online version](#)).

4.3 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must not:

- jam, prop open or leave open shared entrance doors.
- allow strangers to enter the block.

You will be charged for any damage caused by this including our current administration fee.

4.4 You are responsible for making sure that you, any person living with you or visiting your property must not damage, deface or put graffiti on our property.

You will be charged, including our current administration fee, for any repair or replacement for which you are responsible and we may take legal action against you.

### Fire Safety

4.5 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must not place door mats, carpets, rugs or any other items in the communal areas/hallways to the block.

Items may be removed without prior notice. You will be informed if we remove and store. Items can be retrieved at your cost, up until 10 days from removal date, after which the Council will dispose of these items. The Council takes no responsibility for damage to these items.

Any items deemed to be an immediate hazardous risk will be removed and disposed of immediately.

You will be charged the full cost of the removal including our current administration fee.

### Parking

- 4.6 If your property has a designated parking space, only you and your legitimate visitors can park there.
- 4.7 You must not rent or sell the parking space to anyone else.
- 4.8 If you have been provided with a parking permit, or permits, they are only for your use, or for visitors to your property, and must be returned to us when your tenancy ends. They must not be copied, sold or passed on to anyone else.
- 4.9 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must not park a vehicle anywhere on your property except on a 'hard standing' (a driveway or paved area intended for parking).
- You must get our written permission before installing a hard standing or driveway.
- 4.10 You must get our written permission to park caravans, motor homes or SORN vehicles on a driveway, hard standing or paved area around your property or any communal parking areas.
- 4.11 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must comply with any parking conditions issued by us and must not obstruct access to other properties, the highway, or park anywhere that would obstruct emergency services from accessing other properties or the highway. This includes parking in a bay designated for blue badge holders without the required permit on display.

### Gardens, trees and fences

- 4.12 You are responsible for maintaining the gardens, trees and front fences. You must tell us if there is a good reason why you cannot look after these items.
- 4.13 You must make sure:
- your garden, trees, hedges and flowerbeds are tidy and not overgrown.
  - that lawns are cut
  - your garden is free of any hazardous material or rubbish
  - your garden is in a safe, clean and hygienic condition.
- If there are exceptional circumstances as to why you cannot do this, we may clear it and charge you for the work. This will include our current administration fee.
- 4.14 You are responsible for maintenance of following items in your garden:
- shed
  - greenhouse
  - pond
  - water feature
  - or other structure
- 4.15 You may take on responsibility for cultivating an area adjoining your property by

obtaining from us:

- a Licence to Cultivate
- or appropriate consent.

4.16 You must get our written permission:

- to plant trees in your garden
- before removing any trees
- before removing any fencing.

We will only refuse permission if there is a good reason.

4.17 You are responsible for maintaining any trees or shrubs within your garden. They must be pruned and cut back so they do not overgrow, overhang pathways, neighbours' gardens or boundaries.

4.18 If you believe a tree may be dead, diseased or dangerous, or that the roots may be affecting underground services or property foundations, you must contact us or a specialist for advice on dealing with the problem

If tree work needs to be carried out due to an immediate health and safety issue we will carry out the work without consultation.

You will be charged the full cost of the work including our current administration fee.

4.19 We will maintain all the boundaries to your property. We are responsible for the repair or renewal of the fencing or other boundary markers but they will not be a like-for-like replacement. For further details of our fencing policy please contact us.

## Ball games

4.20 Playing ball games in the street or close to someone's property or vehicles can cause annoyance or nuisance to others. If this is persistent it will be investigated.

## Flammable gasses or liquids

4.21 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must not keep or use:

- bottled gas
- paraffin
- petrol
- or any other dangerous material

This includes in your property or in communal areas such as:

- stairs
- lifts
- landings
- walkways
- entrance halls
- drying areas

- bin stores
- paved areas
- shared gardens
- parking areas
- individual gardens

### **Rubbish, pests and vermin**

4.22 You must only put rubbish in:

- bin bags or containers provided by us and they must not be overfilled.
- rubbish chutes where provided which must be kept clear at all times.

You must not:

- allow rubbish to build up in your property or any garden or communal areas whether or not it is in suitable containers
- place non-recyclable materials in recycling bins
- place recyclable materials in non-recycling bins.

We may have to:

- clear your garden or property of rubbish.
- control or remove vermin or pests such as mice or wasps.

You may be charged for any costs we incur for investigating and taking action in relation to the above activities including our current administration fee.

### **Pets and other animals**

One single domestic pet is allowed without advance permission unless they prove to be a nuisance to staff and neighbours or breach any environmental protection laws. You must get our written permission first if you wish to have more than one domestic pet. We will need to consider the impact it could have on your property and neighbours. Our permission will not be unreasonably withheld, delayed or withdrawn by us. We reserve the right to withdraw our permission.

We will give special consideration for guide, hearing, and support dogs.

4.23 You, any person living with you or visiting your property are responsible for:

- keeping your pets, supervised, under control and cared for.
- making sure your pet doesn't roam unsupervised in any communal area, cause a nuisance or damage our property.

4.24 You, any person living with you or visiting your property must not:

- keep livestock or any animal which is wild, dangerous or poisonous as defined by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.
- allow any pet or animal you keep at the property to cause a nuisance to anyone in the local area, including our employees, agents or contractors.
- cause a nuisance by breeding any animals at the property.
- allow pets or animals to foul in the communal areas of the property, on

footpaths or in play areas in the local area. You must remove and dispose of faeces hygienically.

- allow pets to cause damage to our property or harm to any person.
- feed pigeons, squirrels or other vermin either at the property or in communal areas.
- allow your property to become a nuisance or cause harm to others by failing to look after your pets or animals appropriately.

4.25 If any pet or animal living at or visiting your property causes a nuisance we will ask you to remove it from the property.

4.26 If you live in an area where there are dog byelaws you must keep to the rules of the scheme.

4.27 If you live in specialist accommodation such as Independent Living you will need to talk to us if you wish to keep a pet or animal. We will consider each case individually, based on your requirement and the nature of the scheme where you live.

4.28 We will ask you to remove an animal or withdraw our permission if we believe that any animal you keep is causing a nuisance or we believe it is unsuitable to be kept in the property. We will do this in writing giving our reasons and the date by which you must comply.

## Protecting you from problems caused by others

4.29 To protect you and other residents where appropriate we will investigate complaints of:

- nuisance and annoyance
- harassment
- anti-social behaviour
- criminal activity
- domestic abuse

Where serious problems are caused we may:

- ask an environmental health officer to help investigate any complaint.
- ask perpetrators to sign an acceptable behaviour contract.
- seek an injunction to protect you or any person making a complaint from violence or a serious threat of violence.
- in cases of domestic abuse, ask the court for an order to repossess the property to evict the violent tenant but not the victim, who may then be offered another property elsewhere.
- serious problems are caused by you or others we can take criminal or civil action which may lead to the repossession of their or your property.

In relation to any anti-social behaviour which could result in imprisonment of the offender(s) if appropriate we may obtain a:

- civil injunction
- Community Protection Notice (CPN)
- Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO)
- ask the court for an order to repossess the property of any tenant if they, their occupants or visitors cause nuisance and annoyance or harassment, or engage in anti-social behaviour or criminal activity.

If you feel you are a victim of domestic abuse, or feel at risk, we can offer support and advice and will take firm action against anyone responsible. Further details are available on our website at:

**[www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555)**

If you have been affected by domestic abuse, or believe that somebody you know is being abused, you can contact our Domestic Abuse service by calling them in confidence on **01438 242666** or secure email **domesticabuse\_gcsx@stevenage.gov.uk**

### Tenancy Fraud – protecting our housing stock and the public money

- 4.30 This is to ensure that properties are allocated to those in need of housing and that this need continues from the start of the introductory tenancy until the person's tenancy ends.

Where appropriate, we will fully investigate a person who provides false information, false documentation or withholds information as it is a criminal offence.

We may take repossession proceedings to recover the property and we may prosecute using the following legislation; Prevention Of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 s.1 and s.2.; The Fraud Act 2006 s1(2) and s.1(3) and the Housing Act 1996 s.171.

If found guilty you may be fined and receive a criminal record.

The types of fraud we investigate include:

- **Subletting** – not using the property as your only and main principle property and allowing another person to use the whole of the property with or without financial gain
- **Abandonment** – Parting with possession- no longer using the property as your main and principle property
- **False housing applications** – providing false and misleading information to obtain a social housing property
- **Succession** – providing false and misleading information to take over a tenancy for a social housing property
- **Assignment** – providing false and misleading information to obtain a social housing property
- **Right to buy** – providing false and misleading information to purchase a social

housing property receiving discount and committing offences under the money laundering regulations

- **Mutual Exchange** – providing false and misleading information

If you would like to report a fraud

please contact **0300123 4033**

or visit **[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/reportfraud](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/reportfraud)**

 Stevenage Borough Council  
Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
Hertfordshire  
SG1 1HN

 Email [csc@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:csc@stevenage.gov.uk)

 Telephone 01438 242242  
Out of hours 01438 314963

 @StevenageBC

 @stevenageboroughcouncil

# Tenancy Agreement for Secure and Introductory Tenants

Tenancy start date

Tenancy number

Date tenancy could become secure

Subject to terms and conditions

## This is a Tenancy Agreement between The Stevenage Bough Council of Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 1HN and:

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

Name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

Name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

## Other people occupying the home

Title

Name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

Name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

Name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

Name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

## Property details

Property address

Description

Floor level

Maximum occupancy

Number of bedrooms

Store number and address (if applicable)

The following fittings are your responsibility

## Rent and service charges

The total rent you must pay each week at the start of the tenancy is

£

Plus a weekly service charge of

£

Total charge you must pay each week is

£

## Who should we contact in an emergency?

Title

Name

Surname

Property address

Home phone

Mobile phone

Work phone

Email address

Relationship to you

## Declaration

The information I/we gave in our housing application is true and our circumstances have not changed since then. I/we know that I may be liable to prosecution and/or possession proceedings if I have knowingly or recklessly given information that is false or if I/we have withheld information that the Council needs to ensure proper allocation of its homes.

I/we have read and understood the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenancy Conditions and I/w agree to comply with them.

I/we agree that the information in this agreement and on my/our tenancy file (which may be updated from time to time) may be disclosed to other parts of the Council and agents of it, for housing management purposes.

This agreement includes and is subject to tenancy conditions that are contact in the attached separate document. I/we declare that I/we have read or had the tenancy conditions explained to me/us before I/we signed this document.

Title

Name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 1)

Date

Title

Name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 1)

Date

## Office use only

Signature of authorised officer

Name/Designation in CAPITALS

Date

Dear <<fullname>>

**PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF VARIATION TO THE TENANCY AGREEMENT  
(HOUSING ACT 1985- SECTION 103)  
(This is not a notice of a change in your rent, or a notice of eviction)**

**THIS NOTICE ONLY APPLIES TO YOU IF YOU ARE AN INTRODUCTORY OR A SECURE  
TENANT.**

Stevenage Borough Council is planning to make some changes to the Tenancy Agreement for Introductory and Secure tenants. The Tenancy Agreement is the document which sets out the terms of your tenancy.

Some of the reasons we would like to make changes to the tenancy agreement include:

- To reflect changes in the law
- To strengthen our approach to Anti Social behaviour
- To clarify the rights and responsibilities of the tenant and the landlord (Stevenage Borough Council).

Before we can make any changes to the Tenancy Agreement, we must send you this notice called a Preliminary Notice which tells you what changes we intend to make, and how they will affect you. We invite you to comment on these proposed changes. You should send any comments in the pre-paid envelope enclosed. Alternately you may e-mail your comments to **TenancyContractConsultation@stevenage.gov.uk**. We will consider any comments you make as long as we receive them by 25 October 2019.

Changes will only be introduced once all comments have been considered. We will then serve you with a Notice of Variation which will give you details of the finalised changes and the date when they will come into effect. We will also send you a copy of the new tenancy agreement for your information.

You will have been provided with a tenancy agreement when you received the keys to your home. Please refer to your agreement to compare the changes that are proposed. You can also view a copy of the agreement on the Stevenage Borough Council website [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk).

If you are not happy with the changes at that stage, you have the right to end your tenancy by giving four weeks' written notice to quit.

A summary of the changes are as follows:

## How long we keep your information

You can update this yourself in your online customer account

## Glossary

**Our** – Stevenage Borough Council

**Overcrowding** – This is defined by Statute. Please see sections 324-328 and 330-331 of the Housing Act 1985.

**Us** – Stevenage Borough Council

**We** – Stevenage Borough Council

# 1 Your tenancy

## Introductory Tenancies (New Tenants)

You will be an 'introductory tenant' unless you are transferring from a secure tenancy or an assured tenancy with a registered social landlord (but not an assured shorthold tenancy).

An introductory tenancy is usually for a probationary period of 12 months. During this time we'll monitor your tenancy and a member of the housing team will visit you at home between 4 and 6 weeks after your tenancy has started and then again after 8 months.

As an introductory tenant you:

- have fewer legal rights than you do as a secure tenant.
- can be evicted much more quickly and easily than a secure tenant.
- are not permitted to carry out any alterations to your home.

If you successfully complete the probationary period your introductory tenancy will convert to a secure tenancy if:

- there have been no breaches in your agreement
- we have not taken any action that could lead to us extending the trial period or having to take possession of your home.

The secure tenancy will start on the date shown on the front of this agreement. You won't need to sign a new agreement.

If you don't stick to the terms of your tenancy during the probationary period we may extend it by a further six months, or end your tenancy. We will:

- tell you of our intention and reasons for this.
- give you the right to ask for a review before we extend it.

People who don't have the right to succeed to a tenancy will not become introductory or secure tenants even if they continue to live in the property following the death of the current introductory or secure tenant(s).

## **Secure Tenancies**

A secure tenancy means that you can keep your home for as long as you want, unless there is a legal reason for us to repossess your home. These legal reasons are called 'Grounds for Possession' and are set out in legislation. For us to gain possession of your home or to make you move to another property, a County Court must agree with our request except in cases where a property is abandoned.

Your tenancy agreement with us will be a secure tenancy if you are:

- already a secure tenant and you are moving to another property owned by us.
- an assured tenant of a registered social landlord, such as a housing association, and you are transferring to one of our properties.

## **Demoted tenancies**

The Council can apply to the County Court for a Demotion Order under the Housing Act 1985 as amended by Grounds 2a and 2b of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. A Demotion Order may be granted if the court is satisfied that the person who is the secure tenant, or any person who lives in or visits the home, takes part in anti-social behaviour, or threatens to do so or has used your home for an unlawful purpose. If a Demotion Order is granted you will have a Demoted Tenancy and you will no longer be a Secure Tenant.

## **Additional conditions**

Some additional conditions may apply to particular properties, or types of properties, from time to time. This includes housing for older people, tower blocks, flats and new build schemes. These will form part of your tenancy agreement. If you are offered a property where such conditions apply you will be informed of these additional conditions before you sign your tenancy agreement. By signing a tenancy agreement you also agree to comply with these additional conditions and you acknowledge that they have been drawn to your attention.

You may not be housed in the future if you:

- are evicted
- abandon your home
- continue to owe money for housing related charges or any other payment due under this agreement when you move out.

## **Your rights and responsibilities**

- to be consulted about important changes in our housing service. We will ask for your views about any changes to this agreement or any of our housing plans if they substantially affect you, such as modernisation or improvement work that is planned for your home or your area. If changes are approved you will be told in writing and be given a least 28 days' notice. Separate rules apply to changes in your rent which are explained in the section on 'Rent'.

## **Compliments and complaints**

- 1.5 We are always trying to improve the services we provide so please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve them.

- 1.6 If you are not satisfied about a service provided by us or a response that you received from an enquiry, you may feel that you wish to make a complaint. A complaint is when:
- we have failed to do something we should have done
  - we have done something badly or in the wrong way
  - you feel that you have been treated unfairly or discourteously.

We operate a formal complaints procedure and further details are available on our website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints/](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints/)

### **Your commitments to us**

- 1.7 You must look after your home and:

- if there are any changes to your name, provide us with acceptable proof such as a marriage certificate or statutory declaration.

- 1.8 You must not:

- keep or store (even temporarily) mopeds, motorbikes, mobility scooters or electric wheelchairs outside your home, within 3 meters of the building or in any communal areas such as:
  - stairs or lifts
  - landings or walkways
  - entrance halls
  - drying areas
  - bin stores
  - paved areas
  - shared gardens

- 1.9 We want our communities to be great places to live and for you and other residents to feel safe. To achieve this, you or any person living with you or visiting your home/communal areas (such as stairs, lifts, landings, walkways, entrance halls, drying areas, bin stores, paved areas or shared gardens) must not:

- harass, threaten, use language that causes offence, verbally abuse or assault other people or any member of staff employed by us, our agents or contractors. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - using or threatening to use violence
  - using abusive or insulting words
  - damaging or threatening to damage another person's home or possessions
  - causing damage to another person's property by writing any graffiti
  - engaging in public disorder
  - doing anything that interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of other people
  - displaying any sign, writing or other visible representation of a threatening, abusive or offensive nature
  - malicious vandalism.
- allow any illegal activity such as:
  - use, possess, manufacture, cultivate or sell illegal substances or drugs
  - create drug-related litter (including needles)
  - store stolen goods
  - burglary or theft from any premises
  - theft of any vehicle or property

- install aerials or allow aerial access points for purposes associated with pirate radio.
- create noise such as:
  - loud music or high television volume
  - shouting or arguing
  - banging doors
  - allowing burglar alarms to be activated without a means for them to be turned off in your absence.
- undertake vehicle repairs in a manner that causes:
  - a nuisance to your neighbours
  - the creation of noise and debris
  - excessive revving of engines.
- park an illegal or unroadworthy vehicle on the land around your home or on roads within the locality of your home.
- do excessive DIY work or do it at unsociable hours.
- make false or malicious complaints about the behaviour of any other person.
- allow dogs to regularly bark, foul or cause annoyance to others in the neighbourhood.
- drop or throw any items from multi-storey blocks of flats, maisonettes or any other property.
- interfere with security or safety equipment in multi-storey flats or communal blocks of flats or maisonettes or Independent Living scheme.
- dump or fly-tip rubbish.
- allow your home to be used to store scrap, scrap metal, vehicles or tyres.
- as commercial storage.

If we are made aware of any of the above we may:

- restrict your access to our staff, contractors or offices
- start legal proceedings against you including possession of your home.

1.12 You will be asked to repay in full any costs or liabilities incurred by us resulting from your breach or failure to perform any part of this agreement.

Examples of things that we may charge for include:

- putting right any work to your home that you have carried out without first having sought written permission from us.
- putting right damage caused by you for not complying with your repairing duties including your failure to maintain your own equipment.
- changing the locks of your home and otherwise securing it if it is abandoned by you.
- your misuse of the emergency repair service for non-emergency repairs.
- the repair or replacement of any safety or security equipment at blocks of flats or Independent Living schemes which you, any person living with you or anyone visiting your home have damaged.
- clearing up or undertaking repairs required if you, any person living with you or anyone visiting your home damages our property.

- misuse of emergency alarm equipment.
- replacing missing or broken keys.
- tree and garden works and garden clearance.
- calling at your home for a pre-arranged appointment and you (or someone authorised to act for you) are not there.

## **Other people in your home**

1.13 If you want someone to become part of your household, who was not part of it when you moved in, you must get our written permission. For example children born since the start of the tenancy you must provide us with copies of their birth certificates.

1.14 We will not give permission if the additional person you want to become part of your household:

- would cause overcrowding in contravention of sections 324-328 and 330-331 of the Housing Act 1985
- is likely to cause a nuisance.

1.15 If you are a tenant living in specialist accommodation including an Independent Living property you must not sub-let your home or allow other people to live with you without the prior written permission of the landlord. Permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances for a specific duration of time. For example, family members or friends may be permitted to stay for a temporary period.

## **Making improvements to your property**

1.20 We will charge you for all costs incurred including the current administration charge for:

- repairing and/or maintaining any of your improvements.
- inspection of works carried out in your property
- for retrospective permission if you carry out works to your property without prior permission

## **Passing on your tenancy**

1.29 If you die, a secure tenancy can be passed on once to your:

- husband
- wife
- partner
- civil partner.

This is called a statutory succession under the terms of the Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and can only happen once.

They must have been living continuously in the property, using the property as their only and main home unless they have notified the landlord in writing of a reason prior to the

death otherwise they will lose that right to succeed (for example a relationship breakdown).

1.32 Our Succession Policy is in line with current legislation including the Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 which explains the qualifying circumstances when a non-statutory succession will be considered.

1.33 If you die while you are:

- an introductory tenant, any person who takes over your tenancy will also be an introductory tenant. They will only become a secure tenant if they fulfil all the terms and conditions of the introductory tenancy
- as a secure tenant, the person who takes over your tenancy will be a secure tenant immediately.

If the property is not suitable we may give them another council home more suitable to their needs. We also have the right to ask for possession if the home has special features adapted for a person with disabilities or the home is one of a group of properties held for persons with special needs.

1.34 If you are a secure tenant you have the right to pass on your tenancy to another person – this is called an assignment. You are only entitled to assign your tenancy to someone who would have the right to take over your tenancy if you died (right of succession). This can only happen if no succession has already taken place.

- We may apply to the court for possession of your home if you assign your home to someone else without our consent as your landlord or you assign your home with consent, but to someone who is later found to be ineligible for a tenancy.

## **Ending your tenancy**

1.38 If you want to bring your tenancy to an end you must complete a 'Termination of Tenancy' form. If you would like us to help you complete it, let us know. Alternatively you can write to us.

1.39 The termination form or letter must:

- give 4 weeks' notice which must be received by the Monday 4 weeks before the last Sunday of the tenancy
- include your unique tenancy reference number
- make sure that the letter is signed by person/persons on the tenancy agreement
- provide a forwarding address and contact details

1.41 Please note that if you do bring this tenancy to an end:

- we do not have to offer you alternative accommodation.

## **Leaving your home**

1.46 You must leave the property in a clean and tidy condition and in accordance with our leaving standards and conditions set out in the Leaving Standard (hyperlink available in the online version). This means that:

- we will hold you responsible for any damage to the structure of the building or to fixtures and fittings that is not caused by fair wear and tear.
- if any repairs are required to the property or fixtures and fittings that are not caused by fair wear and tear you must undertake any repair work requested. If you do not we will arrange to have it done and we will charge you for all costs incurred including the current administration charge.

1.48 If you remove or damage any fittings including any alterations we may hold you responsible for:

- any costs incurred by us for the damage to these alterations and the cost of reinstalling them including current administration charge.
- any rental loss while carrying out the works required.

## **Flexicare schemes**

1.51 These are Independent Living homes with the additional care services on site.

If the person who was assessed for the Flexicare service leaves the accommodation (1 or 2 bedroom property) on a permanent basis we will work with the remaining person to see what their housing needs are.

## **If we have to repossess your home**

1.56 This may result in you losing your right to live in your home and we will not be under any duty to offer you alternative accommodation if a court grants us a possession order.

1.57 The grounds as to why we may repossess your home are defined by law.

Please see Appendix 2 for a full list of the grounds which are subject to legislative changes that may introduce additions or amendments to the existing grounds.

1.58 We can also apply to a court to repossess the property if we need to move you and anyone living with you out of your property for a special reason relating to the building itself. Examples of such reasons are:

- We are planning soon to demolish or rebuild the property or to carry out work which we cannot do unless the property is empty.
- The property is specially adapted for a physically disabled person, or is part of a group used for persons with special needs, there is no longer such a person living there, and we require the Property for such a person.
- The property has become unsafe for some reason and we need to move you for your own safety.
- You are only living in the property because we are doing work to your home, and your home is now ready for you to move back into.

1.59 If we need you to move out of your property for such reasons, we will offer you a suitable property to move to.

1.60 If we want to repossess your home we have to end your tenancy by first serving you one of the following documents:

- 'Notice of Intention to Terminate'
- 'Notice of Seeking Possession'
- 'Notice of Intention to demote your Tenancy'
- 'Notice to Quit'

The document explains the reason we are ending your tenancy. You have the right to request a review of these reasons.

1.61 After serving any of the documents in 1.60, and if we have not been able to resolve the issues at hand, we can apply to a court where a judge will decide whether we have a good enough reason:

- to change your secure tenancy to one with fewer rights – called demoting your tenancy.
- for a Possession order where you don't give up your home voluntarily.

## **Running a business from your home**

1.65 If you run a business from your home without our written permission and there are complaints about your activities, we may apply to court for possession of your home.

## **Smoking**

1.66 You, any person living with you, or anyone visiting your home are not allowed to smoke, vape or use electronic cigarettes in any of the enclosed or substantially enclosed communal areas to blocks of flats or Independent Living accommodation.

1.67 To help us undertake our obligations as set out in this agreement you are required to provide us with a smoke free environment when a member of our staff, our agents or contractors are due to attend or are in attendance.

1.68 You must ensure that you, anyone living with you or anyone visiting your home do not smoke, vape or use electronic cigarettes for a sufficient amount of time to ensure that any enclosed or substantially enclosed part of your home or communal part is smoke free prior to an arranged appointment.

1.69 Failure to comply with these obligations could result in us taking action against you under the Public Health Act 2006.

## **2 Paying your rent and other charges**

2.4 You are required to pay your rent and any other charges on time or in advance so that your account is fully paid up or in credit at the end of each week. You can choose to pay:

- weekly
- fortnightly
- monthly

2.5 Your first payment is due when you receive your keys at the letting appointment.

2.6 We will send you a rent statement at least once a year.

You can see the current balance of your rent account online by logging into your account at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/pay)

2.7 If you started your tenancy on any day other than a Monday, your first rent payment will be due from that day. It will be worked out as a proportion based on the number of days to the next Monday.

2.10 If any money is payable to you by us as compensation for damage to your property, home loss and or disturbance, we reserve the right to pay some or all of that money into your rent account if you are in arrears for your rent account or for any housing related debt.

### **Help with paying rent and other charges**

2.13 If you cannot pay your rent you should:

- See if you can get assistance in paying your rent through Universal Credit or Housing Benefits.

2.14 If you think you are entitled to financial assistance to pay your rent it is your responsibility to make a claim.

You must make sure that you provide all the information requested to process your claim and if your circumstances change, you are required to tell the Department of Works and Pensions immediately. There may be financial penalties if you don't.

2.15 You can only get direct payments for the care support element if you've been assessed by Social Services as needing care and support services and only the following people are eligible:

- disabled people aged 16 or over (with short or long-term needs)
- disabled parents for children's services
- carers aged 16 or over (including people with parental responsibility for a disabled child)
- older people who need community care services.

### **Charging for additional services**

2.20 There will be some communal service charges for Independent Living Schemes that are included in the rent and are payable whether or not you use the service.

## **3 Repairs, improvements and major works**

We aim to keep our properties and neighbourhoods in a good state of repair and provide an excellent service.

You can find lots of information about repairs and maintenance as well as report a repair online on our website at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs)

## **Our responsibilities**

### 3.4 We will:

- carry out scheduled cleaning and take reasonable care to maintain in good order the communal areas (including the stairs, lifts, fire doors, lighting and the rubbish chute) in blocks of flats and Independent Living schemes.
- make sure that while repair work is being done that any disturbance is kept to a minimum.

## **Your responsibilities**

### 3.5 Your responsibilities include (The list below is not exhaustive):

- carrying out minor repairs, maintaining and keeping your home secure.
- changing light bulbs.
- replacing toilet seats.

### 3.7 If you do not keep your home in a safe, secure, clean and habitable condition including adequate ventilation or in good repair we may apply to court for possession of your home.

## **Telling us when a repair is needed**

### 3.9 You must report to us immediately any disrepair or damage, including criminal damage, to your home or any other property belonging to us caused by:

- your own fault or neglect
- the fault of any person living with you or visiting your home

If necessary, we will arrange an appointment with you to assess what needs to be done.

### 3.10 If the repair is required as a result of criminal damage you should report this repair to the police and get a crime reference number.

### 3.11 You must arrange, and if necessary pay for, the repair or replacement of any part of the property that is damaged deliberately, carelessly or neglectfully by you, any member of your household, visitor or animal. If, for reasons of safety or security, we have to do the repair, we will charge you the full cost of the work.

If the disrepair or damage is your responsibility we will give you the opportunity to put it right within a reasonable time. If we carry out the repairs to put it right you will be liable for the full costs incurred including administration fees.

If the work is not required under health and safety grounds you may be required to pay the full amount in advance of the work being carried out.

We may also apply to court for possession of your home.

### 3.12 If disrepair or damage is our responsibility we will discuss with you the nature of the repairs that need to be carried out. If necessary, we may have to:

- temporarily cut off services

- temporarily stop all rights of access to the property
- permanently divert rights of access (such as paths or water pipes) as long as it is no less beneficial to the property.

### **Laminate or hardwood flooring**

- 3.20 You must get written permission from us if you wish to install laminate or hardwood flooring to your home. You will be required to use noise insulating underlay.
- 3.21 We will not give you permission if the flooring is likely to cause a noise problem and if you have already installed flooring that is causing a noise problem you will have to remove it.
- 3.22 If your flooring needs to be taken up due to any repairs such as leaks or wiring faults, we will not be responsible for the condition or relaying of the flooring.

### **Allowing access**

Whenever possible, we will give you at least 24 hours' notice for you to allow our officers, agents, appointed contractor or utility service representatives to come into the property at reasonable times. They will show you an official identification card.

- 3.26 You may need to allow neighbours and anyone working for them to come into your home at reasonable times to allow work or services to their own property. They may need to come in to carry out:
- reasonable inspections
  - repairs
  - alterations
  - improvements

They must:

- give you at least 48 hours' written notice (except in an emergency).
- put right any damage caused.
- have our permission to do so.

### **Allowing access in an emergency**

If we have to force entry we will make sure your home is left secure but we may charge you for the costs of forcing our way in.

## **4 Maintaining a pleasant neighbourhood**

### **Common parts and areas**

- 4.2 You must keep the common areas outside your home and adjacent to the property clean, free from obstruction and tidy at all times. You will be charged including our current administration fee for:
- the cleaning of lifts and communal areas if fouled by you, your household, visitors or pets.

the clearing of:

- refuse deposited in the common parts (fly tipping).
- rubbish chutes blocked by inappropriate disposal of rubbish by you, any person living with you or visiting your home.

This is in line with the Clear Corridor policy ([hyperlink available in the online version](#)).

4.3 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must not:

- jam, prop open or leave open shared entrance doors.
- allow strangers to enter the block.

You will be charged for any damage caused by this including our current administration fee.

4.4 You are responsible for making sure that you, any person living with you or visiting your home must not damage, deface or put graffiti on our property.

You will be charged including our current administration fee for any repair or replacement for which you are responsible and we may take legal action against you.

## **Fire Safety**

4.5 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must not place door mats, carpets, rugs or any other items in the communal areas/hallways to the block.

Items may be removed without prior notice. You will be informed if we remove and store. Items can be retrieved at your cost, up until 10 days from removal date after which the Council will dispose of these items. The Council take no responsibility for damage to these items.

Any items deemed to be an immediate hazardous risk will be removed and disposed of immediately.

You will be charged the full cost of the removal including our current administration fee.

## **Parking**

4.9 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must not park a vehicle anywhere on your property except on a 'hard standing' (a driveway or paved area intended for parking).

You must get our written permission before installing a hard standing or driveway.

4.10 You must get our written permission to park caravans, motor homes or SORN vehicles on a driveway, hard standing or paved area around your home or any communal parking areas.

4.11 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must comply with any parking conditions issued by us and must not obstruct access to other properties, the highway, or park anywhere that would obstruct emergency services from accessing other properties or the highway.

## **Gardens, trees and fences**

4.12 You are responsible for maintaining the gardens, trees and front fences.

You must tell us if there is a good reason why you cannot look after these items.

4.13 You must make sure:

- your garden, trees, hedges and flowerbeds are tidy and not overgrown.
- that lawns are cut
- your garden is free of any hazardous material or rubbish
- your garden is in a safe, clean and hygienic condition.

If there are exceptional circumstances as to why you cannot do this, we may clear it and charge you for the work. This will include our current administration fee.

4.18 If you believe a tree may be dead, diseased or dangerous, or that the roots may be affecting underground services or property foundations, you must contact us or a specialist for advice on dealing with the problem.

If tree work needs to be carried out due to an immediate health and safety issue we will carry out the work without consultation and you will be charged the full cost of the work including our current administration fee.

## **Flammable gasses or liquids**

4.21 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must not keep or use:

- bottled gas
- paraffin
- petrol
- or any other dangerous material

This includes in your home or in communal areas such as:

- stairs
- lifts
- landings
- walkways
- entrance halls
- drying areas
- bin stores
- paved areas
- shared gardens
- parking areas
- individual gardens

## **Rubbish, pests and vermin**

4.22 You must only put rubbish in:

- bin bags or containers provided by us and they must not be overfilled.
- rubbish chutes where provided which must be kept clear at all times.

We may have to:

- clear your garden or home of rubbish.
- control or remove vermin or pests such as mice or wasps.

You may be charged for any costs we incur for investigating and taking action in relation to the above activities including our current administration fee.

## **Pets and other animals**

While we understand that you may want a pet, you must get written permission first. We need to consider the impact it could have on your property and neighbours. It will not be unreasonably withheld, delayed or withdrawn by us. We reserve the right to withdraw our permission.

You will be required to sign a pet permission agreement.

We will give special consideration for guide, hearing, and support dogs.

4.23 You, any person living with you or visiting your home are responsible for:

- keeping your pets, supervised, under control and cared for.
- making sure your pet doesn't roam unsupervised in any communal area, cause a nuisance or damage our property.

4.24 You, any person living with you or visiting your home must not:

- keep a dog at the property unless you have our written permission to do so.
- keep livestock or any animal which is wild, dangerous or poisonous as defined by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.
- allow any pet or animal you keep at the property to cause a nuisance to anyone in the local area, including our employees, agents or contractors.
- cause a nuisance by breeding any animals at the property.
- allow pets or animals to foul in the communal areas of the property, on footpaths or in play areas in the local area. You must remove and dispose of faeces hygienically.
- allow pets to cause damage to our property or harm to any person.
- feed pigeons, squirrels or other vermin either at the property or in communal areas.
- allow your property to become a nuisance or cause harm to others by failing to look after your pets or animals appropriately.

4.25 If any pet or animal living at or visiting your property causes a nuisance we will ask you to remove it from the property.

4.26 If you live in an area where there are dog byelaws you must keep to the rules of the scheme.

### **Protecting you from problems caused by others**

In relation to any anti-social behaviour which could result in imprisonment of the offender(s) if appropriate we may obtain a:

- civil injunction
- Community Protection Notice (CPN)
- Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) or
- ask the court for an order to repossess the home of any tenant if they, their occupants or visitors cause nuisance and annoyance or harassment, or engage in anti-social behaviour or criminal activity.

If you feel you are a victim of domestic abuse, or feel at risk, we can offer support and advice and will take firm action against anyone responsible. Further details are available on our website at

**[www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555)**

If you have been affected by domestic abuse, or believe that somebody you know is being abused, you can contact our Domestic Abuse service by calling them in confidence on **01438 242666** or via secure email **domesticabuse\_gcsx@stevenage.gov.uk**

### **Tenancy Fraud - protecting our housing stock and the public money**

4.30 This is to ensure that properties are allocated to those in need of housing and that this need continues from the start of the introductory tenancy until the person's tenancy ends.

Where appropriate we will fully investigate a person who provides false information, false documentation or withholds information as it is a criminal offence.

We may take repossession proceedings to recover the property and we may prosecute using the following legislation; Prevention Of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 s.1 and s.2.; The Fraud Act 2006 s1(2) and s.1(3) and the Housing Act 1996 s.171.

If found guilty you may be fined and receive a criminal record.

The types of fraud we investigate include:

- Subletting:- not using the property as your only and main principle home and allowing another person to use the whole of the property with or without financial gain
- Abandonment:- Parting with possession- no longer using the property as your main and principle home
- False housing applications:- providing false and misleading information to obtain a social housing property
- Succession:- providing false and misleading information to take over a tenancy for a social housing property

- Assignment:- providing false and misleading information to obtain a social housing property
- Right to buy:- providing false and misleading information to purchase a social housing property receiving discount and committing offences under the money laundering regulations
- Mutual Exchange:- providing false and misleading information

If you would like to report a fraud please contact 0300123 4033 or visit [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/reportfraud](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/reportfraud)

### **Terms**

If you have any comments or queries about any of these proposed changes, please let us have them by 25 October 2019.

Yours sincerely



Jaine Cresser  
Assistant Director, Housing & Investment

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Part I – Release to Press



**Meeting** Executive  
**Portfolio Area** Communities and Neighbourhoods  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

### KEY DECISION

#### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To support the Council to take forward its approach to Community Wealth Building (CWB) by developing an Inclusive Economy Charter. This Charter is in line with the CWB motion passed by Full Council on 29 January 2020.
- 1.2 To use the Charter to build upon the Council's existing good practice, and to address social, economic and environmental inequalities.
- 1.3 To set out a series of milestones for involving communities and other key stakeholders in CWB.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That an Inclusive Economy Charter is developed and launched by the end of June 2020, underpinned by an action plan. That this Charter includes a space for communities and stakeholders to pledge their support.
- 2.2 That the Council pilots a Community Balance Sheet in partnership with its Cooperative Neighbourhoods Programme. That this balance sheet is published alongside its annual statement of accounts.

- 2.3 That the Council agrees a set of metrics to measure the impact of CWB on day-to-day business, and that this process is supported by a cross-departmental working group.
- 2.4 That the Council facilitates a CWB Group to review progress and to validate findings of impact work. This group will support the Council to share best practice at a regional and national level.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 CWB approaches focus on how much money is held and reinvested in an area for the benefit of local communities. For the Council, this relates to how much business it does with local suppliers, and how it supports local people to connect to, and drive forward, a sustainable and inclusive economy.
- 3.2 The Council has been developing its approach to CWB over the last 6-9 months, which includes working in partnership with colleagues from the University of Hertfordshire.
- 3.3 This approach has identified four key foundations that underpin an inclusive economy. These are procurement and social value, training and skills, cooperative and social economy growth, and tackling climate change.
- 3.4 A motion in favour of CWB and developing an Inclusive Economy Charter was passed by Full Council on 29 January 2020.
- 3.5 The Council is well placed for moving forward with CWB, having continued to invest in some of the essential infrastructure. This includes provision of community development work and partnership work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- 3.6 This engagement includes establishing a sector-based leadership group comprising providers and funders linked to the VCSE sector.
- 3.7 On engaging with major developers, e.g. those involved in town centre regeneration, the Council has a proven mechanism in place (Stevenage Works). This already involves two other key anchor institutions, the DWP and North Herts College.
- 3.8 Stevenage Works provides a framework for supporting large contractors to work with local communities, which includes connecting local people to training, work placement and job opportunities.
- 3.9 The roll out of the Council's Cooperative Neighbourhood Programme provides opportunities to embed CWB from the outset. This provides the infrastructure needed to involve communities in CWB.
- 3.10 Furthermore, the Cooperative Neighbourhood Programme provides the strategic framework needed to support cooperative and social economy growth, should external resources become available.
- 3.11 Similar to the roll out of the Cooperative Neighbourhood Programme, the Council's work on tackling climate change is timely, with strong links between climate and economic sustainability.

- 3.12 On sharing its practice, the Council is developing a policy statement on CWB for Herts Growth Board, along with a business case for external resources.
- 3.13 This business case is in the early stages; however, it enables the Council to consider how it can increase the speed and scale of its CWB work.
- 3.14 The interest and support provided to the Council by the University of Hertfordshire shows the potential for engaging other anchor institutions, alongside those already involved through Stevenage Works.
- 3.15 The interest in CWB nationally is increasing, and Stevenage can draw upon the more established work of areas such as Preston, Plymouth, and Bristol, whilst ensuring that CWB is applied in a Stevenage context.
- 3.16 The recommendations on Community Balance Sheets (2.2) and establishing a group to validate impact work (2.4) ensures that Stevenage is adding to the regional and national debate, helping to set the pace for taking CWB forward at a district-level.

#### **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1 On developing and launching an Inclusive Economy Charter (2.1), this takes forward the motion passed by Full Council on 29 January 2020. Launching this by 30 June provides time to engage stakeholders in design and development. Going beyond this timescale would risk losing momentum and / or the opportunities to make a case for external resources.
- 4.2 On piloting a Community Balance Sheet (2.2), this enables the Council to test CWB at a community-level, which in turn will increase engagement from key stakeholders. Linking this to the Cooperative Neighbourhood Programme supports alignment to community development work. Publishing community balance sheets alongside the Council's annual statement of accounts demonstrates the Council's commitment to CWB and supports a wider understanding of how the Council works to achieve Value for Money.
- 4.3 On agreeing metrics for measuring progress (2.3), these will support the Council to identify the extent to which CWB is becoming embedded in day-to-day work. They will also help to highlight those areas that require the engagement of external partners. Regular meetings of a cross departmental working group will ensure join-up, and consistent messaging to stakeholders.
- 4.4 On setting up a CWB group (2.4), this will support the Council to validate its work on developing tools to measure CWB, including Community Balance Sheets. Inviting specialist onto this group will ensure that Stevenage has a voice when it comes to shaping the CWB agenda both regionally and nationally. This includes providing evidence to inform the development of emerging funding programmes, e.g. replacement funds for EU programmes.
- 4.5 To support these recommendations, the Council has developed an integrated model of delivery, showing the potential for running a series of pilots relating to the four foundations of CWB. The extent to which this model can be adopted will depend upon the success or otherwise of leveraging external

funds, although there are options to undertake smaller scale work in the interim, e.g. a pilot Community Balance Sheet.

- 4.6 In addition, the Council has developed an Inclusive Economy Wheel, which shows the relationship between the four foundations of CWB and higher-level impacts. As per 4.5, the activities in the outer ring of this model are dependent upon the availability of external resources in the medium term, however, the wheel provides a helpful tool to engage stakeholders, and potential funders, over the next 12 months.
- 4.7 Both the integrated model of delivery (4.5) and Inclusive Economy Wheel (4.6) are included in the appendices of this report.
- 4.8 A Portfolio Holders Advisory Group was held on 27 February 2020. This confirmed support for the CWB approach. A summary of the main discussion points are shown in 4.9 and 4.10. These will be included as part of the action plan.
- 4.9 The main discussion points included exploring the role of the health service in CWB, rethinking procurement, engaging local businesses in contract readiness, promoting local spend, developing community balance sheets, and developing partnerships with the VCSE. The
- 4.10 On alignment with other areas, the Portfolio Holders Advisory Group identified links to existing work with VCSE in culture and sport, and the Council's digitalisation and commercialisation strategies.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 In order to take forward its current CWB work, the council has invested staffing resource alongside the in-kind support provided by the University of Hertfordshire.
- 5.2 Looking ahead, the recommendations made in this paper have been set in order that they can be achieved using a similar level of resource.
- 5.3 Any significant scale-up of the CWB approach, e.g. as per breadth of activities contained in diagrams (4.5 and 4.6) will require additional resources.
- 5.4 These resources will need to be levered through business cases or other applications made to external investors.
- 5.5 The proposed CWB Group will support the Council to keep up-to-date on potential funding programmes and / or research opportunities.
- 5.6 Where small scale work is carried out, e.g. in partnership with community development workers, risk assessments should be made to ensure this doesn't impact on the ability of officers to carry out their existing duties.

### **Legal Implications**

- 5.7 There are no direct legal considerations, however indirectly CWB might impact on current strategies, e.g. procurement. The procurement manager is

engaged. Legal will need to be engaged where applications are made for funding, and where agreements need sign off and / or delivery partners need to be procured.

### **Risk Implications**

- 5.8 Where external funds are applied for, or received, a full risk register will need to be produced including provisions made for the council to manage the funds, and to assess proportionality of funds against outputs and results.
- 5.9 Where small scale pilot activities take place, a local risk register should be produced in partnership with relevant services, e.g. community development, in order to ensure there are no negative impacts on capacity to deliver existing services.
- 5.10 Where this pilot work includes engagement with external stakeholders, a risk register should take into account how the Council maintains a leadership role in order to ensure join-up.

### **Policy Implications**

- 5.11 Where CWB is considered a cross cutting theme, there are potential implications on a number of policies. These include procurement, and the review of this strategy will be supported by involving the Procurement Manager in the CWB Working Group.
- 5.12 Join-up across policy development is further supported by inviting the Corporate Policy and Research Officer onto the Working Group.

### **Planning Implications**

- 5.13 There are no immediate planning implications, although planning and CWB are linked areas of work, and the Council may wish to further explore this relationship in due course.

### **Environmental Implications**

- 5.14 There are no immediate implications, although pilot work will support CWB to understand the need for connectivity between specific localities and place.

### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.15 Climate change is included as one of the key foundations of CWB. Therefore, impacts are expected to be positive. Cross referencing to emerging climate change strategy will be facilitated by the Working Group.

### **Staffing and Accommodation Implications**

- 5.16 No direct implications although risk registers will ensure that pilot activities do not reduce capacity to undertake day-to-day work. HR have been invited onto the working group and there are links to the workforce development agenda.

### **Human Resources Implications**

- 5.17 As per 5.16.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.18 These will be monitored where any pilot work is undertaken and are expected to be positive. For example, a key reason for supporting cooperative and social economy growth is to reduce inequalities by supporting job creation for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

### **Service Delivery Implications**

- 5.19 Implications on current service delivery will be monitored. Any negative impacts will be considered in a local risk register, to reduce likelihood of CWB impacting on capacity to deliver day-to-day services.

### **Community Safety Implications**

- 5.20 No direct implications at this stage. To be monitored in local risk registers.

### **Information Technology Implications**

- 5.21 No direct implications at this stage, although any review of digital services will need to consider CWB, e.g. this might include further development of procurement portals.

### **Safeguarding Children Implications**

- 5.22 No direct implications at this stage. To be monitored in local risk registers.

### **Other Corporate Implications**

- 5.23 Identifying links to other corporate work will be supported by the Working Group.

### **Other Implications**

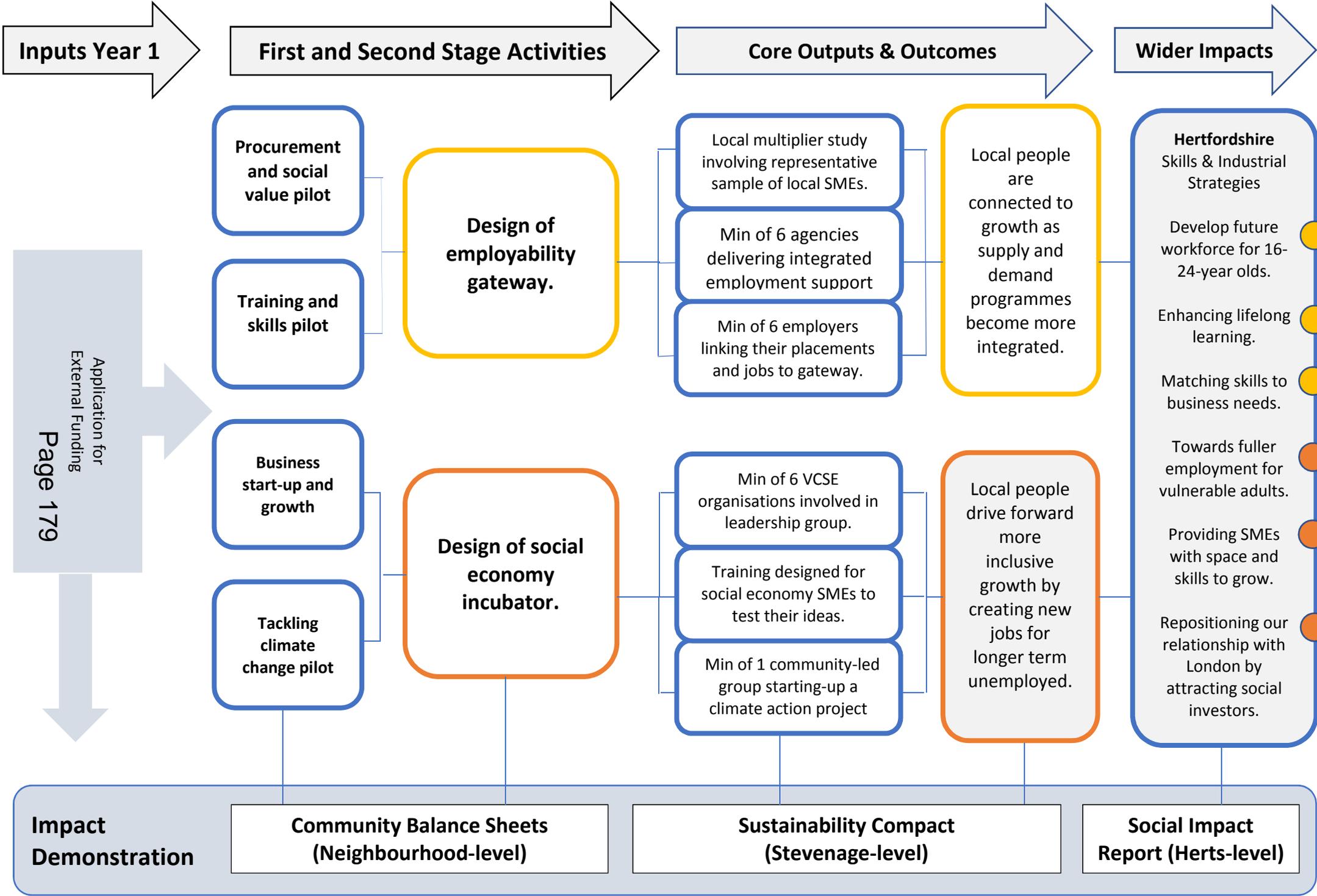
- 5.24 Approaches for engaging with external stakeholders and at the appropriate level will require coordination. This includes engagement with businesses. To support, Communications should be engaged.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **APPENDICES**

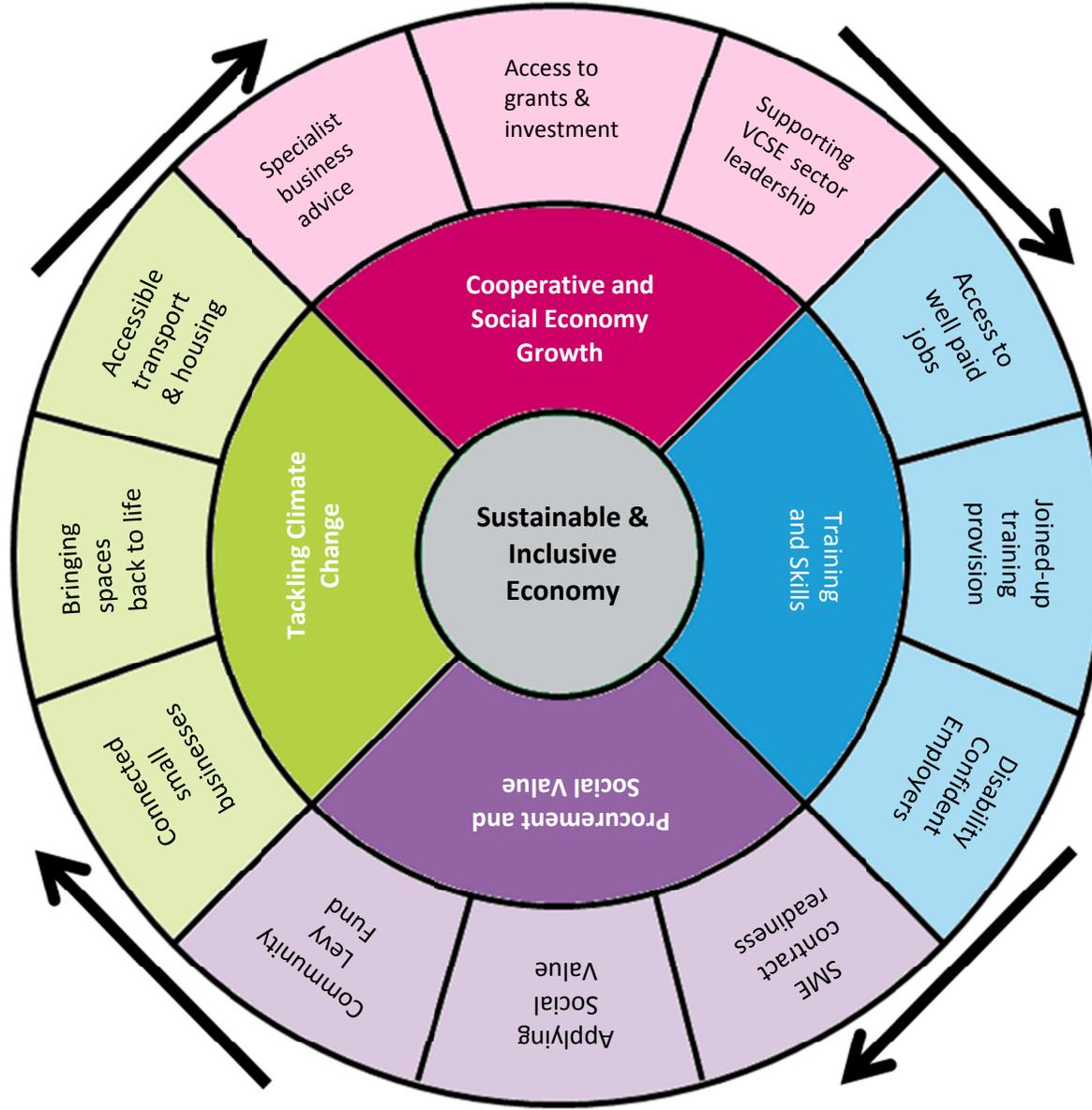
- A Flow diagram showing Integrated Model (reference Paragraph 4.5)  
B Diagram showing Inclusive Economy Wheel (reference Paragraph 4.6)



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VFM calculations apply the triple bottom line of social, economic and environmental costs.

More resilient economies, capable of withstanding external social, economic and environmental changes.



Supporting jobs growth for people who struggle to compete in the mainstream labour market.

Reduced inequalities as people have more access to better paid jobs with training.

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**Meeting** Executive  
**Portfolio Area** All  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER THREE 2019/20

### NON KEY DECISION

**Authors** Katrina Shirley/Chloe Norton | 2018/2501  
**Contributor** Charlie Smith, Assistant Directors | 2457  
**Lead Officer** Matt Partridge | 2456  
**Contact Officer** Richard Protheroe | 2938

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To highlight the Council's performance across key priorities and themes for quarter three 2019/20.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the delivery of priorities which form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across the key themes for quarter three 2019/20, together with the latest achievements, be noted.
- 2.2 That the suite of strategies included in the scope of the new Place of Choice programme, as set out in paragraph 3.4, be agreed, and that the progress being made in identifying associated actions to be tracked for 2020/21 be noted.

- 2.3 That actions to commence implementation of the Corporate Landlord Review, and to ensure the prompt certification of health and safety compliance of non-domestic/non-commercial council buildings in accordance with the compliance contract, are noted and endorsed (para 3.124 and 3.125).
- 2.4 That further improvement plans for the Customer Service Centre are noted and endorsed (para 3.119 to 3.123).
- 2.5 That ongoing implementation of improved practices to support sickness absence management is endorsed (para 3.110 to 3.112).
- 2.6 That issues with the delay in inspections to council garages are recognised and plans to improve garages lettings are noted (para 3.93 to 3.95).
- 2.7 That improvement plans for the collection of rent are endorsed (para 3.72 to 3.73).

**3 BACKGROUND**

**Future Town Future Council Programme**

3.1 Members approved the Cooperative Corporate Plan in December 2016. It reflects the Council’s continuing focus on cooperative working and outlines the key outcomes and priorities for the town over the next five years through the Future Town, Future Council (FTFC) Programme as seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Future Town, Future Council Programme

3.2 The FTFC Programme was reviewed in March 2018 to ensure that it continued to reflect the Council’s priorities. As it was apparent that working in partnership is embedded in the culture of the Council and there is a strong framework for future collaboration with other public sector bodies, the Partner of Choice Programme was closed. Development of partnerships continues as part of day-to-day business and any new shared service proposals will be considered and implemented within the Financial Security Programme.

3.3 At the Executive meeting on 11th September 2019, Members requested that officers scope the ‘Place of Choice’ FTFC strand to incorporate the place based strategies that the Council has developed with partners.

3.4 It is proposed that the following existing and emerging strategies/plans are included in the scope of the programme, with associated outcomes as summarised below:

Strategy/Plan	Outcome	Lead Assistant Director
Stevenage Re-imagined 2018-22	Making Stevenage a destination creative town	AD Communities & Neighbourhoods
Healthy Stevenage Strategy 2018-22	Working to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of Stevenage residents	AD Communities & Neighbourhoods
Community Safety Strategy 2018-21	Building resilient communities, reducing crime and disorder and helping people to feel safe	AD Communities & Neighbourhoods
Community Wealth Building Strategy (in development)	Unlocking opportunities for the local economy and our residents, ensuring that future regeneration and growth in Stevenage works for everyone	AD Communities & Neighbourhoods
Climate Change Strategy (in development)	Achieving net zero Council emissions by 2030 and leading work to achieve this aim for the town, its businesses and residents	AD Planning & Regulation
Future Town Future Transport Strategy 2019-31	Establishing Stevenage as a leader in sustainable transport, with enhanced connections, healthy travel options, liveable streets and green transport options	AD Planning & Regulation
Biodiversity Action plan 2017-22	Enhancing Stevenage’s biodiversity by conserving, restoring, recreating and reconnecting wildlife habitats, whilst increasing awareness and appreciation of Stevenage’s wildlife	AD Stevenage Direct Services

3.5 Key priorities are well-established for the existing strategies and are in development for the emerging strategies. Work is now underway to draw out key actions from the constituent strategies to cover the period to the end of March 2021, progress against which will be reported to the FTFC Board and Executive on a quarterly basis through the normal FTFC reporting mechanisms. The scope of this strand will develop further over time as new priorities emerge i.e. a Stevenage focused Local Industrial Strategy.

**Customer, Place and Transformation and Support**

3.6 Council services are organised into nine Business Units across three themes: Customer, Place and Transformation and Support. This structure is focused on delivering the right services, to the right standards, at the right time for the town’s residents and businesses, using the most cost/resource effective delivery models.

3.7 In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these (Council Service) themes is monitored throughout the year to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement.

3.8 A complete set of performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme, and the customer, place, and transformation and support themes) is attached as Appendix 1. Summaries of performance measure result status are outlined at paragraph 3.10 (FTFC focus) and paragraph 3.55 (Corporate Focus).

**Future Town, Future Council Programme progress update**

3.9 The focus and scope of the FTFC programmes is outlined in Appendix 2. Delivery of the agreed outcomes is monitored to ensure that the Programme remains on track.

3.10 In addition to the monitoring of programme milestones, thirteen measures aligned to FTFC delivery were monitored and reported on for April to December 2019. The overview of FTFC focused results for April 2019 to December 2019 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
13	12	0	1

3.11 Programme delivery updates for the FTFC Programmes together with an outline of any focused activity being implemented to keep the programmes on track are set out in the following paragraphs.

**External Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes**

**Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Programme**

**Programme Outcomes**

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2021 and one to begin 2019/20

3.12 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Achieving vacant possession of Swingate House
- Advancing the SG1 scheme
- Progressing the bus interchange project in line with milestones
- Beginning works on the Town Square Public Realm and ‘North Block’ improvements

- Supporting the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) to ensure there are robust governance arrangements in place for the regeneration of Stevenage
- Launching the fresh marketing brand, 'Stevenage Even Better' and opening the visitor centre to celebrate and promote the regeneration of the town

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.13 A planning application was submitted in December for the SG1 development by Mace and has been validated. Communications will be led by Mace as the applicant; however internal communications packages have been produced for members and staff.
- 3.14 The project to consider how the Public Sector Hub project could be accelerated, and through doing so, speed up the delivery of other elements of the SG1 scheme is underway. A report is due to be presented to the Executive at its meeting in June 2020.
- 3.15 Construction work has begun on both the Town Square and North Block. Paving is being laid for the first phase in the Town Square and stripping of the building is currently in progress in the North Block. Weekly project meetings are being held with the contractor on site to monitor the delivery of both projects.
- 3.16 A report regarding the bidding opportunity to the Government's Town Fund bid was submitted to the Executive in December. The objective of the Fund is to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth through: regeneration, planning and land use; skills and enterprise infrastructure; and connectivity. This will enable the Towns Fund Board to put forward an Investment Plan which could realise up to £25m funding from within the £3.6bn Fund. The approach was agreed and work will continue to progress the bid.

### **Housing Development Programme**

#### **Programme Outcomes**

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage
  - Improved access to the housing market in Stevenage for a greater number of residents
- 3.17 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Completing and letting 54 new affordable homes across a number of schemes and 11 private sale homes
  - Starting work on a further 295 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes including sites at Shephall Way, North Road and Symonds Green

- Exploring the viability of other potential areas of development across the town including opportunities to work in partnership with other providers
- Continuing to work with partners to enable the delivery of affordable homes
- Forming a Wholly Owned Company to support the delivery of new homes

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.18 The open market acquisitions programme has been scaled up this financial year. The ambition is to purchase properties to be converted for those with additional accessibility requirements as there is a current lack of suitable stock, as well as being utilised for additional temporary accommodation. In this last quarter, a further nine open market acquisitions have been completed, bring the total currently for this financial year to thirty. The Housing Development team are working with colleagues from Legal Services to achieve completion on the pipeline of additional properties.
- 3.19 The Ferrier Road scheme handed over on 7th October 2019 and all affordable rented units have been let with residents moving in throughout October .This scheme delivered 14 units of affordable accommodation including 4 properties which have been let through a nominations agreement with Hertfordshire County Council for adults with additional care needs. The development also includes one private sale unit, the receipts from which will help to fund the other affordable accommodation in the town.
- 3.20 The Burwell Court and Ditchmore Lane developments are progressing well and are on target for anticipated handover in quarter 4.
- 3.21 The tender period for the Kenilworth Close scheme is now finished and evaluation has been completed. A report will be presented to January Executive to consider the appointment of the contractor. On site, the Community Centre has been demolished, and the disconnection of electrics at the site is also completed.
- 3.22 The schemes at North Road (21 Homes), Shephall Way (9 Homes) and Symonds Green (29 Homes) have all continued to progress this quarter. The contractor at the North Road site is carrying out further design work to produce building control drawings ready to start on site .The foundations have been completed and the flooring is beginning to be laid on the Shephall Way site. Also work has been done to extend the hoarding at the Symonds Green site and create a new footpath to ensure access to the park is maintained. All 3 schemes will take 12-18 months to complete.

## **Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Programme**

### **Programme Outcomes**

- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the Council, residents and partners, and help to give people pride in the place they live
- Residents feel that they can work with the Council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area
- The Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs
- Staff better understand the town's communities and so are more able to facilitate the change that is required

3.23 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Developing the Council's approach to co-operative neighbourhood management, working initially with Stevenage Direct Services, Housing and Investment and Communities and Neighbourhoods
- Continuing the planned roll-out of neighbourhood improvements, with consultation and engagement work starting in Bedwell and Longmeadow
- Completing the Community Centre Review
- Progressing the Garage Programme
- Reviewing and reshaping resident involvement activity in response to the Community Engagement Framework

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.24 Neighbourhood improvements in St Nicholas and Martins Wood identified through community engagement/ participatory budgeting activities were completed this quarter. A programme of works for projects is due to be completed by April 2020.
- 3.25 Planning is now underway for the roll out of CNM in Bedwell and Longmeadow. Community Development Officers have worked on an engagement plan for both wards which commenced in January. Activities also include regular ward patrols by Neighbourhood Wardens, attendance at residents groups and community events as well as bespoke engagement events as planned by the team.
- 3.26 A report was presented to the Executive in quarter three that considered stage two of the review of Council-owned community centres operating across Stevenage in order to form the basis of a proposed future operating model. Implementation work can now begin, in order to address the recommendations of the report through the Co-operative Compact Partnership work.
- 3.27 A high level scoping paper has been drafted to develop a Stevenage approach to Community Wealth Building. The University of Hertfordshire will support phase 1, which will include a desk-based analysis of Stevenage spend. This

was debated further at full Council in January and a report concerning this matter is on the agenda for today's Executive meeting.

- 3.28 Work has progressed on developing the model for future Neighbourhood Management. A report establishing the principles and direction of travel for the roll-out of Cooperative Neighbourhoods, including the prototype neighbourhood of St Nicholas and Martins Wood, was approved by the Executive in December.

## **Excellent Council Homes Programme**

### **Programme Outcome**

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers

- 3.29 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Delivery of a major refurbishment programme to our flat blocks (incorporating the MRC, lift replacements and retrofitting of sprinklers)
- Implementation of a new area-based co-operative neighbourhood management approach in conjunction with staff from Stevenage Direct Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods
- The launch of a new online account where customers will be able to access housing services 24/7
- Providing staff with the right business tools and software to enable them to work more effectively out in the community
- Completing the final phases of the Housing and Investment Future Council Business Unit Review
- Delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Initiative Strategy and Housing Older Persons Strategy

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.30 The major refurbishment programme (MRC) is a £55 million 5 year programme which commenced in 2019. The majority of year one works had been completed at the end of quarter three with handover by the contractors scheduled in January. Consultations events with leaseholders for the next phase will take place in quarter four.
- 3.31 Progress continues on a new area-based co-operative neighbourhood management approach with Communities & Neighbourhoods and Stevenage Direct Services. More details on progress can be seen in paragraph [3.28](#).
- 3.32 A presentation outlining progress and principles of the Housing Older People Strategy was presented to the Strategic Leadership Team in October which received positive feedback. The strategy is in development and will now be presented to the Executive during the next financial year.
- 3.33 The Sprinklers contract has been awarded this quarter and a pre-start meeting has been held with the successful contractor. Resident consultation will also take place and is planned for quarter four.

- 3.34 The lift refurbishment programme is on target for delivery, despite some early delays. A further 3 lifts have been renewed and are expected to be completed and in service in quarter four.
- 3.35 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Initiative Strategy was presented to and agreed by the Executive in quarter three. The strategy has now been published on the Council's website and distributed to all parties involved in its production. Additionally it has been shared on social media platforms, as well as an article published in the local press. Monitoring of the underpinning action plan will begin from April 2020.
- 3.36 The online Housing account is due to go live during quarter 4. This will enable housing and Investment customers to access our services 24/7. They will be able to view their rent, service charge and sundry accounts, make payments, set up direct debits, report repairs using a visual aid and bid for council homes. We will be encouraging our customers to make contact with us through this on line account complying with data protection regulations. The development of this account has been with a number of stakeholders including customers and Citizens Advice.
- 3.37 The final structure for the business unit review will be shared with staff in quarter 4, which will highlight the opportunities that are available. The structure has been designed to support the co-operative neighbourhood management model as well as responding to changes in government legislation in terms of welfare reform and building safety. The new structure will go live in quarter one.

## **Connected to our Customers Programme**

### **Programme Outcomes**

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help
  - Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services
  - Online customer data will be protected, better used to provide useful insight, and the technology reliable
  - The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
  - A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices
- 3.38 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:
- New website testing and launch
  - Finalising procurement of the digital platform and plans for implementation.
  - Phased implementation of digital platform capabilities starting with replacement CRM and quick wins for self-serve options
  - Customer and Business Account functionality placed into the new website, providing a single view of the customer and establishing a new centralised digital customer relationship

- Developing a service redesign approach that will optimise new technology and new ways of working
- Developing a Channel Shift Strategy which will clearly set out the Council's approach to optimising the take-up of the new digital services whilst ensuring access for everyone, so that no-one is left behind
- Implementation of the Environmental Services case management system; integration into the digital platform to enable self-serve
- Working with services to understand desired new ways of working and technology to support mobile, agile and area working.
- Planning for how the Council wants to work from the new Public Sector Hub

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.39 There have been changes to key staff, with the programme manager and sponsor both moving to new roles in other authorities in quarter three. Interim arrangements have been put in place, enabling the programme to proceed with minimum delays.
- 3.40 Progress with the new website has continued this quarter with more than 90% of new web pages completed. Public launch of the beta site has been delayed and discussions are taking place with the supplier to resolve these issues. A new launch date will be confirmed in due course.
- 3.41 Development of the new integrated digital solution, Firmstep, has progressed, and launch is anticipated in the CSC for quarter four, replacing the existing system. The new software will enable integrations between systems, to join up council service delivery and provide better customer facing online service channels
- 3.42 Firmstep will be integrated into Environmental Service's new management system, 'Bartec', which is anticipated to "go live" in March. This will remove administrative burden and speed up processes, by automating a number of tasks. It will also significantly improve the information available to Customer Services and online self-service when handling residential waste and recycling enquires.
- 3.43 The Council recognises there are significant engagement and communication requirements to move staff and customers towards online service delivery. These requirements have been scoped in order to develop a comprehensive engagement project plan and communications plan. These plans will include specific actions and interventions to ensure that non-digital provisions are enhanced for customers that are unable to readily access services online.
- 3.44 Work has commenced on describing a new customer offer for online, telephone and in-person interactions, as well as community neighbourhood working. These service delivery descriptions in the short, medium and longer term (as envisioned at the Public Sector Hub) will form the basis for a service plan for CSC to transition its resourcing and service delivery ambitions from current state to future state. This is being supported by a new Customer Promise.

**Internal Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes**

**Financial Security Programme**

**Programme Outcomes**

- To meet the Financial Security three year savings target
- To ensure that the General Fund expenditure equals income without the use of balances from 2022/23 onwards
- To ensure the Housing Revenue Account has sufficient funding to meet the capital needs of the Housing Asset Management Strategy and identified revenue needs
- To identify Financial Security options using the three revised workstreams (efficiency, commercial and improved processes), before recommending any service rationalisation options, as summarised below.

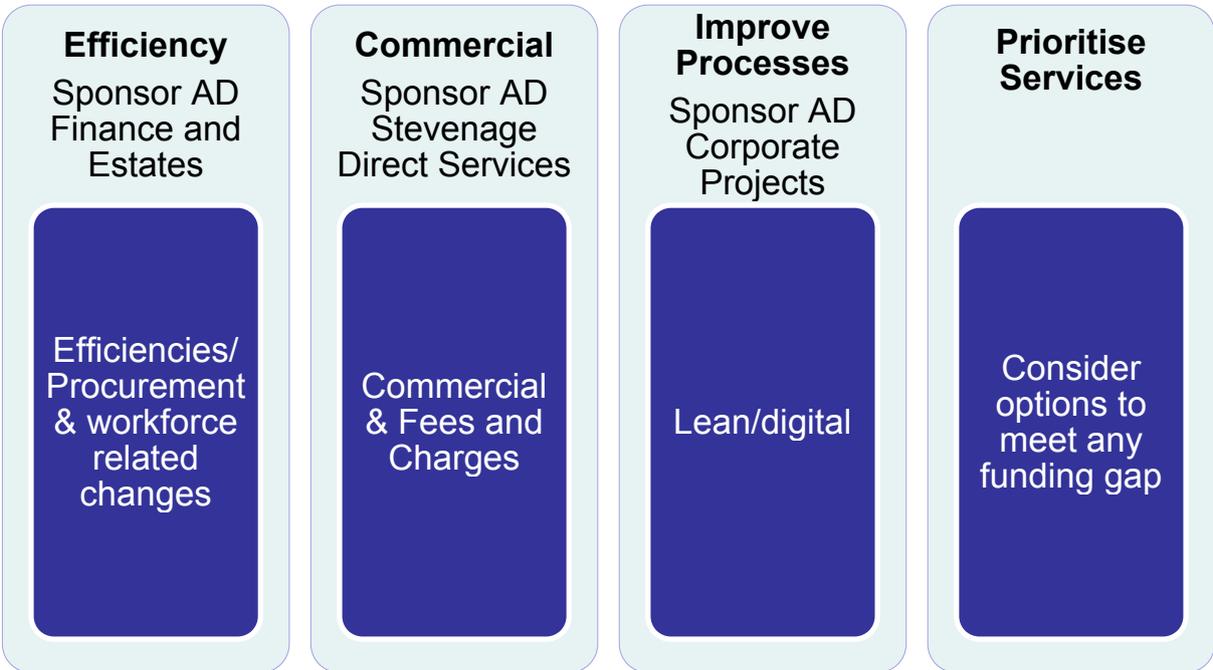


Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.

- 3.45 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Identifying Financial Security options that meet the three year target (£2.2 million General Fund and £1 million Housing Revenue Account) and as amended by the report to the September Executive for the General Fund MTFs and the November Executive for the HRA.
  - Identification of Financial Security options to meet the General Fund and HRA funding gap for the period 2020/21-2022/23 via the Financial Security workstreams
  - The financial security options should include the output from the review of leases for the Commercial Portfolio, to ensure they are reviewed in a timely manner to protect the Council’s revenues

- Purchase of Investment Properties to meet the General Fund target of £200,000
- Completion of Local Asset Reviews to meet the objectives of the General Fund Asset Management Strategy
- Review of fee-earning services to determine fee versus cost
- Identify options to improve productivity via use of digital interventions
- Review of budgets for cross-cutting reviews
- Presentation of Financial Security options to the Leader's Financial Security Group before approval by the Executive in November 2019

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.46 Preparations continued in quarter three to finalise the 2020/21 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund (GF) budgets. This included Financial security options to meet the Council's saving targets, updated fees and charges and Capital Strategy for the next three years.
- 3.47 Further discussions have taken place on the Council's commercial and insourcing strategy. A timeline for delivery will be progressed following the appointment of new AD (Stevenage Direct Services) and the Council's Commercial Manager.

### **Employer of Choice Programme**

#### **Programme Outcomes**

- Improved employee engagement
  - Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts
  - Improved managerial competency
  - Improved reputation as a place to work
  - Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles
- 3.48 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer, including development of the new e-recruitment module of the HR System
  - Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure
  - Enabling new ways of working to equip staff for the future including policies, practices and culture
  - Developing digital skills and tools to enable staff self-service.
  - Creating a new Learning and Development Strategy

#### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.49 The Council's Competency Framework for grades 1-9 was agreed and is now in place. Briefings are taking place with managers on how to use the framework. The Communications team are supporting an internal campaign, showcasing staff demonstrating values and behaviours in the Competency

Framework which commenced in December. Work is now underway to develop sets of interview questions to sit alongside the competency framework.

- 3.50 Work is underway on the Learning & Development (L&OD) Strategy based on identified learning needs analysis. A policy has been written and a map of L&OD is currently being developed. Discussions took place at a Senior Leader Team meeting in December and all ADs committed to developing learning plans for their business units in January 2020.

## **Performing at our Peak Programme**

### **Programme Outcomes**

- The provision of high quality performance management tools
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation

- 3.51 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Enhancing our business insight through data connectivity, and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for our customers
- Developing our insight culture through the effective engagement and use of our new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement
- Delivering a new scheme of delegations to officers in respect of Executive powers

### **Programme Delivery Update**

- 3.52 Work continues to improve the use of the performance management system, Inphase. The set-up of the risk management element of the system has been reviewed and enhancements have been made to make it more 'user friendly'. This will form the basis for a full roll-out of operational risk registers on the system, which had been piloted within Corporate Services and Stevenage Direct Services.
- 3.53 An Inphase upgrade was completed in December 2019, and moving forward this will enable further improvements to the usability of the system in quarter 4.
- 3.54 The annual review of performance measures is underway. The Corporate Performance and Improvement team is engaging with Assistant Directors and 4th tier managers to review their existing performance measures and to identify new operational measures, with a view to building them into the Council's performance suite during 2020/21.

## Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

3.55 Results for the full set of current corporate performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme and the Customer, Place and Transformation and Support themes) are attached as Appendix 1. The overview of corporate focused results for April 2019 to December 2019 is outlined below:

3.56

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)	Missing Data
42	35	1	5	1*

\* Data cannot be verified for Assets5b: Percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (as per SBC definition)

3.57 A summary of highlights and areas for improvement for April 2019 to December 2019 is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes: Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

### **A: Customer Theme**

3.58 The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

#### **Housing and Investment**

##### **Highlights and Achievements**

3.59 The Homelessness and Housing Options team made a successful bid for the Rough Sleeper Initiative for £177,500.

##### **Spotlight: Health and Safety compliant non-domestic/non-commercial Council buildings (falling under the compliance contract)**

3.60 The percentage of health and safety compliant assets (statutory definition) has maintained good performance this quarter. The compliance team is now working with the contractor to ensure this level is maintained.

3.61 The Compliance team are unable to provide a result for 'Assets 5b: Percentage of (Council) assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (as per SBC enhanced definition)' for the second consecutive quarter. The team are reviewing the contract to ensure that there is an improved performance around non-statutory low level repairs included in this performance measure. Consequently, results are unable to be provided as the contractor's performance is being scrutinised, and an improvement plan is being put in place.

- 3.62 The Compliance team have audited the report provided by the contractor and are currently unable to verify the figures reported. In the absence of reliable information no data is able to be reported. The compliance team is working with the contractor to ensure that the necessary assurance is given.
- 3.63 It should be noted that performance measures 'Assets 5a' and 'Assets 5b' relate to council premises such as civic offices, community centres, play centres, pavilions, cemetery buildings, depots etc. and refer to Compliance Services via the ComplyFirst Framework. These services relate to the provision of regular compliance servicing and related maintenance of fire, water, electrical, gas, air conditioning and minor building works. Officers are currently working on a corporate landlord project to map the management of compliance across all council buildings and this could impact on the future definition of these measures.

### **Spotlight: Households in Emergency/Temporary Accommodation**

- 3.64 The number of households in temporary/emergency accommodation at the end of December 2019 was 89 against a target of 75. In the previous quarter it was reported that there were an additional 58 households that had not been included in the total figure but were deemed to be in a form of temporary accommodation. This is because these cases have been accepted as being owed a homeless duty, but were placed into non-secure tenancies which cannot be a final offer of accommodation.
- 3.65 Due to the process in place at the time, discharge of duty was not formally completed and as a result these are still officially designated as temporary accommodation. These cases are being reviewed and a programme is in place to rectify this. Currently 8 of the 58 original cases have been moved into alternative accommodation or have been made a permanent offer for their current accommodation.
- 3.66 The improvement plan in place should result in completion of outstanding cases by the end of the current financial year, subject to customer engagement and any appeals received.
- 3.67 The team are looking to review this performance measure as a result of the Executive approving the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy in quarter 3. The new performance measure will incorporate those in non-secure tenancies, as well as the designated temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast.

### **Spotlight: Rent Collection Rate**

- 3.68 The rent collection rate at the end of quarter 3 was 0.50% below target at 97.3%. The trend for collection for December is lower than anticipated, which is in part related to the increase in numbers of tenants in receipt of Universal Credit (UC). Further to this performance has been affected by staff vacancies, in part related to the Business Unit Review.

- 3.69 The number of council tenants in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) was 896 as at 7 February 2020. This figure has been double-checked using the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Landlord Portal. It should be noted that this figure relates to a particular point in time and also that as individual tenants' circumstances change, they may come on and/or off UC. Officers are continuing to monitor the fluctuating UC position.
- 3.70 53% (£407, 773.64) of the overall total of arrears is attributed to tenants who are in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) and are in arrears, standing at 646 as at 7 February 2020.
- 3.71 Meanwhile, the number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) has continued to decrease and currently stands at 41% of all current tenants.
- 3.72 An income and arrears collection action plan is in place, focusing on proactive and preventative approaches. The Income Services team's collective and individual efforts are directed towards increasing income collection to expected levels and tenancy sustainment, whilst supporting those tenants experiencing financial challenges. The team has started to carry out campaigns such as telephone campaigns and home visits, in particular targeting those that are in receipt of UC and over 5 weeks in arrears (allowing for the 5 weeks claim assessment time). This will be closely monitored to ensure that collection of all income streams under the service is maximised.
- 3.73 All stage one Business Unit Review interviews for the Income Services team have been completed since the end of the quarter and it is expected that there will be a full team in place from 9 March 2020.

## **Communities and Neighbourhoods**

### **Highlights and Achievements**

- 3.74 The Community Centre review was completed with a report and recommendations signed off by Executive in December. The recommendations will be implemented in 2020, with a view to developing more sustainable community centres to serve the town in future years.
- 3.75 Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) has now been commissioned by East Herts, following on from the success of the expansion of the service to North Herts. A pilot is also due to take place in Welwyn and Hatfield in 2020.
- 3.76 The Community Safety team launched a 'Contactless Box Project' in December in partnership with Stevenage Rotary Club. The contactless boxes allow members of the public to provide contactless donations to local homeless people, which in turn, are developed into resources for Stevenage Haven to support those accessing its services.
- 3.77 The annual firework event took place at Fairlands Valley Park in November and maintained high attendance despite poor weather conditions.
- 3.78 The Healthy Stevenage Partnership has worked to shape the district offer with Public Health this year. The focus on young people and wellbeing has led to

the formation of healthy hub proposals at a number of secondary schools in the town. In December the partnership hosted a session with Adult Social Care and the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership to shape the future county wide strategy. In addition the play service has been commissioned by the University of Hertfordshire to lead some action research into child and family wellbeing.

- 3.79 In October the full Council debate focused on the role of culture in the future of the town and welcomed presentations from the Arts Council and MACE. Over £100k of external investment has been secured for the town since the launch of the Arts and Heritage Strategy and future plans for Arts and Heritage will feature in regeneration plans moving forwards.

## **B: Place Theme**

- 3.80 The Place Theme incorporates the following Business Units:
- Planning and Regulation
  - Stevenage Direct Services
  - Regeneration
  - Housing Development

(The Regeneration and Housing Development Business Units are primarily focused on delivery of the Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration and Housing Development Programmes of FTFC. Delivery updates for these programmes are summarised in paragraphs 3.13 to 3.16 and 3.18 to 3.22 respectively)

### **Planning and Regulation**

#### **Highlights and Achievements**

- 3.81 The team are leading on the work for our new Climate Change, Action Plan, Business Charter and Community Pledge list.
- 3.82 The Council has agreed to introduce CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) from the 1st of April 2020. CIL would be a mandatory floor space charge on new development in the borough which would be used to fund key infrastructure to support growth in Stevenage.
- 3.83 Planning applications continue to be determined within corporate and statutory targets, including hearing the North of Stevenage application.
- 3.84 The Parking team have been consulting upon residents parking restriction in the Old Town.

### **Stevenage Direct Services (SDS)**

#### **Highlights and Achievements**

- 3.85 Following investment via the capital programme, four play areas (Fairlands Valley Park, Blenheim Way, Holly Leys and Balmoral Close) were improved and opened in time for the October half term.

- 3.86 In quarter 2 Stevenage Direct Services launched a Recycling Bag Pilot, which continued into quarter 3. Around 270 households were invited to participate in a pilot for the use of recycling bags in place of the current plastic boxes provided. Focus group sessions are being held in quarter 4 with residents who are interested in providing feedback.
- 3.87 During Quarter 3 the Green Space volunteers collectively gave over 250 hours (equivalent to £2,580) to help with maintenance of the Town Centre Gardens and delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan activities. In November the team worked in partnership with Yes Futures to provide 60 secondary school students in Stevenage with an opportunity to undertake volunteer work in the town. Over 3 days students undertook tasks at Weston Road Cemetery, Fairlands Valley Park and Town Centre Gardens.
- 3.88 Repairs are being fixed promptly and time taken to complete them continues to be better than the target level. The team have placed major focus on a case management approach to each case dealt with. This, coupled with efforts to review and improve processes, has improved performance and productivity.
- RepTime1: Emergency Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December 2019: target 1 day, achieved 0.88 days.
  - RepTime2: Urgent Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December 2019: target 5 days, achieved 2.77 days.
  - RepTime3: Routine Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December 2019: target 20 days, achieved 7.08 days.
- 3.89 The time taken to re-let Standard general needs voids has increased since last quarter (30.27 days), however it still remains within target. In October and November the performance was behind target, however performance in December was far better and therefore kept Quarter 3 performance overall within target. Officers are currently identifying ways to further improve relet times.
- Voids General Needs: The time taken to re-let standard general needs voids (days) December 2019: target 32 days, achieved 31.82 days

### **Spotlight: Waste and Recycling Rate**

- 3.90 The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting was estimated to be 37% against a target of 41%. The figure reported here is an estimate based on the figure for the same period last year, which estimates this measure will not meet its target. However, the actual figure for Q3 will not be available until March 2020.
- 3.91 Trends over the past eight years show that figures for Q3 and Q4 are lower than the previous two quarters. We are still on track to meet our annual target.
- 3.92 A new draft waste policy seeks to introduce mechanisms that will support an increase in recycling figures for Stevenage. In addition, officers are also

nearing completion of a project with the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to consider separate weekly food waste collections and other initiatives to support the emerging policy and drive up recycling rates.

### **Spotlight: Garage Void Rate**

- 3.93 The void rate of garages has increased this quarter to make it a red measure (14.74% against a target of 12%). This has increased due to a change in our inspection process, whereby each garage is inspected by a qualified asbestos surveyor, prior to letting a garage out.
- 3.94 The asbestos inspections have increased the time taken to relet garages. A large number of garages have been returned by the contractor for letting and the Garage team is now in the process of offering these garages out to customers.
- 3.95 A project is also underway to modernise the current garage letting process and ensure that the available units are effectively marketed. In the medium term the intention is to allow customers to view the available garages, sign up and make payments on-line. As an interim measure, the waiting list is also be reviewed to ensure that time is not being spent making offers to customers who are no longer interested.

## **C: Transformation and Support Theme**

- 3.96 The Transformation and Support Theme incorporates the following Business Units:
- Corporate Services
  - Digital and Transformation
  - Finance and Estates

### **Corporate Services/Digital and Transformation**

#### **Highlights and Achievements**

##### **Customer Services**

- 3.97 Service delivery through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) was first identified as a focus for improvement (spotlight) at quarter three 2017/18 (March 2018 Executive). Since then, the CSC Improvement Plan has supported the recovery of performance levels but in quarter three 2019, the CSC did not achieve 2 of its 4 corporate performance measure targets. As forecasted, performance has been on a downward trend during the quarter.
- CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre answered within 20 seconds: target 55%, April to December 2019 achieved 49.6%
  - CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre: target 8%, April to December 2019 achieved 15.1%

- CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the Customer Service Centre served within 20 minutes: target 80%, April to December 2019 achieved 79.8%
  - CSC13a: Percentage of calls to the CSC resolved within the CSC (by CSC advisors): target 65%, April to December 2019 achieved 62.1%
- 3.98 Historical performance data demonstrates performance in the Customer Service Centre is closely related to the amount of skilled advisers available.
- 3.99 The new recruitment model has helped to reduce the impact on performance by reducing the time taken to recruit new advisers into the team. The improved training delivery and upskilling of CSC advisers will have a positive impact on performance. At the end of Q3 the establishment is at 20.8 FTE, this is 82% of the establishment. These vacant posts are recruited to through the adviser pool and are expected to be in post in February. However, since April 2019 12 advisers have moved on either to other roles in the Council or left for other reasons. This has meant the service has continued to lose skilled staff, and this has created a heavier than normal burden on recruitment and training. Further actions are now being planned and undertaken to further improve recruitment and investigate ways to improve staff retention.
- 3.100 The focus on this service area will be retained until initial performance improvement can be seen to be sustained across the full set of CSC measures.

### **Technology**

- 3.101 The joint ICT strategy has been given final approval from both councils. This will ensure a united vision for the IT service over the next three years.
- 3.102 The tender for virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) hosted desktop has completed this quarter and the ICT team are now working through designs and implementation. On completion this will mean that all users will be supplied with Windows 10 desktop on the latest version and VMware Horizon on new hardware. This will increase performance, in particular login times, and due to changes in the software structure will enable ICT to update systems with less impact on the entire council.
- 3.103 Microwave (resilient link) implementation is underway which on completion will give a secondary link alongside a cable connection between both datacentres, meaning that if one of the connections is disrupted there will be no reduction in provision of the virtual desktop and access to systems as either connection can supply required connectivity.

### **Our staff**

- 3.104 Employees are continuing to engage in regular and meaningful REAL conversations with their managers. These conversations typically include objectives, development, engagement and wellbeing, but they are also tailored to address individual matters.

3.105 Agency usage is back within target in Quarter 3, this is the first time this financial year. Agency usage is likely to remain slightly higher whilst the programme of Business Unit Reviews continues.

- Agency usage as a percentage of the total workforce: target 12%, April to December 2019 achieved 11.4%

3.106 The figure of 11.4% agency usage is profiled as follows:

- 3.06% are workers covering on an ad-hoc basis at Cavendish Road
- 6.11% are agency workers covering established posts
- 2.18% are covering key strategic projects

### **Spotlight: Sickness Absence**

3.107 The Sickness Absence measure is currently rated as red. The number of sickness days per FTE has not been within target for the past year. Sickness absence has decreased by 2.4% compared to last quarter.

- Sickness absence rate for the current workforce (per FTE): target 8 days, twelve months to March 2019 achieved 8.86 days; twelve months to June 2019 achieved 9.49 days, twelve months to September 2019 achieved 9.8 days, twelve months to December 2019 achieved 9.56 days

3.108 The rise in sickness has been due to an increase in the number of complex long term sickness absences (accounting for 59% of sickness).

3.109 In the last 12 months 62 staff have been off long term sick with 47 having returned to work. The breakdown of length of long term sickness absence is: 64% of staff have been off for less than 3 months, 26% 3 to 6 months and 10% over 6 months. The breakdown of reasons for long term sickness absence is: 36.4% anxiety/stress/depression, 26.16% hospital surgery, 12.86% cancer related illnesses, 6.73% heart/respiratory, 4.69% muscular/skeletal and 11.39% other absence.

3.110 The Council has introduced a third party sickness reporting service, which went live in quarter three. This service provides advice and challenge on fitness for work to both individuals and managers, and ensures consistency of approach/advice on sickness absence. They will also follow up to ensure appropriate application of policy and return to work and provide regular and timely management information. Initially it is expected that the introduction of this sickness reporting service will show an increase in sickness absence levels.

3.111 There are some proactive interventions in place to try and reduce sickness absence levels. These include free flu jab provisions, physio and counselling services for staff and the introduction of the annual leave purchase scheme to support an employee work life balance.

3.112 The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor the performance and management of sickness absence until revised policy and practice results in a sustained reduction in levels of sickness absence.

### **Finance and Estates**

3.113 The Revenues and Benefits service continues to exceed targets for Council Tax collection rates.

3.114 The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year received by the authority has exceeded target for the quarter.

3.115 The time taken to process housing benefit new claims and change events is 1.4 days below target.

### **Senior Leadership Team Perspective**

3.116 Good performance across all three key delivery themes (Customer, Place, Transformation and Support) has been achieved in quarter three, with the majority of corporate performance measures meeting or exceeding targets. The main focus for improvement is the Transformation and Support theme. Outcomes that significantly exceed expectations (measures achieving 'green plus' status) include the following:

- % of complaints progressing to stage 2 and 3 that are upheld or partially upheld
- % repairs fixed first time and average responsive repair end-to-end times
- % of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that are broadly compliant
- % planning applications determined within national target timescales
- Number of Homelessness preventions

3.117 The Senior Leadership Team request that the Assistant Directors responsible for areas of improvement focus assess the factors impacting on performance and develop/implement plans that will provide sustainable performance improvement.

3.118 At the end of quarter 2 2019/2020 (September 2019), the following improvement plans were identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

- Continuing to embed the new service model in the Customer Service Centre
- Ensuring that pressure continues to be applied to the contractor to enable compliance with Health and Safety regulations to be effectively monitored and recorded
- Reducing re-let times and developing plans to achieve the 2% efficiency saving in the repairs and voids service
- Managing sickness absence more effectively and aligning it to council health and well-being policy.

- Ensuring that the issues around temporary accommodation are resolved and monitored

## **Customer Service Centre**

- 3.119 As reported in paragraph 3.97, new improvement measures in place from 2018/19 have improved and stabilised CSC performance results. There are some key activities that have supported recovery:
- Implementation of a new resource planning function
  - New recruitment practices and training to upskill CSC advisers
  - Review and re-design of the CSC's performance framework
  - Re-focus on sickness management
  - Additional management posts – increased available resource for both service and team development
- 3.120 Performance was impacted in Q3 by several resource challenges. Several long term sickness cases caused an estimated 15% reduction in the CSC4 measure (percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds). In addition the CSC currently has three staff on maternity leave and two seconded to other areas of the business. These roles are back-filled, however performance is still impacted as skilled and high performing advisers are lost and time is spent on recruiting and upskilling cover staff.
- 3.121 Upskilling throughout Q4 will increase skill sets across the staff who are either single or dual service (working on one or two telephone lines). This increases flexibility, particularly during peak periods and times of unplanned absence. To diversify the age and background of job candidates, recruitment adverts tailored to attract different kinds of people will be developed and methods for broadening advertising reach identified. Experience has also shown that people talented at customer service are not always as strong at writing lengthy job applications. We will therefore be reducing the written application process, and instead placing more emphasis on candidate interviews and test scenarios. To support staff retention research will be undertaken with our staff to understand more about their motivations for staying in Customer Services, and their drivers for moving to other roles.
- 3.122 There are some challenges for Q4, which include the implementation of a new digital platform, Firmstep. There is approximately 50 hours of training planned for advisers. There are also two planned upgrades to major systems, Academy and Northgate, which will need to be monitored carefully. The final quarter also traditionally holds some of the worst weather we face and can lead to additional customer demands at short notice.
- 3.123 There are also a number of other improvements planned for Q4. A new workforce management system implementation is planned that will enable faster resource modelling scenarios, easier and better demand forecasting and help to inform decisions about staffing skills vs demand. The possibility of

setting up a formal CSC standby rota in key services will be investigated, to make additional resource available during times of high demand, such as bad weather. To reduce unexpected high demand caused by poor communications to customers, clear guidelines for service managers are being developed to help them write better letters and other messages. Over several years the CSC team leaders have only had limited investment in their management skills, so options will be considered to help support their development.

### **Health and Safety Compliance of non-domestic/non-commercial Council Buildings (under the compliance contract)**

- 3.124 It is positive to report that in quarter three the contractor achieved 100% compliance in respect of servicing and inspecting assets that have a statutory health and safety requirement. However, concerns continue with regard to the provision of certification and documentation associated with servicing and inspection in accordance with the Council's enhanced definition, resulting in not being able to report performance figures for quarters two and three. Officers are reviewing the contract to ensure an improved performance around non-statutory, low level repairs included in this measure. Performance of the contractor is currently being scrutinised in order to deliver an improvement plan resulting in an increased level of performance.
- 3.125 A Corporate Landlord programme has been initiated which has a number of associated projects and actions. One of the actions is to do a complete compliance audit across all the Council's buildings to review compliance checks in place. This will be completed in the next few months and will inform the compliance contract needs going forward. The project is sponsored by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **Repairs and Voids Service**

- 3.126 As noted above, high levels of performance in the repairs service have been sustained into 2019/20. A key focus during 2018/19 was on re-let times for major works voids, which were classified as having a 'red' status throughout the year. Performance has significantly improved in this area, and has been below target for 2019/20.
- 3.127 Although re-let times are generally within target, the cost of void loss is higher than expected. This is due to the average rate of property turnover (67 per month) being higher than expected (40 per month). There are advantages to a higher turnover rate; however, a more ambitious re-let target is required to achieve the void loss target. A plan is being developed to address this.

### **Sickness Absence**

- 3.128 The management of sickness absence was initially identified as a 'spotlight' area at March 2018 Executive and has continued to be a focus for the Senior Leadership Team. Whilst sickness absence improved throughout the year to December 2018, an increase was observed in quarter 4 of 2018/19 and this trend has continued into 2019/20, in the main associated with an increase in the number of complex long term sickness absences. Improvement plans

advised in previous performance reports continue to be implemented and further details of proactive interventions can be seen in paragraphs 3.110 to 3.112.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

3.129 As referred to in paragraphs 3.65 to 3.67, an action plan is in place to address issues relating to under-reporting of temporary accommodation and the number of cases in non-secure accommodation is gradually reducing.

### **Next Quarter Focus**

3.130 In view of both the above assessment, and the new red and amber measures arising at December 2019, the following improvement plans have been identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

- Beginning to implement the Corporate Landlord review in respect of asset maintenance and compliance and ensuring that pressure continues to be applied to the contractor to enable compliance with Health and Safety regulations to be effectively monitored and recorded (paragraphs 3.124 to 3.125 refers)
- Continuing to embed the new service model in the Customer Service Centre (paragraphs 3.119 to 3.123 refer)
- Maximising the collection of rent by ensuring the associated action plan is fully implemented (paragraphs 3.72 to 3.73 refer)
- Ensuring that issues with the delay in inspections to council garages are recognised and performance is monitored closely; and initiating a marketing campaign to enhance lettings activity (3.93 to 3.95 refer)
- Developing plans to achieve more ambitious re-let targets (paragraph 3.127 refers)

3.131 In addition, the development and implementation of the IT strategy will continue to be monitored by the IT Shared Service Partnership Board to ensure that services are delivered that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

3.132 The Council's approach to performance management and monitoring allows the organisation to proactively identify issues and challenges and ensure prompt management intervention. The fluid nature of the framework enables the Senior Leadership Team to amend targets to ensure that they continue to reflect revisions to service delivery models where necessary and to support and drive forward additional improvements in services for the benefit of internal and external customers.

## **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

4.1 The information presented in this report is collated from the information provided to monitor delivery of the Future Town, Future Council Programme and corporate performance for the quarter. It aims to give Executive an overview of the achievements the Council has made for the year to date, with a

focus on the previous quarter and identifies plans for continued improvements in some areas to ensure the Council is fit for the future.

- 4.2 The Senior Leadership Team and Service Managers have been consulted to determine the appropriate content and to identify the key achievements.
- 4.3 As referred to in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5, work has progressed on scoping the new 'Place of Choice' FTFC programme. Officers propose this will incorporate the activities associated with a number of existing and emerging strategies that are focussed on improving the quality of life of residents and visitors. This programme is intended to provide overarching governance, to ensure that these strategies are well aligned, and that the FTFC Board are tracking key deliverables and priorities for each year. In addition, bringing this programme together does provide the opportunity to promote, celebrate and market the success of Stevenage more widely as a thriving, successful town providing a range of opportunities for residents and businesses. The Executive is asked to agree the suite of strategies included in the scope of the programme, as set out in paragraph 3.4 and note the progress being made in identifying key actions that will be incorporated into the FTFC programme of activity in 2020/21.
- 4.4 A number of areas have been identified in section 3 of this report where a particular focus on improvement is required and outline plans have been set out. The Executive is recommended to note and endorse these improvement plans.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

- 5.1.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting financial implications.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

- 5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting legal implications.

### **5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.3.1 The report outlines performance against key priorities that form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across key business unit themes. Where necessary, Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for improvement activity identified.

### **5.4 Risk Implications**

- 5.4.1 There are no direct significant risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s). Officers responsible for developing performance

improvement plans will need to consider any risk implications from the improvement activity identified.

5.4.2 The Council has an embedded approach to risk management that mitigates any adverse effect on delivery of the Council's objectives and internal control processes and also provides good governance assurance.

## **5.5 Other Corporate implications**

5.5.1 Improvement activity outlined may impact on the development of future policy or procedure.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Executive Report 10 July 2019: 2018/19 Annual Report & Performance Overview

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: Compendium of Performance Results
- Appendix 2 : Future Town, Future Council Programme Scope/Focus for 2019/20

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# Executive Report Appendix One

## Key to Performance Status

### Symbols

-  Red Status - Focus of improvement
-  Amber Status - Initial improvement activity identified
-  Green Status - Any variance from target manageable
-  Green Plus Status - Exceeding expectations
-  New measure - Performance results not required
-  No data results
-  Missing value

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19	Actual to 31/03/19	Status at 31/03/19	Target to 30/06/19	Actual to 30/06/19	Status at 30/06/19	Target to 30/09/19	Actual to 30/09/19	Status at 30/09/19	Target to 31/12/19	Actual to 31/12/19	Status at 31/12/19	Target to 31/03/20
NI15b: The rate of violence against the person (victim based crime) per 1,000	Customers	26.00	?	?	33.07	?	?	10.00	2.96	☆	17.00	9.00	☆	28.00	7.90	☆	35.00
CS8: Anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population	Customers	31.00	?	?	35.00	?	?	8.00	7.69	☆	20.00	8.45	☆	28.00	5.38	☆	33.00
CS9: Criminal damage per 1,000 population	Customers	9.80	?	?	12.00	?	?	2.50	2.39	☆	5.70	2.36	☆	8.80	2.47	☆	10.00
VGC1: Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas certificate	Customers	100.0%	100.0%	☆	100.0%	100.0%	☆	100.0%	100.0%	☆	100.0%	100.0%	☆	100.0%	100.0%	☆	100.0%
Assets5b: Percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (as per SBC definition)	Customers	100.00%	97.00%	▲	100.00%	91.00%	▲	100.00%	91.00%	▲	100.00%	?	?	100.00%	?	?	100.00%
Assets5a: Percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (Statutory)	Customers	100.00%	98.00%	▲	100.00%	91.00%	▲	100.00%	99.60%	☆	100.00%	100.00%	☆	100.00%	100.00%	☆	100.00%
BV66a: Rent collection rate	Customers	97.8%	98.6%	☆	98.7%	99.1%	☆	93.6%	93.8%	☆	96.3%	96.9%	☆	97.8%	97.3%	●	98.7%
BV213: Homelessness preventions	Customers	270.0	279.0	☆	360.0	399.0	☆	90.0	128.0	☆	180.0	272.0	☆	270.0	428.0	☆	360.0
ECHFL-EW1: Percentage of tenants satisfied with external works completed (for the current quarter)	Customers	80.0%	89.7%	☆	80.0%	91.2%	☆	80.0%	98.9%	☆	80.0%	100.0%	☆	80.0%	100.0%	☆	80.0%
ECHFL-IW1: Percentage of tenants satisfied with internal works completed (for the current quarter)	Customers	80.0%	95.7%	☆	80.0%	96.0%	☆	80.0%	100.0%	☆	80.0%	100.0%	☆	80.0%	100.0%	☆	80.0%
NI156: Number of households in temporary/emergency accommodation at end of period	Customers	100.00	61.00	☆	100.00	73.00	☆	75.00	73.00	☆	75.00	81.00	▲	75.00	89.00	▲	75.00
ECHFL: Percentage of Homes maintained as decent	Customers	82.6%	82.6%	☆	75.3%	75.4%	☆	76.9%	77.0%	☆	79.4%	79.5%	☆	81.5%	81.5%	☆	76.1%
FS3 (Futsav1b): Percentage of GF savings identified to meet three year target	Future Town, Future Council	47.4%	81.6%	☆	69.9%	83.0%	☆	21.1%	45.9%	☆	39.8%	71.9%	☆	47.4%	69.6%	☆	69.9%
CTOC1: Percentage of customer complaints responded to within deadline	Future Town, Future Council	95.00%	89.66%	▲	95.00%	90.45%	●	95.00%	94.37%	☆	95.00%	94.19%	☆	95.00%	94.94%	☆	95.00%
EAA1: Customer satisfaction with CSC customer service	Future Town, Future Council	90.0%	88.4%	☆	90.0%	88.5%	☆	90.0%	88.7%	☆	90.0%	90.1%	☆	90.0%	89.7%	☆	90.0%
FS2a (LACC2): Percentage HRA approved savings removed from HRA for current year	Future Town, Future Council	91.00%	86.70%	☆	91.00%	86.70%	☆	91.00%	98.00%	☆	91.00%	94.00%	☆	91.00%	92.00%	☆	91.00%
FS1a (LACC1): Percentage GF approved savings removed from GF budget for current year	Future Town, Future Council	92.00%	89.90%	☆	92.00%	89.90%	☆	98.00%	98.00%	☆	92.00%	94.00%	☆	92.00%	92.00%	☆	92.00%
WebSat1: Customer satisfaction with Council website	Future Town, Future Council	0.15	0.28	☆	0.20	0.28	☆	0.11	0.26	☆	0.11	0.30	☆	0.15	0.26	☆	0.20
FS4 (Futsav2b): Percentage of HRA savings identified to meet three year target	Future Town, Future Council	33.5%	54.3%	☆	46.3%	56.0%	☆	2.5%	36.0%	☆	29.3%	100.0%	☆	33.5%	79.3%	☆	46.3%
HDD1d: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) by the Council (since 2014)	Future Town, Future Council	148.00	168.00	☆	160.00	173.00	☆	179.00	176.00	☆	183.00	192.00	☆	212.00	216.00	☆	225.00

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19	Actual to 31/03/19	Status at 31/03/19	Target to 30/06/19	Actual to 30/06/19	Status at 30/06/19	Target to 30/09/19	Actual to 30/09/19	Status at 30/09/19	Target to 31/12/19	Actual to 31/12/19	Status at 31/12/19	Target to 31/03/20
HDD1b (formerly NB1) - New Build Spend v Budget of development activity that is contracted	Future Town, Future Council	90.0%	97.7%	★	90.0%	98.2%	★	90.0%	99.8%	☆	90.0%	99.7%	☆	90.0%	98.2%	★	90.0%
CNM2g: Garage Voids as a percentage of stock	Future Town, Future Council	12.00%	12.81%	●	12.00%	10.70%	★	12.00%	10.79%	★	12.00%	11.58%	★	12.00%	14.74%	▲	12.00%
EoCrec: Time to recruit	Future Town, Future Council	45.00	42.00	★	45.00	40.00	☆	45.00	42.00	★	45.00	47.00	★	45.00	46.00	★	45.00
EoC4a: Percentage of apprentices in post as percentage of workforce.	Future Town, Future Council	2.5%	3.0%	☆	2.5%	2.4%	★	2.3%	2.1%	★	2.3%	1.9%	★	2.3%	2.1%	★	2.3%
Compl4: Percentage of stage 2 & 3 complaints upheld fully or partially (Housing)	Future Town, Future Council	40.00%	43.08%	●	40.00%	39.51%	★	40.00%	35.00%	★	40.00%	20.00%	☆	40.00%	24.71%	☆	40.00%
NI191: Residual household waste per household (kgs)	Place	386.00	371.00	★	519.00	498.00	★	135.00	122.00	☆	250.00	243.00	★	380.00	371.00	★	520.00
NI192: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Place	41.5%	37.0%	▲	40.0%	40.0%	★	42.0%	43.0%	★	43.0%	42.0%	★	41.0%	37.0%	▲	40.0%
Rep Cost1: Average responsive repair cost per dwelling	Place	240.75	222.17	☆	321.00	316.42	★	81.77	62.40	☆	163.54	162.78	★	245.30	218.46	☆	327.07
Rep-Time3: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Routine Repairs	Place	20.00	9.81	☆	20.00	9.82	☆	20.00	6.45	☆	20.00	7.16	☆	20.00	7.08	☆	20.00
Rep-Time1: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Emergency Repairs	Place	1.00	0.47	☆	1.00	0.52	☆	1.00	0.79	☆	1.00	0.85	☆	1.00	0.88	☆	1.00
Rep-Time2: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Urgent Repairs	Place	5.00	3.99	☆	5.00	3.87	☆	5.00	2.83	☆	5.00	2.80	☆	5.00	2.77	☆	5.00
VoidsGNMW - The time taken to relet major works general needs voids	Place	65.00	83.24	▲	65.00	80.67	▲	65.00	51.92	☆	65.00	59.88	☆	65.00	59.00	☆	65.00
BTC1a: New jobs created through Business Technology Centre	Place	70.00	121.00	☆	125.00	188.00	☆	15.00	?	?	30.00	34.00	☆	45.00	47.00	★	60.00
BTC1b: New business start up in Business Technology Centre	Place	30.00	58.00	☆	52.00	86.00	☆	5.00	?	?	10.00	20.00	☆	15.00	34.00	☆	20.00
ELL1a: Percentage of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that are broadly compliant	Place	92.50	87.50	▲	92.50	96.89	☆	92.50	98.45	☆	92.50	95.83	☆	92.50	95.93	☆	92.50
NI157a: Percentage of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	Place	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%	83.3%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%
VoidsGN: The time taken to relet standard general needs voids	Place	32.00	27.32	☆	32.00	27.86	☆	32.00	30.31	☆	32.00	30.27	☆	32.00	31.82	★	32.00
NI157c: Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	Place	80.0%	97.0%	☆	80.0%	96.8%	☆	80.0%	96.3%	☆	80.0%	97.5%	☆	80.0%	97.9%	☆	80.0%
NI184: Food establishments in the area broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Place	95.0%	94.2%	★	95.0%	95.1%	★	95.0%	96.1%	★	95.0%	96.1%	★	95.0%	97.0%	★	95.0%
ECH1: Percentage of Repairs service customers satisfied (telephone survey)	Place	90.00%	96.07%	★	90.00%	96.13%	★	90.00%	93.08%	★	90.00%	93.36%	★	90.00%	93.01%	★	90.00%

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19	Actual to 31/03/19	Status at 31/03/19	Target to 30/06/19	Actual to 30/06/19	Status at 30/06/19	Target to 30/09/19	Actual to 30/09/19	Status at 30/09/19	Target to 31/12/19	Actual to 31/12/19	Status at 31/12/19	Target to 31/03/20	
+	ECH-Rep3: Percentage repairs appointment made and kept	Place	95.00%	99.26%	★	95.00%	98.68%	★	95.00%	98.61%	★	95.00%	98.49%	★	95.00%	99.35%	★	95.00%
+	ECH-Rep4: Percentage repairs fixed first time	Place	87.50%	97.47%	☆	87.50%	97.47%	☆	87.50%	98.96%	☆	87.50%	99.14%	☆	87.50%	99.11%	☆	87.50%
+	NI157b: Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	Place	65.00%	90.2%	☆	65.00%	88.8%	☆	65.00%	96.6%	☆	65.00%	96.0%	☆	65.00%	97.2%	☆	65.00%
	CSC13a: Percentage of calls to the CSC resolved within the CSC (by CSC advisors)	Transformation and Support	65.00%	65.10%	★	65.00%	64.30%	★	65.00%	62.90%	★	65.00%	61.80%	★	65.00%	62.10%	★	65.00%
	CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the CSC answered within 20 secs	Transformation and Support	55.00%	48.4%	▲	55.00%	49.6%	▲	50.00%	61.3%	☆	52.00%	56.9%	★	55.00%	49.6%	▲	55.00%
	CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the CSC served within 20mins	Transformation and Support	80.00%	71.8%	▲	80.00%	75.0%	●	75.00%	81.2%	☆	78.00%	80.2%	★	80.00%	79.8%	★	80.00%
	Cust1: Percentage complaints progressing to stage 2 and 3 that are upheld or partially upheld	Transformation and Support	40.00%	38.6%	★	40.00%	34.6%	☆	40.00%	31.8%	☆	40.00%	18.3%	☆	40.00%	23.1%	☆	40.00%
	Pe1: Total Human Capital - measures Workforce Stability	Transformation and Support	85.00%	84.0%	★	85.00%	84.9%	★	85.00%	85.9%	★	85.00%	85.0%	★	85.00%	85.9%	★	85.00%
	Pe6: Appraisal completion to meet corporate deadlines	Transformation and Support	100.00%	99.1%	★	100.00%	99.8%	★	100.00%	100.0%	★	100.00%	100.0%	★	100.00%	100.0%	★	100.00%
	Pe4a: Sickness Absence Rate for the Current Workforce (FTE)	Transformation and Support	8.00	8.42	★	8.00	8.86	●	8.00	9.49	▲	8.00	9.80	▲	8.00	9.56	▲	8.00
	NI181: Time taken (days) to process housing benefit new claims and change events	Transformation and Support	11.00	8.12	☆	9.00	5.96	☆	12.00	13.45	●	12.00	10.09	★	10.00	8.60	★	10.00
	BV9: Percentage of council tax collected	Transformation and Support	89.00%	90.00%	☆	96.8%	96.2%	★	33.00%	33.3%	★	61.00%	60.4%	★	88.00%	87.5%	★	96.8%
	BV10: Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year received by the authority	Transformation and Support	89.00%	88.2%	★	99.00%	98.9%	★	36.00%	36.9%	☆	61.00%	62.9%	☆	89.00%	89.8%	★	99.00%
	Pe2: Agency Usage as a percentage of total workforce	Transformation and Support	10.00%	11.5%	▲	12.00%	11.9%	★	12.00%	13.2%	●	12.00%	12.8%	●	12.00%	11.4%	★	11.00%
	CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre	Transformation and Support	7.00%	14.4%	▲	6.00%	14.3%	▲	10.00%	7.2%	★	10.00%	10.4%	★	8.00%	15.1%	▲	8.00%



## **Appendix 2**

### **Future Town, Future Council Scope and Focus for 2019/20**

#### **External Facing Programmes**

##### **1. Stevenage Centre Town Centre Regeneration Programme**

###### **1.1. Programme Outcomes**

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2020/21 and one to begin 2019/20.

###### **1.2. Programme Overview**

- 1.3. Regeneration of the town centre is the Council's number one priority and was the priority most often placed in residents' 'top three' in the town-wide survey undertaken in 2017. The Council wants to make Stevenage a destination of choice through delivering a new vibrant town centre, with quality shopping, office and leisure facilities.
- 1.4. The Council officially announced the appointment of Mace as the development partner for the first phase of town centre regeneration (SG1) in February 2018. This ambitious scheme will bring £350million of private investment into the town centre. It will see the area covering the Council (Daneshill House) offices, the Plaza, bus station and some of the adjacent car parks redeveloped with new shops, bars and restaurants, homes, new public spaces, and a central public sector hub accommodating the Council offices, a library, exhibition space, and health services
- 1.5. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Achieving vacant possession of Swingate House
  - Advancing the SG1 scheme
  - Progressing the bus interchange project in line with milestones
  - Beginning works on the Town Square Public Realm and 'North Block' improvements
  - Supporting the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) to ensure there are robust governance arrangements in place for the regeneration of Stevenage
  - Launching the fresh marketing brand, 'Stevenage Even Better' and opening the visitor centre to celebrate and promote the regeneration of the town

## **2. Housing Development Programme**

### **2.1. Programme Outcomes**

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage.
- Improve access to the housing market in Stevenage for a greater number of residents.

### **2.2. Programme Overview**

2.3. Providing decent, affordable homes appropriate to the needs of residents is one of the Council's key priorities and again was high on the agenda for many respondents to the town-wide Resident Survey. The Council is meeting this priority by delivering its own new build programme. Overall the programme remains on track for delivery of 300 homes by 2020.

2.4. The Council continued to work proactively during 2018/19 to get the Secretary of State's Holding Direction on the adoption of the Local Plan lifted. This was achieved in March 2019 and the Council has subsequently adopted the Local Plan since the year-end. This will provide the certainty needed to encourage developers to bring forward their schemes to provide a range of housing, including a proportion of affordable homes.

2.5. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Completing and letting 54 new affordable homes across a number of schemes and 11 private sale homes.
- Starting work on a further 298 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes including sites at Shephall Way, North Road and Symonds Green.
- Exploring the viability of other potential areas of development across the town including opportunities to work in partnership with other providers.
- Continuing to work with partners to enable the delivery of affordable homes.
- Forming a Wholly Owned Company to support the delivery of new homes.

## **3. Excellent Council Homes Programme**

### **3.1. Programme Outcomes**

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers.

### **3.2. Programme Overview**

3.3. The Council's aim is to provide high quality, efficient and effective housing services. The Council has committed through the Excellent

Council Homes programme to transform its housing services to better meet the needs of its customers.

3.4. The programme comprises five main themes:

- Business Vision: focused on embedding corporate values and unified customer service to all members of staff. This is to ensure that customers will receive the same, excellent customer service from every member and area of business.
- Digital Housing: aimed at improving back office processes and enhancing internal systems in order to support digital development and access to information for our customers.
- Service and Personal Development: focused on delivery of a cohesive team provided with the right tools and skills to deliver excellent customer service.
- Knowing our Customers: aimed at understanding our customers' needs and prioritising them to provide bespoke services where possible. This is to improve contact with our customers and visibility and approachability of our staff.
- Major Investment in Flat Blocks: focused on delivery of the Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC), sprinkler systems and lift replacements in council-owned flat blocks

3.5. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- The launch of a new online account where customers will be able to access housing services 24/7.
- Delivery of a major refurbishment programme to our flat blocks (incorporating the MRC, lift replacements and retrofitting of sprinklers).
- Implementation of a new area-based co-operative neighbourhood management approach in conjunction with staff from Stevenage Direct Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods.
- Completing the final phases of the Housing and Investment Future Council Business Unit Review.
- Providing staff with the right business tools and software to enable them to work more effectively out in the community.
- Delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Initiative Strategy and Housing Older Persons Strategy.

## **4. Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme**

### **4.1. Programme Outcomes**

- Residents feel that they can work with the council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area.
- Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to deliver the change that is required.
- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live.

- The Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs.

#### **4.2. Programme Overview**

4.3. The Co-operative Neighbourhood Management (CNM) programme sets out how the Council will work with communities to improve neighbourhoods. Through working together with residents and other partners the Council believes public spaces can be made more attractive and in turn help to give people pride in the place they live. The CNM programme was formally launched at Stevenage Day in June 2017 and is complemented by an 'Our Neighbourhood' area on the Council's website. Focused investment in neighbourhood improvements has continued to progress throughout the year. The programme has been further re-purposed to provide the FTFC oversight for the development of the Council's approach to area-based co-operative neighbourhood management.

4.4. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Developing the Council's approach to co-operative neighbourhood management, working initially with Stevenage Direct Services, Housing and Investment and Communities and Neighbourhoods.
- Continuing the planned roll-out of neighbourhood improvements, with consultation and engagement work starting in Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Completing the Community Centre Review.
- Progressing the Garage Programme.
- Reviewing and reshaping resident involvement activity in response to the Community Engagement Framework.

### **5. Connected to our Customers Programme**

#### **5.1. Programme Outcomes**

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help.
- Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services.
- Online customer data will be protected and better used to provide useful insight
- The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices.

#### **5.2. Programme Overview**

5.3. The 'Connected to our Customers' programme aims to improve the accessibility of Council services and the customer experience. It will

enhance the way residents can access Council services through increasing the use of digital options, whilst ensuring that officers continue to spend time with those customers who require additional assistance.

5.4. The Council's digital aspirations will evolve as we co-operatively redesign services with our workforce and customers. This modernisation of service delivery will allow the Council to be more responsive to customer needs and flexible in order to adapt more quickly to changing demands or priorities.

5.5. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- New website testing completion, with 'go-live' expected in late summer 2019.
- Finalising procurement of the digital platform and plans for implementation.
- Phased implementation of digital platform capabilities starting with replacement CRM and quick wins for self-serve options.
- Customer and Business Account functionality placed into the new website, providing a single view of the customer and establishing a new centralised digital customer relationship.
- Developing a service redesign approach that will optimise new technology and new ways of working.
- Developing a Channel Shift Strategy which will clearly set out our approach to optimising the take-up of the new digital services whilst ensuring access for everyone, so that no-one is left behind.
- Implementation of the Environmental Services case management system. Integration into the digital platform to enable self-serve.
- Working with services to understand desired new ways of working and technology to support mobile, agile and area working. Planning for how we want to work from the new Public Sector Hub

## **Internal Facing Programmes**

### **6. Financial Security Programme**

#### **6.1. Programme Outcomes**

- As meet the Financial Security three year savings target
- To ensure that the General Fund expenditure equals income without the use of balances from 2022/23 onwards
- To ensure the Housing Revenue Account has sufficient funding to meet the capital needs of the Housing Asset Management Strategy and identified revenue needs
- To identify Financial Security options using the three revised workstreams (efficiency, commercial and improved processes), before recommending any service rationalisation options, as summarised below.

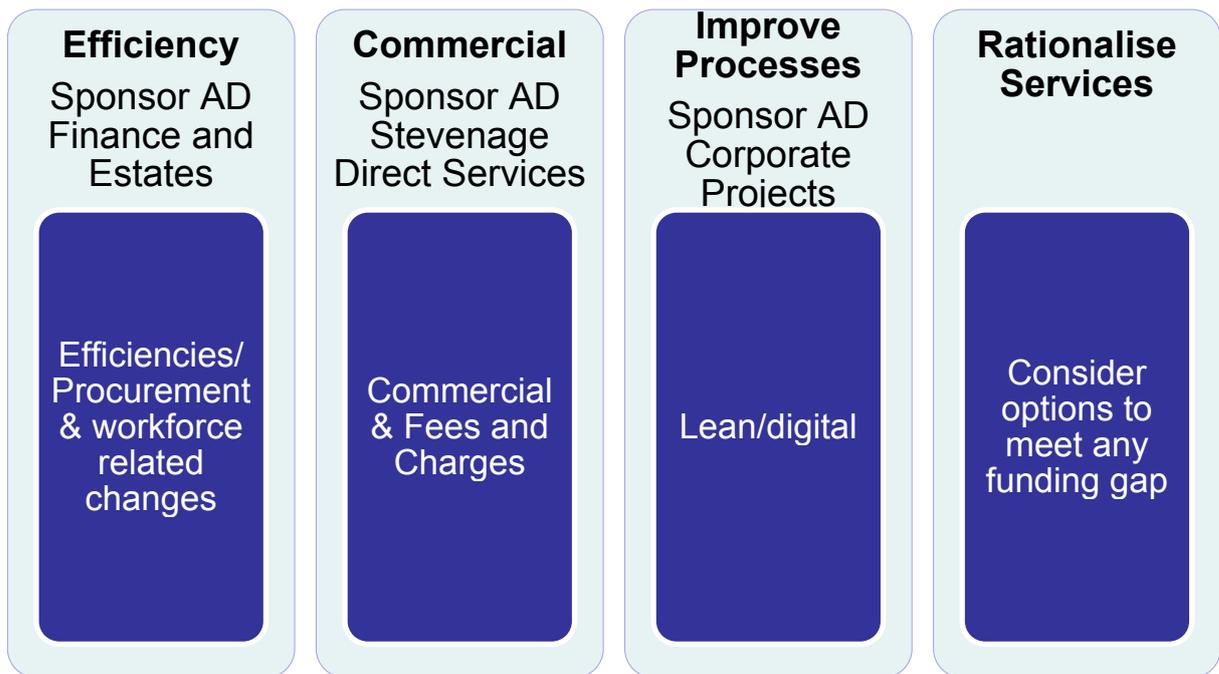


Figure 2: Financial Security workstreams

## 6.2. Programme Overview

6.3. This programme aims to ensure that the Council has sufficient funds available to deliver quality services that residents want and need. The Council aims to break away from the cycle of dependency on Government grant through becoming more efficient in its processes and developing new and innovative funding streams to ensure it has the resources it needs to be a Council fit for the future and build a vibrant town that residents deserve.

6.4. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Identification of Financial Security options to meet the General Fund and HRA funding gap for the period 2020/21-2022/23 via the Financial Security workstreams.
- Review of leases for the Commercial Portfolio, to ensure they are reviewed in a timely manner to protect the Council's revenues.
- Purchase of Investment Properties to meet the General Fund target of £200,000.
- Completion of Local Asset Reviews to meet the objectives of the General Fund Asset Management Strategy.
- Review of fee-earning services to determine fee versus cost.
- Identifying options to improve productivity via use of digital interventions
- Review of budgets for cross-cutting reviews.
- Presentation of Financial Security options to the Leader's Financial Security Group before approval by the Executive.

## **7. Employer of Choice Programme**

### **7.1. Programme Outcomes**

- Improved employee engagement.
- Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts.
- Improved managerial competency.
- Improved reputation as a place to work.
- Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles.

### **7.2. Programme Overview**

7.3. The Council aims to create a flexible, collaborative, creative and modern workforce to ensure it can deliver the priorities set out in the FTFC programme and give residents the standard of services they expect. This programme aims to transform the way the Council works, ensuring that staff have the skills, abilities and experience to deliver excellence. The Council must become an employer of choice so that it can compete in today's market place and attract and retain the best staff to build for the future.

7.4. Through Future Council Business Reviews, work has begun on shaping the next stage of the transformation programme to ensure the Council has the right structures, teams and people in place.

7.5. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer, including development of the new e-recruitment module of the HR System
- Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure.
- Enabling new ways of working to equip staff for the future including policies, practices and culture.
- Developing digital skills and tools to enable staff self-service.
- Creating a new Learning and Development Strategy.

## **8. Performing at our Peak Programme**

### **8.1. Programme Outcomes**

- The provision of high quality performance management software tools.
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making.
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation.

## **8.2. Programme Overview**

8.3. The Council aims to become an insightful Council with improved service performance and slimmed down decision-making processes. The programme will improve the organisation's insight, analysis and intelligence to help us to make better informed business decisions. This is being achieved through more timely coordination of data and the adoption of tools to support ongoing strategic and operational analysis.

8.4. During 2019/20 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Enhancing business insight through data connectivity, and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for our customers.
- Developing our insight culture through the effective engagement and use of our new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement.
- Delivering a new scheme of delegations to officers in respect of Executive powers

Part I – Release to Press



**Meeting** Executive  
**Portfolio Area** Resources  
**Date** 11 March 2020



## 3RD QUARTER MONITORING REPORT - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2019/20

### KEY DECISION

**Authors** Katia Cousins 2383  
**Contributor** Finance Team and Budget managers  
**Lead Officers** Clare Fletcher 2933  
**Contact Officer** Clare Fletcher 2933

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Council undertakes a review of all revenue and associated budgets on a quarterly basis. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter monitoring report for 2019/20.
- 1.2 To update Members on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected 2019/20 net expenditure and seek approval for the revisions to the 2019/20 revenue budgets.
- 1.3 To update Members on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected 2020/21 net expenditure and seek approval for the revisions to the 2020/21 revenue budgets.
- 1.4 To update Members on the General Fund and HRA Financial Security options approved for 2019/20.
- 1.5 To update Members on the Council’s reserves and balances available to support revenue expenditure and to seek approval for revisions to the allocated reserves.

- 1.6 To update Members on any new Financial Security options that contribute to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account savings target.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

### General Fund

- 2.1 To approve the 2019/20 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter General Fund projected net decrease in expenditure of £108,000 and that the cumulative changes made to the General Fund remain within the £400,000 (increase) variation delegated to Executive.
- 2.2 To note the progress of the 2019/20 approved savings, growth bids and carry forwards.
- 2.3 To approve the new carry forward requests of £100,800.

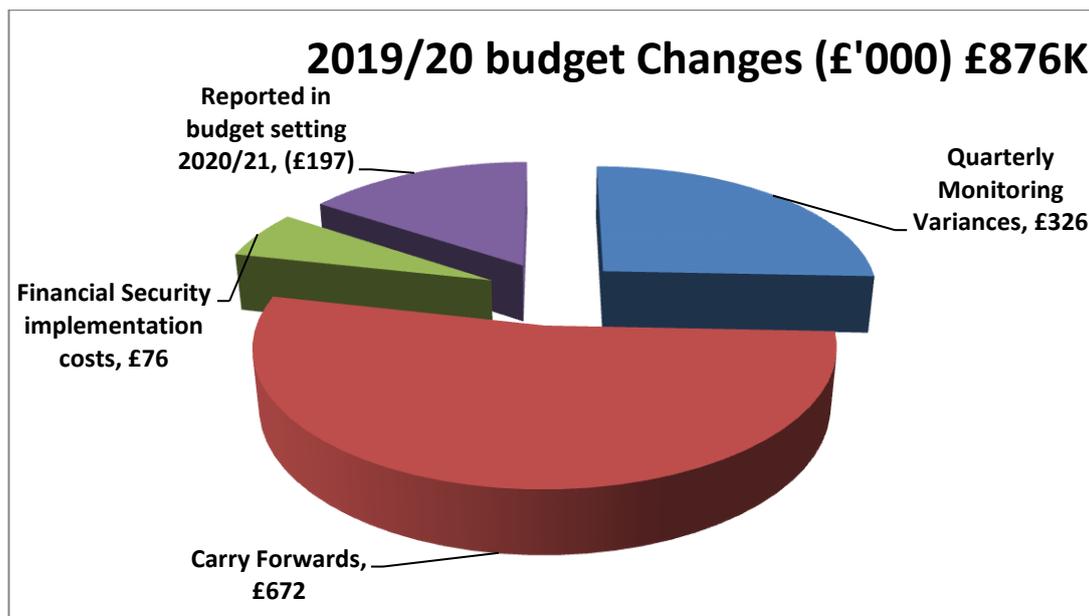
### Housing Revenue Account

- 2.4 To approve the 2019/20 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter decrease in the net HRA deficit of £16,440.
- 2.5 To note the progress of the 2019/20 approved savings, growth bids and carry forward requests.
- 2.6 To approve new carry forward requests of £47,000.

## 3 BACKGROUND

### 3.1 General Fund Working Budget

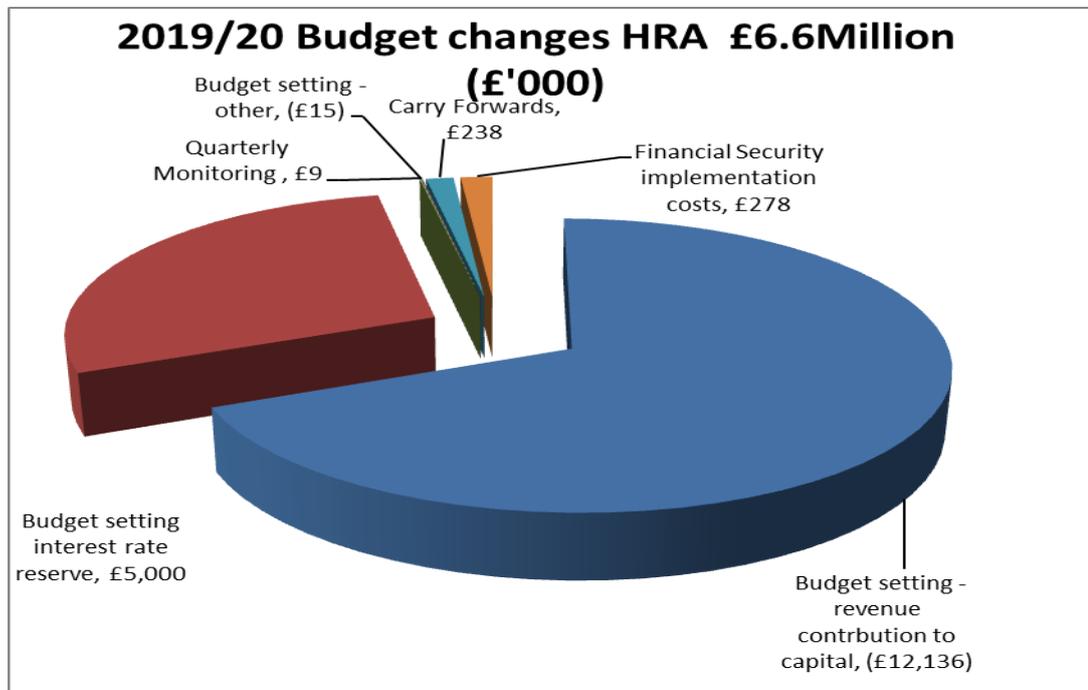
Since the 2019/20 General Fund net revenue budget of £8,802,520 was approved by Council on 27 February 2019, Members have approved net budget increases of £876,160, (as summarised below). The approved working budget totals £9,678,680.



\* (£) indicates reduction in spend /increase in income

### 3.2 Housing Revenue Account Working Budget

The HRA net revenue budget of £9,076,320 was approved at Council on 30 January 2019. Subsequently Members have approved 2019/20 budget changes of £6,627,430 (as summarised below). The approved working budget totals £2,448,890.



\* (£) indicates reduction in spend /increase in income

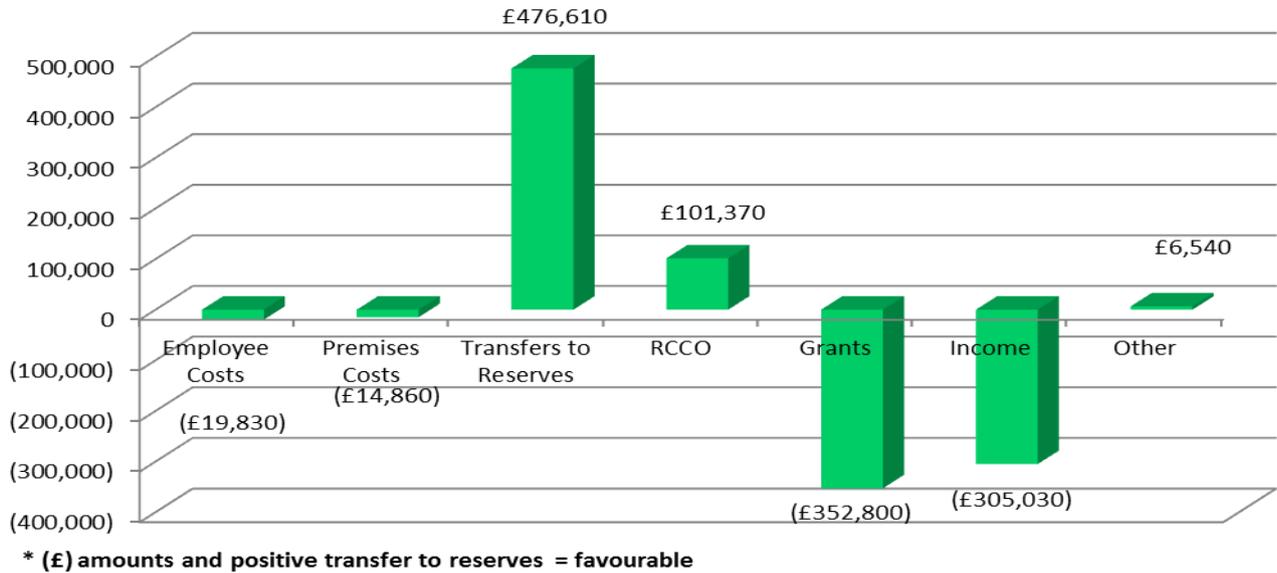
## 4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

### 4.1 General Fund Budget Review

4.1.1 As a result of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget monitoring review the General Fund net expenditure is projected to decrease by £108,000, including carry forward requests of £100,800. This means the net change in the General Fund projected expenditure is a decrease of £7,200 excluding carry forward requests.

4.1.2 Pressures and savings identified during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter can be seen in the graph below.

## 2019/20 Quarter 3 - General Fund Variances Favourable variance £108,000



### 4.2 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter variances

#### 4.2.1 Employee Costs – net under spend £19,830.

The General Fund salary budgets include an allowance for turnover (4% salaries) totalling £634K. To date £488K or 77% has been identified, with a further £164K projected to be found for quarter 4. In addition to this a further salary underspend of £224K is reported across the General Fund, however £60K of this is recommended to fund a programme manager post to support a review of how we manage our assets (Corporate Landlord review).

#### 4.2.2 Premises Net Costs – net saving £14,860. This consists of:

- Additional Rent from Swingate House compared to budget projection of when the building would be empty, £41,060.
- A net pressure on electricity costs of £4,160 across the Councils assets.
- A net pressure of £12,040 on Commercial Property repairs and maintenance relating to re-letting and health and safety compliance. This is continuously under review by Estates officers.
- A £10,000 pressure for a survey and specification for the water project at the Leisure Centre.

#### 4.2.3 Transfers to and from Reserves – net transfer to Reserves £476,610.

Table One - Summary of Q3 Allocated Reserve Movements			
Allocated Reserve	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Net Transfer
<b>Revenue Reserves</b>			
Regeneration Reserve (SG1)	71,690		71,690
ICT Reserve		92,410	(92,410)
Homeless Prevention	347,330		347,330
<b>TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES</b>	<b>419,020</b>	<b>92,410</b>	<b>326,610</b>
<b>Capital Reserves</b>			
Capital Reserve	150,000		150,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVE</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ALLOCATED RESERVES</b>	<b>569,020</b>	<b>92,410</b>	<b>476,610</b>

- Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter monitoring with the Regeneration team, timing of recruitment and project spend will require a transfer back in to the Regeneration Reserve to fund future years spend £71,690. The reserve is projected to be fully utilised by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- Members have already approved the ICT Reserve, this adjustment reflects the use of the reserve to fund growth posts in 2019/20 £92,410. The money is required earlier than originally anticipated following establishment monitoring.
- The transfer in to the Homeless Prevention reserve relates to unspent grant that will be drawn down when needed £347,330 to cover staff and homeless prevention activities (see also paragraph 4.2.5).
- A one off contribution to the capital reserve is recommended in line with the Capital Strategy as reported to the February Executive, to ensure there are sufficient funds for the 2020/21 capital programme (£150,000).

4.2.4 **Revenue Contribution to Capital (RCCO)** – £101,370 revenue transfer to fund capital projects. Queensway set up costs were capitalised in 2018/19 and financed from capital receipts. An adjustment has been included to reverse the impact on the General Funds capital resources.

4.2.5 **Grants** – Flexible Housing Support Grant and the Rough Sleepers Grant are projected to be £347K unspent. These are allocations from 2018/19 (£248K) and 2019/20 (£404K). A further grant notification for 2020/21 was received as part of the financial settlement in December 2019. Staff are being recruited to work with clients to prevent homelessness cases and these have been vital in managing the recent changes to legislation and the peak in demand. £347,330 is recommended to be transferred to the Homeless Prevention Reserve to be drawn down when required to support future prevention schemes.

4.2.6 **Income** – There is an estimated net increase in income is £305,030. This is made up of;

- Additional income of £122,170 from planning reviews and applications. There have been some large planning applications received which have exceeded the working budget projections. This income will fluctuate from year to year hence the

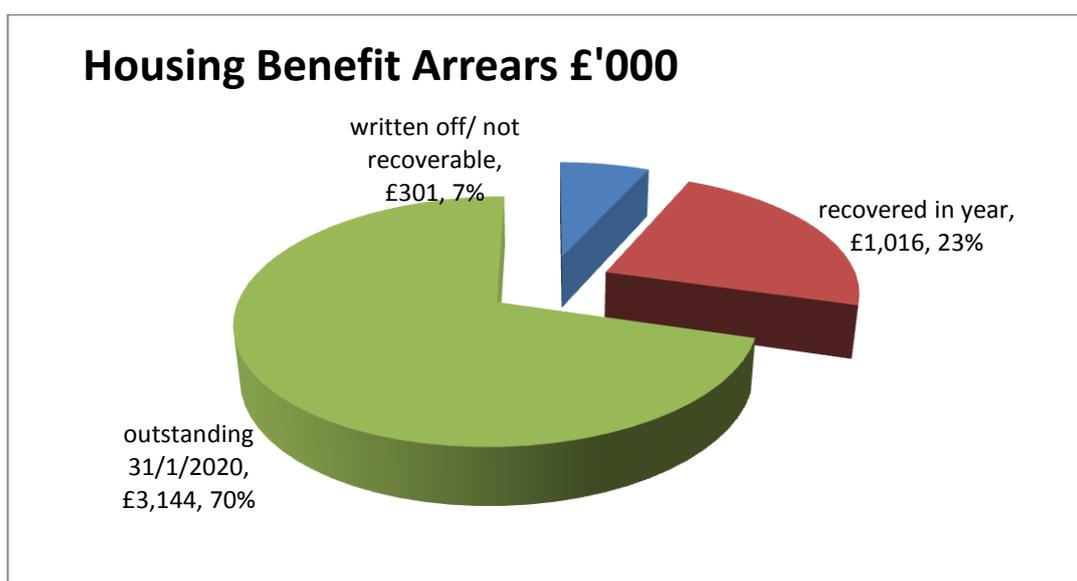
recommendation for some of the gain to go to the equalisation reserve from the net underspend in 2019/20.

- Small land sales have increased by £43,560 over the working budget. These are the sales below £10,000 being our de-minimus for capital receipts.
- As part of the Queensway deal income for set up costs have been received and will be transferred to capital via RCCO £101,370 (see also paragraph 4.2.4 above).
- The original budget for market income was £435,000, this has been reduced during the year as a result of increased voids. There is a further reduction of £10,000 reported in this update and income is now projected to be £404,000. There are currently 132 let stalls and 32 void stalls.
- Additional income is projected for trade waste through the transfer station £22,430. There is also an increase of income from Trade Refuse of £57,500 based on income received to the end of January.
- A decrease of income from cemeteries as death rates are lower nationally £25,000.
- A decrease of income from garage clearances and garage lock changes £7,000.

### 4.3 DEBT PROVISIONS AND ARREARS

#### 4.3.1 Housing Benefit, Council Tax and NDR Debt –

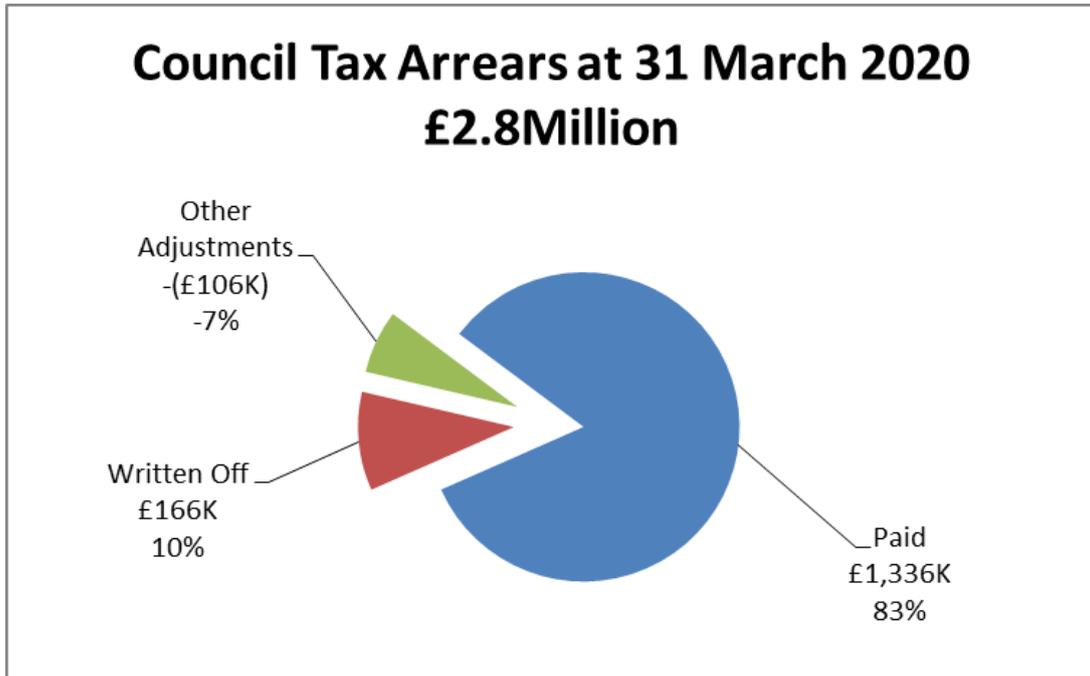
Housing Benefit Debt - There were arrears as at the 1 April 2019 of £3.4Million, with a further £1Million raised in 20219/20. As at the 31 January 2020, 23% of overpayments had been recovered and a further 7% written off, (or unrecoverable). There is a total of £3.1Million outstanding as at the 31 January however there is a debt provision of £2.8Million to offset the impact of write offs.



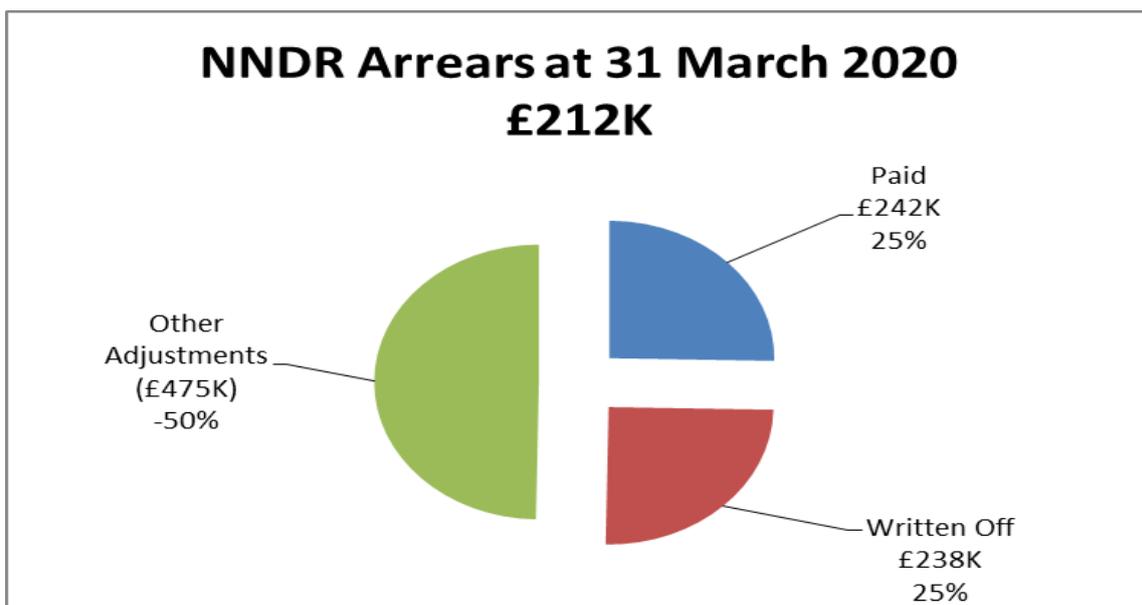
#### 4.3.2 Council Tax and NDR Debt:

There were Council Tax arrears of £4.2Million as at the 1 April 2019, the estimated position at 31 March 2020 is £2.8Million. This equates to £1.3Million (83%) paid, £166K (10%) written off and -£106K (-7%) other adjustments.

Stevenage Borough Council retains 12% of the total precept raised.



4.3.3 There were NDR arrears of £218,078 as at 1 April 2019, the estimated position at 31 March 2020 is £212K. This equates to £242K (25%) paid, £238K (25%) written off and -£475K (-50%) other adjustments.



#### 4.4 Other Updates

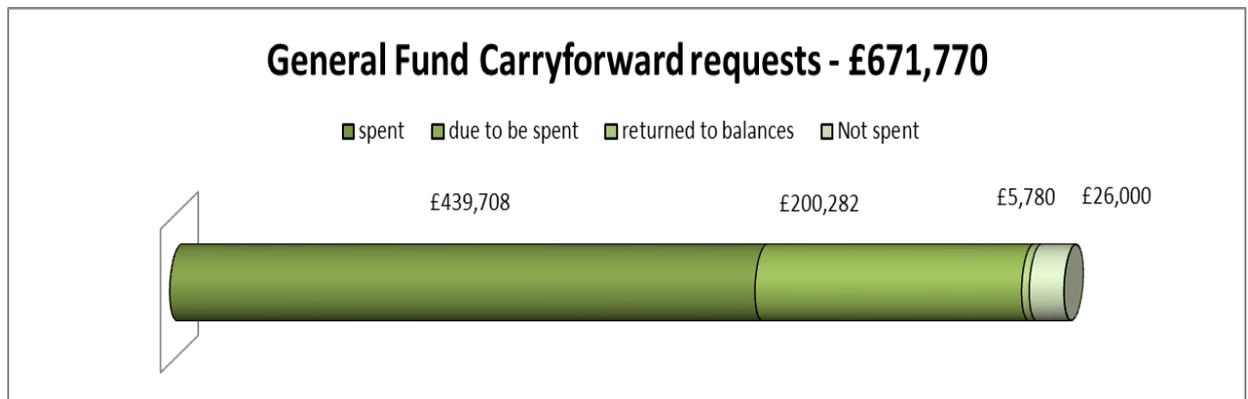
- **Temporary Accommodation** – Members were advised in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter monitoring report of a pressure of £164k on temporary accommodation. At quarter 3 this remains unchanged due to;
  - Additional properties have been utilised from the housing stock to meet the current peak in demand. HRA housing rent is lower than external bed and breakfast costs and it also means that the Council avoid paying for further bed and breakfast places.
  - Payments for bed and breakfast have reduced from a peak of £52K in September to £20K in January.
  - Dedicated resource had been put in place to ensure that the Council can reclaim the maximum housing benefit allowance available for each case to help to offset the additional expenditure.

With these measures in place it is anticipated that bed and breakfast expenditure will be contained within the current working budget.

4.5 **2020/21 General Fund Budget** – The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter General Fund review has not identified any changes to the General Fund Budget 2020/21.

#### 4.6 Approved Carry forwards 2019/20 (General Fund)

4.6.1 Members have already approved total carry forward requests of £671,770



4.6.2 Carry forward requests continue to be monitored and any funds that are required for use in 2020/21 carry forwards will be requested at the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

- Carry forward spent to the end of December 2019 related to grant funding £254K, staff costs 148K and other costs £38K.
- The unspent carry forward relates to a fixed term digital post that straddles financial years.
- The carry forward requested for membership of a business portal was not needed and therefore returned to balances.

#### 4.7 New carry forward requests 2020/21

4.7.1 Carry forwards totalling £100,800 relating to staff, are requested for the following;

- £43,000 to fund a fixed term Human Resources post to support the SDS 6<sup>th</sup> Tier restructure.
- £30,000 for a back log in demand led project work delivered by the Business Improvement Team.
- Communities and Neighbourhoods request £10,000 carry forward to fund three months of a Cultural Officer post and £17,800 for an apprentice in Community Safety for one year only

#### 4.8 Financial Security Options and growth proposals approved for 2019/20

4.8.1 As part of the 2018/19 budget setting process Financial Security savings of £798,552 were approved and implemented. 95% of the total Financial Security options approved have been achieved. Officers have identified the following savings options updates;

- Financial Security Option SD12 - The introduction of the staff pension AVC has been delayed and the impact to the General Fund is £8,320. It is anticipated that this option will be implemented in 2020/21.
- Financial Security Option SD15 - Use of transfer station to do bulk haulage £91,650 (reported in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter monitoring report to Executive 20<sup>th</sup> November), the fuel element of this saving was over-estimated on the mileage and fuel consumption. This adverse impact has been built into the 2020/21 Budget.
- Financial Security Option SC25 - The holiday purchase scheme saving £10,050 has realised a higher saving of £14,940. This saving will be variable each financial year as staff can choose to purchase up to five additional days annual leave.

#### 4.9 2019/20 General Fund Out turn position

4.9.1 Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter review the General Fund balance as at 31 March 2020 is projected to be £3,977,455 as detailed in table four.

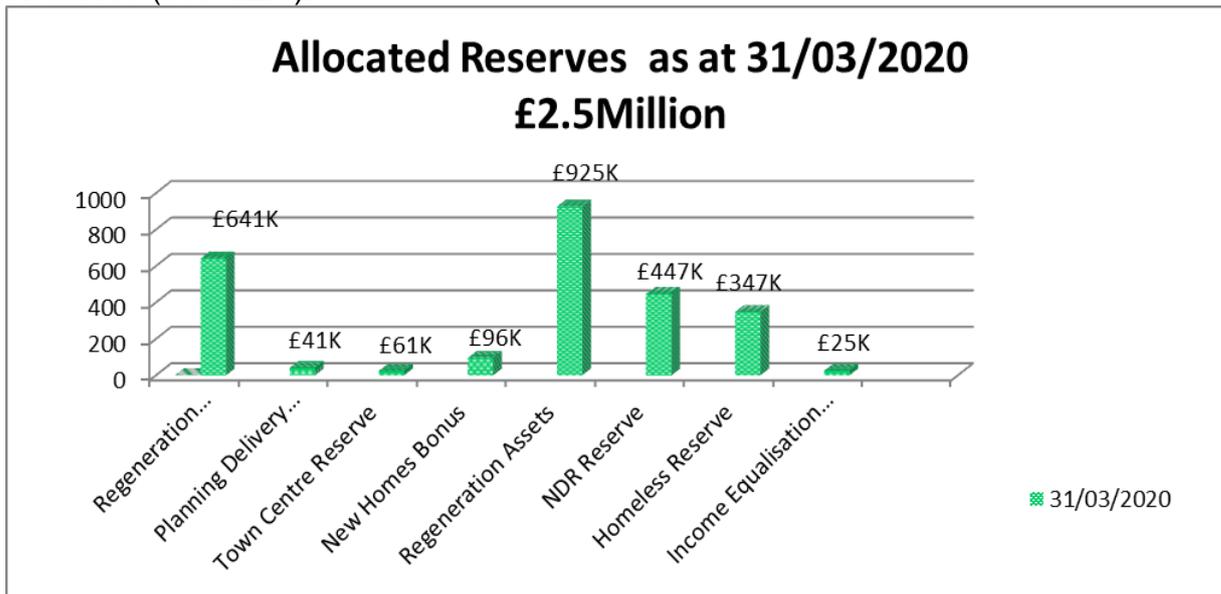
<b>Table Two:</b>	
<b>General Fund Balances</b>	
	£
<b>Original Net General Fund Budget</b>	<b>8,802,520</b>
Approved budget changes	876,160
<b>Net Working budget approved to Date</b>	<b>9,678,680</b>
3rd Quarter review	(108,000)
<b>Total Net Expenditure post Q1 review</b>	<b>9,570,680</b>
less core resources	(8,754,074)
<b>Transfer (to)/from General Fund balances</b>	<b>816,606</b>
<b>General Fund balance 31/3/19</b>	<b>(4,794,061)</b>
Transfer (to)/from General Fund balances	816,606
<b>Projected General Fund balance 31/3/20</b>	<b>(3,977,455)</b>

#### 4.10 Allocated Reserves

4.10.1 The total value of allocated revenue reserves as at the 1 April 2019 was £3.3Million.

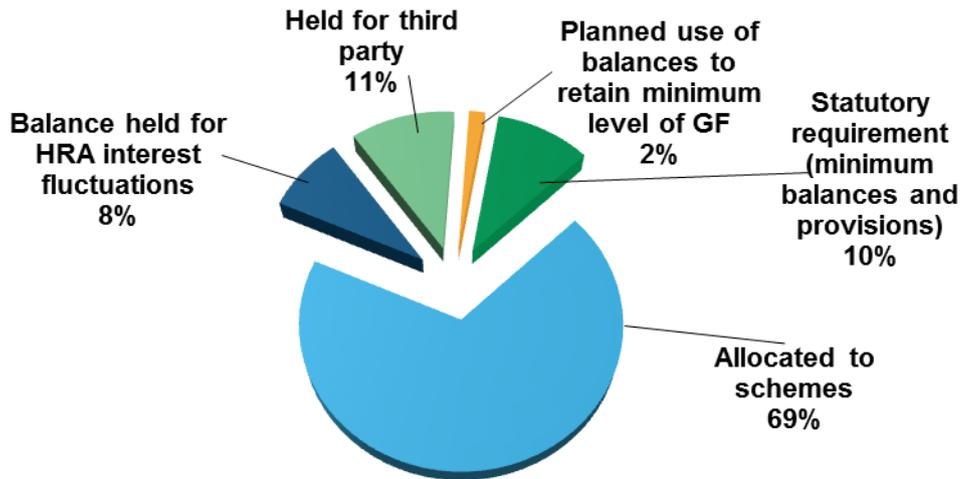
4.10.2 The estimated value of allocated revenue reserves as at the 31 March 2020 is projected to be £2.5Million this is an in year decrease of £765K. The majority of allocated reserves relate to regeneration and new build projects £1.6Million, NDR £447K, New Homes Bonus £96K the two new reserves £372k and other reserves totalling £65K.

4.10.3 There are two new reserves this year, the Homeless and Income Equalisation Reserves (see 4.2.3).



#### 4.11 Investments and Loans

4.11.1 As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 the Council had cash balances of £63.03Million and returns on investment averaged 0.975%. The Council's balances are made up of cash reserves e.g. HRA and General Fund balances, restricted use receipts e.g. right to buy one for one receipts and balances held for provisions such as business rate appeals. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy (Council 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020) reported that all cash balances have been allocated so there are currently no cash resources for new projects. The capital strategy identifies the need for borrowing and a number of capital schemes have not been approved due to the lack of funding resources.



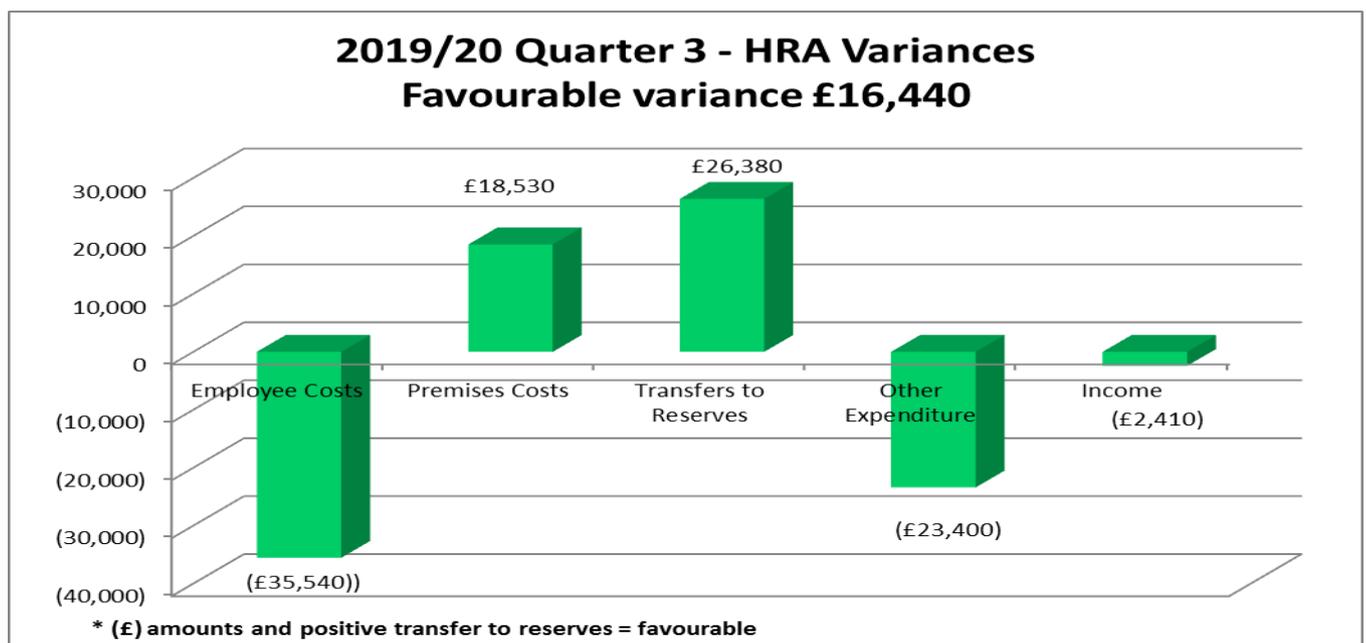
### Analysis of cash balances

4.11.2 The Council had external debt of £205.351Million as at 31 December 2019 of which £194.9Million relates to HRA Self Financing.

### 4.12 Housing Revenue Account – Budget review

4.12.1 As a result of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget monitoring review the HRA net deficit is projected to decrease by £16,440. However, from this underspend there are requests to carry forward expenditure budgets totalling £47,000. This means that the net change in the HRA projected expenditure is an increase of £30,560.

4.12.2 Pressures and savings identified during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter are summarised in the graph below.

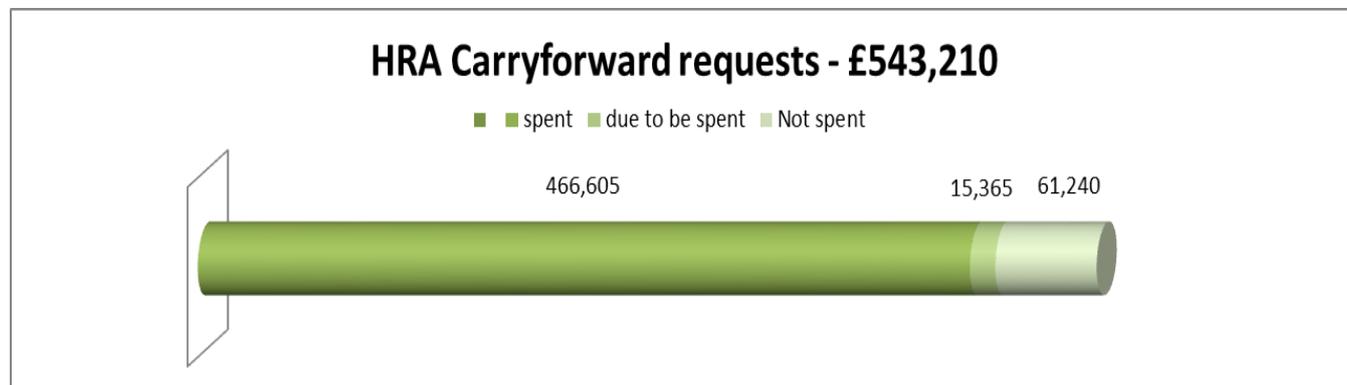


- 4.12.3 **Employee Costs** – As part of the budget review for this quarter a further £37,850 of transitional vacancy has been released and this means that the full target of £182,920 has been met for the year. Overall there is a projected saving on salaries of £35,540 in the housing development team due to vacancies.
- 4.12.4 **Premises Costs** – There is a net pressure on premises costs of £18,530.
- £30,570 is required for council tax payments on unoccupied properties. Part of this relates to the Kenilworth development scheme as properties are empty awaiting redevelopment.
  - This pressure has been partly offset by a £12,040 under spend on window cleaning costs due to a delay in procuring a new service provider.
- 4.12.5 **Transfers to/from Provisions** – The provision for bad debt has been increased by £26,380 at quarter 3. Overall debt has not increased significantly from the last quarter, but some debts have fallen into an older debt banding that attracts a higher % provision. If these debts are recovered at a later date the provision will be returned to general HRA balances.
- 4.12.6 **Other Expenditure** – Overall there is a net favourable variance on other expenditure of £23,400. This is made up of the following areas.
- There is currently a £30,000 underspend for electrical testing works where the costs have been met from alternative budgets and this offsets other pressures identified in this report.
  - A new supplier for decoration vouchers and demand has resulted in an under spend of £5,000 in this year.
  - A one off expense of £29,020 for issuing the revised tenancy agreement.
  - Currently there is no budget provision to cover development and maintenance work on the housing management system. This has led to a projected overspend this year of £25,000. Improvements are being made to workflow on the system reducing the use of paper systems and improving customer's access to services.
  - The budget to progress housing development schemes is currently projected to be £47,180 under budget for the year. A request has been made to carry £47,000 forward into the next year.
  - Other minor pressures totalling £4,760
- 4.12.7 **Income** – Overall there is a £2,410 favourable variance projected on income areas. This is made up from the following;
- Rent projections are £8,320 lower than budget due to the timing and tenure type of new properties coming into the HRA.
  - Charges on temporary accommodation of £10,080, as more properties have been made available to avoid the use of bed and breakfast places and provide more suitable accommodation for customers (see paragraph 4.2.8).
- 4.12.8 The Corporate Performance Report for quarter 3 identified rent collection has fallen below target to 97.3%. This is 0.5% lower than the target and represents £191K of rent. This will impact on the HRA if the rent becomes uncollectable and could lead to an increase in the bad debt provision when reviewed in future budget monitoring.
- 4.12.9 The projection for Interest on balances has been reduced by £15,200 based on average levels of balances for the year.

4.12.10 Other minor pressures totalling £4,760.

#### 4.13 Approved Carry forwards 2018/19 (HRA)

4.13.1 Members have approved HRA carry forward budgets totalling £543,210.



4.13.2 Overall, £466,605 of the total £543,210 has been spent by quarter 3, with a further £15,365 expected to be spent by the year end. The £467k spend has been on Maintenance £302K, Transformation £203K and other spend of £38K.

4.13.3 In total £46,240 of carry forward requests can be returned to HRA balances, but £15,000 for housing development consultancy costs will form part of a further carry forward request to match the timing of development schemes.

#### 4.14 HRA Financial Security Options and growth proposals approved for 2019/20

4.14.1 As part of the 2019/20 budget setting process financial security savings of £354,630 were identified. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter £284,157 are on schedule to be achieved and £70,473 are not likely to be met in the current year. The failed savings mainly relate to timing differences,

- Financial Security Option SA5 - Sale of assets £32,000. This one off saving was achieved in 2018/19 and was included in the year end balances.
- Financial Security Option SC2 - Formation of a wholly owned company (WOC) £25,000. The plan is to be able to set up the WOC in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

#### 4.15 2019/20 HRA Outturn position

4.15.1 Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter review the HRA balance as at 31 March 2020 is projected to be **£18.9Million** as detailed in table three.

<b>Table Three – Housing Revenue Account Out-turn Position</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>9,076,320</b>
Approved budget changes 18/19	(6,627,430)
3rd Quarter Pressure	30,560
3rd Quarter Carry Forward	(47,000)
<b>Projected net deficit post 3rd Quarter review</b>	<b>2,432,450</b>
HRA balance brought forward 1/4/19	(21,302,059)
Deficit in year	2,432,450
<b>Projected HRA balance 31/3/20</b>	<b>(18,869,609)</b>

#### **4.16 2020/21 HRA Budget**

- 4.16.1 The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget review has not identified additional ongoing budget pressures or savings. However, there are several areas that will be reviewed before the year end to ensure that ongoing budget impacts are included in future reports.

#### **5.1 Financial Implications**

- 5.1.1 This report is financial in nature and consequently financial implications are included above.

#### **5.2 Legal Implications**

- 5.2.1 The objective of this report is to outline the projected General Fund and HRA net expenditure for 2019/20 and the impact on the General Fund and HRA balances. While there are no legal consequences at this stage Members are reminded of their duty to set a balanced budget.

#### **5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.3.1 This report summarises external and internal factors that impact on approved budgets and recommends changes to those budgets in year. Budget changes identified for future years that could adversely impact on groups covered by statutory equality duties will be incorporated into the budget setting process which includes Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA). None of the budget changes reported will change any existing equalities and diversity policies.
- 5.3.2 The service department has been asked to look at the equalities and diversity implications in the increase in void re-let times and any potential impact on protected groups.

## **5.4 Risk Implications**

- 5.4.1 A risk based assessment of General Fund balances is undertaken and reported to Council as part of the General Fund Budget setting process. The required level of 2019/20 General Fund balances was calculated at £2,671,410. This report forecasts General Fund balances of £3,977,455 and allocated reserve balances of £2,546,231 which is above the minimum balances required.
- 5.4.2 The HRA balances are projected to be £18,869,609. The level of HRA balances or revenue reserves risk assessed for 2019/20 is £1,945,972. The projected HRA balance is above the risked assessed level, however it should be noted that the HRA holds balances for future debt repayments and the capital programme throughout the 30 year business plan

## **5.5 Policy Implications**

- 5.5.1 The budget framework represents a development of a policy led budgeting approach across Council services and the overall Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## **5.6 Climate Change Implications**

- 5.6.1 The Council declared a climate change emergency at the June 2019 Council meeting with a resolution to work towards a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2030.
- 5.6.2 The Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2020/21 Report approved by Council 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020 included funding for a climate change officer/works to meet the Council's climate change aims and these will be monitored from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

BD1 FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2019/20 Council 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019

BD2 FINAL HRA RENT SETTING AND BUDGET REPORT 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019

BD3 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY COUNCIL 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

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**Meeting:** EXECUTIVE

**Agenda Item:**

Portfolio Area: Resources

**Date:** 11 March 2020

**QUARTER 3 MONITORING REPORT (CAPITAL) - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**



KEY DECISION

Author – Belinda White Ext. 2515  
Contributor – Lee Busby Ext. 2730  
Finance team and budget managers  
Lead Officer – Clare Fletcher Ext. 2933  
Contact Officer – Clare Fletcher Ext. 2933

**1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the Council's 2019/20 and 2020/21 capital programme.
- 1.2 To seek approval for the revisions to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital programme.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the 2019/20 General Fund capital programme net decrease in expenditure of £15.5Million be approved as summarised in table one, para 4.1.1.
- 2.2 The General Fund net increase of capital expenditure of £15.8Million in 2020/21, also as summarised in table one, para 4.1.1, be approved.
- 2.3 That Members approve the net decrease of £3.6Million in the capital expenditure for 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account, as summarised in table three, para 4.3.1.
- 2.4 That Members approve the net increase of £4.0Million in the capital expenditure for 2020/21 Housing Revenue Account, also as summarised in table three, para 4.3.1.

**3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The latest 2019/20 capital programme was approved at Council on 26 February 2020. The 2019/20 programme totals for each fund are and have

been revised for budgets approved for the North Road redevelopment as approved at Council (May 2019) and as annotated in Appendix A and B:

- General Fund £32,865,140
- Housing Revenue Account £33,563,500

#### 4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

##### 4.1 2019/20 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

4.1.1 The updated projected spend for 2019/20 General Fund capital programme (as detailed in Appendix A) is £17.3Million, a reduction of £15.5Million mainly due to reprofiling of schemes as shown in table one:

Table one: Changes to General Fund Capital Budget		
Capital Programme Change to 2019/20 Working Budget & 2020/21 Projected Budget	Increase (Decrease) to 2019/20 Working Budget £	Increase (Decrease) to 2020/21 Projected Budget £
<b>Slippage/Acceleration</b>		
Stevenage Direct Services – Note1	(638,500)	638,500
Housing Development Schemes (Joint GF/HRA) – Note 2	(59,060)	59,060
Garage Site Assembly - Note 3	(85,000)	85,000
Investment Property - Note 4	(13,244,050)	13,244,050
IDOX Property Management Software- Note 5	(17,200)	17,200
North Road Housing Development scheme – Note 6	(1,581,370)	1,581,370
Infrastructure Investment – Note 7	(32,480)	32,330
Corporate Web design – Note 7	(1,070)	1,070
New CRM Technology – Note 7	(15,370)	15,370
Pin Green Play Centre Equipment – Note 7	(35,000)	35,000
Residential Parking – Note 7	(23,160)	23,160
Hardstands – Note 7	(20,000)	20,000
Town Centre Ramps Improvements – Note 7	(15,000)	15,000
FVP Aqua Park – Note 7	(11,760)	11,760
BTC Roof – Note 7	(10,500)	10,500
Cycleway installations – Note 7	(10,000)	10,000
<b>Total Slippage/Acceleration</b>	<b>(15,799,520)</b>	<b>15,799,370</b>
<b>Increases/(Decreases) to Budgets</b>		
Building Conversion into New Homes - Ditchmore Lane – Note 8	258,000	
Cavendish - Fire Alarm Upgrade – Note 9	16,440	
Replacement Shops Van – Note 9		(30,000)
Grants To Registered Providers – Note 9	(600)	
Infrastructure Investment – Note 9	11,060	
Parking Enforcement - Old Town Permits – Note 9	(12,000)	
<b>Total Increases/(Decreases) to Budgets</b>	<b>272,900</b>	<b>(30,000)</b>
<b>Total Change in Working Budget and Projected Budgets</b>	<b>(15,526,620)</b>	<b>15,769,370</b>

## 4.2 Slippage/Acceleration Notes for table one:

- 4.2.1 **Note 1:** a number of capital projects within Stevenage Direct Services are forecast to underspend in 2019/20. The £638K includes
- £503K for replacement vehicles. The vehicles are still in procurement or have a delivery date in 2020/21
  - £80K for the new Waste & Recycling IT system (Bartec), the timing of which has slipped due to the delay in agreeing some additional costs
  - £30K for litter bins
  - £25k for Hertford Road Play Area
- 4.2.2 **Note 2:** The Kenilworth development scheme has been reprofiled since the report approved by Executive on 22 January 2020, and £59K has slipped from 2019/20 to 2020/21.
- 4.2.3 **Note 3:** £85K of the rolling Garage Site Assembly programme has slipped into 2020/21 however only £60K of this may be required.
- 4.2.4 **Note 4: Commercial Property**  
The budget for Investment in Commercial Property has been slipped into 2020/21. As detailed in the Final Capital Strategy 2019/20-2024/25 report, there have been no new purchases in 2019/20. A number of properties have been assessed but did not meet the target return or did not have a strong enough covenant.
- 4.2.5 The lack of investment purchases have been exacerbated by a number of issues including:
- The staffing capacity in the Estates section which although has been restructured is not fully staffed yet and have needed to focus on regeneration activities.
  - Increase in PWLB rates available to Local Authorities by 1% has impacted target return. To date one property has been purchased and has made a net return of £49,000 for the General Fund in 2019/20.
  - The lack of suitable property investments currently available.
- 4.2.6 Action taken to mitigate the impact on the General Fund are:
- The CFO has sought counsel's opinion on investing in property inside and outside the Stevenage boundary in pursuant of supporting the financial provision of the Council's services.
  - Review of the Strategy to revise the scope of investments. The Council's Property Investment Strategy will be reviewed to potentially include purchases outside the Stevenage Boundary and Local Plan economic area.
- 4.2.7 **Note 5:** A further new IT system, Idox Property Management Software, has also slipped into 2020/21, as has spend on the IT and Digital programmes totalling £49K, the majority due to agreeing specification for IT hardware for members.

4.2.8 **Note 6:** There is estimated to be slippage totalling £1.6Million on the North Road Housing Development scheme.

4.2.8 **Note 7:** There is estimated to be further slippage totalling £125K on other projects.

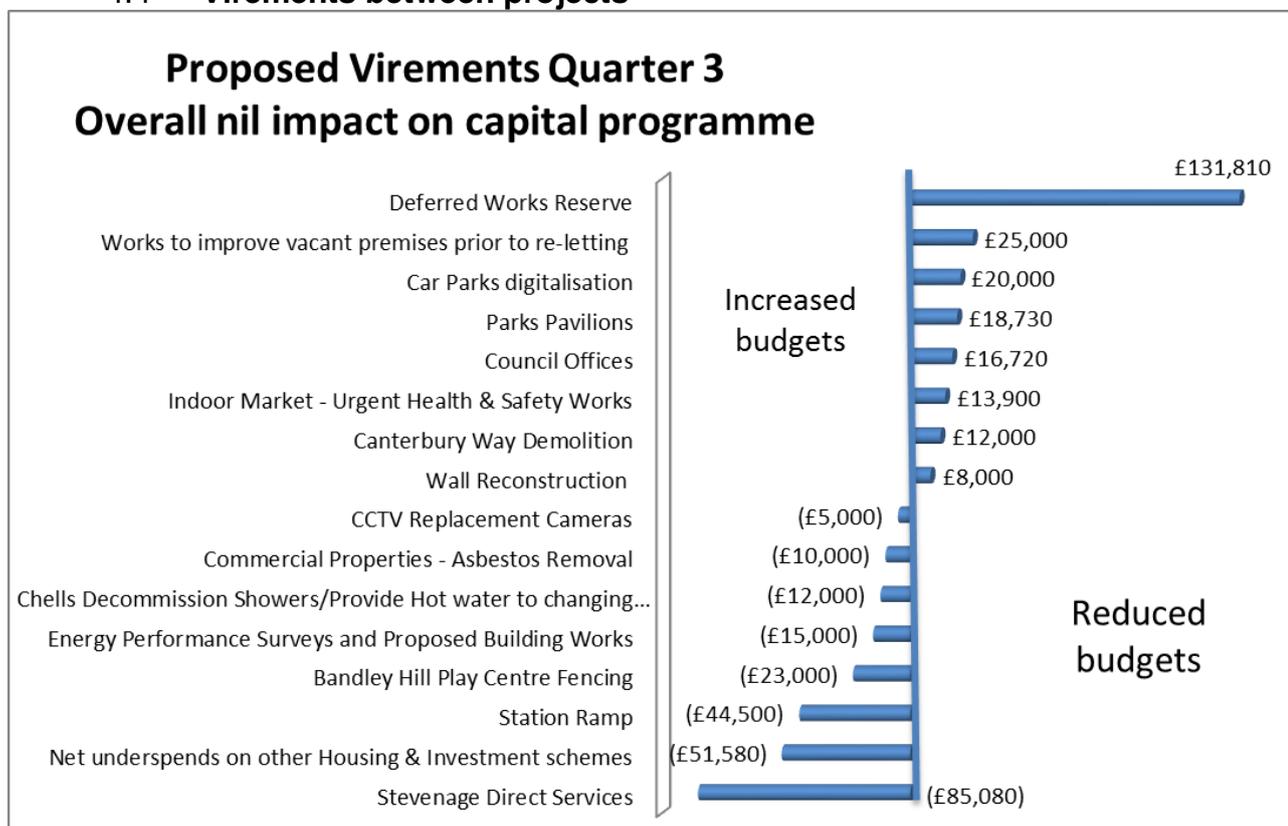
- £35K for Pin Green Play Centre requires a detailed specification of works before procurement can take place.
- Leisure Centre ramp will be completed by the end of 2019/20, but £15K for the Argyle Way ramp will slip due to the application for match funding from ThamesLink Rail.
- Plant work has been completed at Fairland Valley Aqua Park, but the £12K for resurfacing will slip into 2020/21.
- Cycleway Installation is subject to a grant bid from the Arts Council which is still in the pipeline resulting in the slippage of the £10K to be funded by SBC.

4.3. **Increases/Reductions in Expenditure Notes for table one:**

4.3.1 **Note 8:** The Ditchmore Lane housing development scheme expenditure and financing have been revised as the project nears completion and offers have been received.

4.3.2 **Note 9:** A number of other schemes have costs which have varied from previous forecasts, and the over/(under)spends have been incorporated into this report, with a net increase of £15K in 2019/20 and decrease of £30K in 2020/21 (details in table one).

4.4 **Virements between projects**



4.4.1 A number of schemes have been forecast to underspend, returning £158K to the Deferred Works Reserve, including:

- £85K from Stevenage Direct Services of which £59K relates to Green Space Access Infrastructure, £9K due to a lower than forecast costs of works and £50K which had been on hold.
- £96K relates to Housing Investment, including £44.5K due to work on the station ramp costing less than initially forecast.
- £28K relates to Communities & Neighbourhoods including £23K for Bandle Hill Play Centre Fencing which was subject to a revised bid submitted for 2020/21.
- £25K relates to Estates as funding has been found elsewhere for Energy Performance Surveys and Asbestos Removal at Commercial Properties.
- There will be an underspend of £12K on Chells changing room works, due to the decision to cancel hot water works and review works required pending the outcome of the Local Assets Review.

4.4.2 Two new urgent schemes are requested to be funded from the Deferred Works Reserve,

- £20K for Car Park Equipment Digitisation and
- £8K for an urgent wall reconstruction.

This would result in net funds returned to the Deferred Works Reserve of £132K.

4.4.3 The Estates Team request a budget allocation of £25K to ensure commercial vacant premises are in a lettable condition prior to marketing.

4.4.4 A budget increase of £12K is requested for additional costs relating to the demolition of the Canterbury Way pavilion.

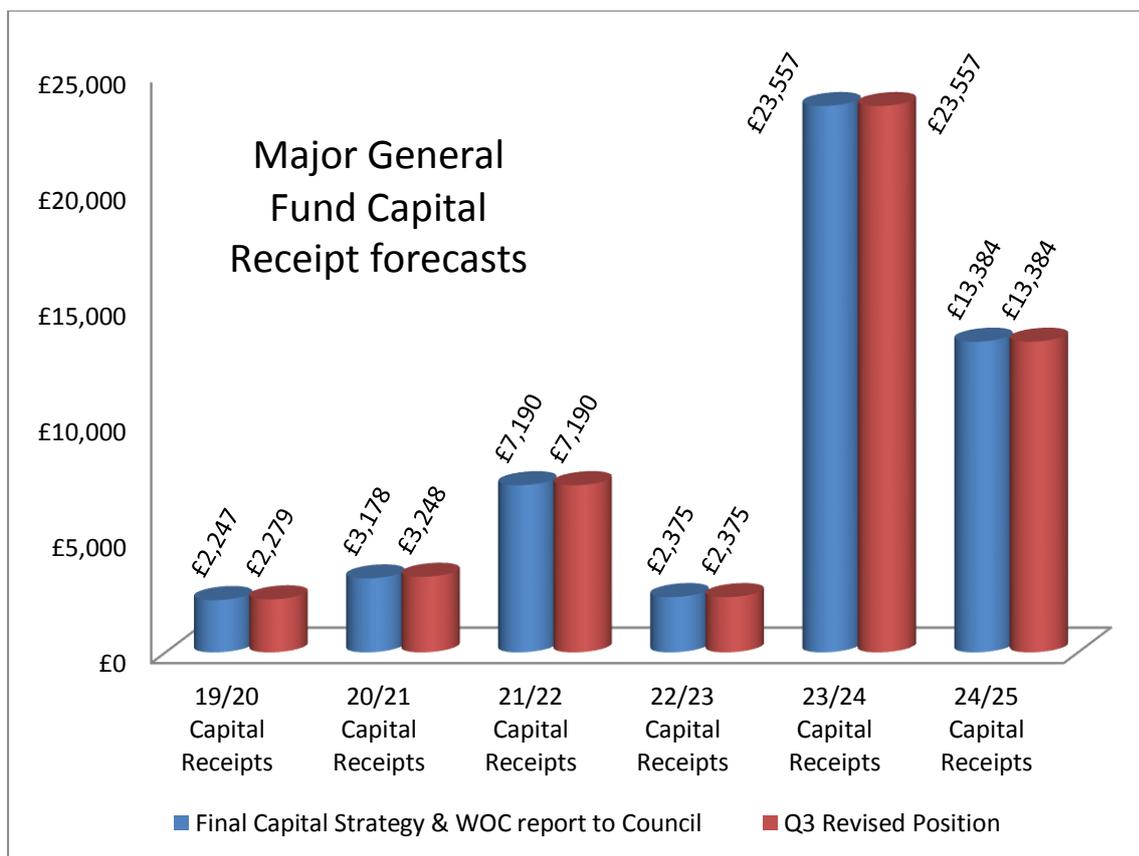
4.4.5 In addition there is a request to fund urgent Health & Safety works on Park Pavilions, Council Offices and the Indoor Market.

#### 4.5 **Other Updates:**

4.5.1 This report includes the investment costs for the WOC of £700K in 2019/20 and £1.6Million in 2020/21, as per the original Wholly Owned Housing Development Company (WOC) business plan (Council 22 May 2019). The WOC business plan is currently being refreshed in light of the 1% PWLB rate increase, and the programme may to slip. Future capital strategy reports will update Members further.

## 4.6 **Capital Resources General Fund**

4.6.1 Projected capital receipts from disposals for the current and future years have been reviewed. Forecast receipts have been adjusted accordingly and shown in the following chart:



Note: Capital receipts shown in 23/24 and 24/25 match fund known expenditure on the Civic Hub and Kenilworth scheme

- The increase in 2019/20 forecasts is due to a higher sale price and an additional sale as part of the Garages Programme.
- The increase in 2020/21 forecasts is due to higher than previously forecast receipts for Ditchmore Lane, Land at Elliot Road and the Garages Programme.

4.6.2 Prudential borrowing that is required to support the Capital programme will be a treasury management decision as to when the external borrowing is actually taken. As per the Treasury Management Strategy, while cash balances are high and rates for borrowing are significantly higher than interest earned on balances, internal borrowing will be used.

4.6.3 Included in the capital strategy is budget for the new bus interchange, which will deliver a high-quality transport hub connecting rail, bus and pedestrian/cyclists, whilst also facilitating the develop of the new Garden Square. There is £9.6Million of GD3 funding earmarked for the relocation and redevelopment of the bus station approved by the LEP but cannot currently be drawn down by SBC. Work continues to demonstrate that the requirements to release the funding have been met. Members should note that procurement has started for the relocation to meet the timetable for SG1 town centre regeneration.

4.6.4 A budget of £6.5Million (£5Million construction costs and £1.5Million for fees and contingency) has been allocated for the new bus station scheme if SBC

has to fund the project. It will have a significant impact on the current capital programme and also the Council's General Fund in the form of additional borrowing costs. The capital strategy to the February Council reaffirmed the possible impacts of having to fund the bus station relocation from SBC resources.

## 4.7 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

4.7.1 The latest HRA Business Plan was approved by Council in January 2020. The updated projection for 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account capital programme is £29.9Million (as detailed in Appendix B) a decrease of £3.6Million as summarised in table three:

<b>Table three: Changes to Housing Revenue Account Capital Budget</b>			
<b>Capital Programme Change to 2019/20 Working Budget &amp; 2020/21 Projected Budget</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease) to 2019/20 Working Budget £</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease) to 2020/21 Projected Budget £</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Slippage</b>			
Decent Homes - Internal & External Works	(900,000)	900,000	Two contracts being let, awards will take place in 19/20 but spend will take place in 20/21
Decent Homes - Flat Blocks	(800,000)	800,000	Consultation on contract slipped
Sprinkler Systems - Flat Blocks	(1,500,000)	1,500,000	Contract awarded but there will be slippage due to late start
New Build Programme including OMAs	(320,690)	320,690	
IT Infrastructure Investment	(49,900)	49,900	net movement across scheduled IT projects
Corporate Website - Redesign	(550)	550	minor reprofiling
New CRM Technology	(245,370)	245,370	developing plans to spend extra financing received on applications that will benefit the HRA
Housing All Under One Roof IT Programme	(135,970)	135,970	developing plans to spend extra financing received on applications that will benefit the HRA
<b>Total Slippage</b>	<b>(3,952,480)</b>	<b>3,952,480</b>	
<b>Increases to Budgets</b>			
Open Market Acquisitions	350,000		to mitigate risk of returning 1.4.1 receipts
March Hare in Burwell Road development	274,190		increased costs
Lease repurchase	13,070		additional costs

<b>Table three: Changes to Housing Revenue Account Capital Budget</b>			
<b>Capital Programme Change to 2019/20 Working Budget &amp; 2020/21 Projected Budget</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease) to 2019/20 Working Budget £</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease) to 2020/21 Projected Budget £</b>	<b>Reason</b>
IT Infrastructure Investment		5,400	alteration to Office 365 capital/revenue split
IT Growth item		35,050	Growth in MTFS
New Intranet	3,500		pressure identified
<b>Total increases to Budgets</b>	<b>640,760</b>	<b>40,450</b>	
<b>Decreases to 2019/20 &amp; 2020/21 Budgets</b>			
Gresley Way development	(78,770)		no further costs
Shephall Way development	(231,550)		reduced costs
<b>Total Decreases to 2019/20 &amp; 2020/21 Budgets</b>	<b>(310,320)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total Change in Working Budget and Projected Budgets</b>	<b>(3,622,040)</b>	<b>3,992,930</b>	

#### 4.8 Budget updates:

4.8.1 **Housing Stock** - A number of contracts have been reprofiled and are as follows:

- Decent Homes – Internal & External Works. The original contract for these works ended earlier than planned, and as a result procurement commenced for two replacement contractors to deliver these works. This contract is due to be awarded in March 2020 and there is a forecast slippage of £900k.
- Decent Homes – Flat Blocks. Dates are now clearer for Member, Leaseholder and Tenant consultation for the Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC), resulting in budget rephasing of £800k from 2019/20 to 2020/21.
- Sprinkler System – Flat Blocks. The sprinkler contract had to be re-procured. The contract has been awarded and has commenced but there is likely to be a potential slippage of £1.5Million.

#### 4.8.2 **Housing Development**

- The Kenilworth development scheme has been reprofiled since the report approved by Executive on 22 January 2020, with £731K more now anticipated to be spent in 2019/20.
- The North Road development scheme has projected slippage of £1.4Million from 2019/20 to 2020/21.
- There is also projected to be £481K of slippage on the Symonds Green development.
- Officers request that the budget for Open Market Acquisitions be increased by £350K to mitigate the risk of 1.4.1 receipts to be returned to government.

- There are also increased costs of £274K anticipated relating to the March Hare development and £13K for repurchase of a lease, but this will be offset by lower projected costs of £310K on the Gresley Way and Shephall Way developments.

#### 4.8.3 **IT/Digital**

- Additional funds were allocated for IT/digital work of benefit to the HRA. Plans are being developed identifying appropriate applications, resulting in £381K slipping from 2019/20 to 2020/21.
- Slippage is also projected against IT Infrastructure Development of £50K.
- IT Infrastructure budgets have also been increased to match the Medium Term Financial Strategy (£35K) and for the HRA share of updated figures for the on-boarding of Office 365.

#### 4.9 **Other Updates:**

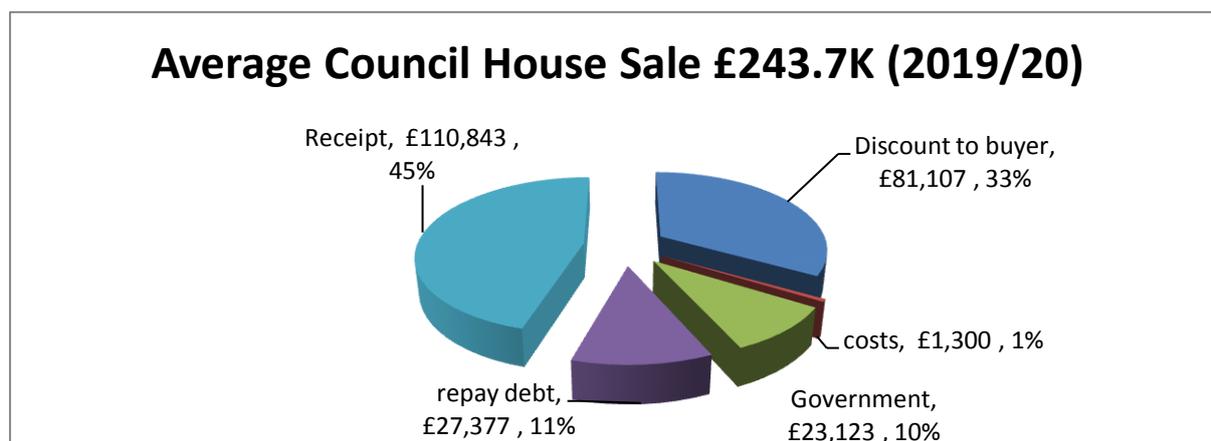
- 4.9.1 The **Decent Homes programme** forms a large part of the ongoing investment programme of the HRA. The number of properties where works have been carried out to bring the property up to the decent homes standard (the standard by which each element i.e. kitchen, bathroom, electrics, windows, roof etc. whose condition is measured) in 2019/20 is 491 to the end of December, against an in year target of 495 to the same period. The target for the year remains at 750 properties in total for 2019/20.
- 4.9.2 The HRA Right to Buy (RTB) receipts included a one for one (1.4.1) balance of £10.0Million on 1 April 2019, available to fund 30% of the future new build schemes. There is a three year deadline to spend these receipts, and if not spent the receipt must be returned to government plus interest (calculated at 4% above base rate). The phasing of RTB funded build schemes have been reviewed, along with the opportunities to support local social housing providers via Registered Provider grants so that 1.4.1 receipts can be utilised wherever possible.
- 4.9.3 The revised programme as outlined in Appendix B now forecasts that there is a need to return receipts in quarter 4 of 2019/20 (£372K plus interest) and quarter 1 of 2020/21 (£317K plus interest). As per para 4.8.2, the Housing Development team have requested an increase to the budget for Open Market Acquisitions to mitigate this risk. Options also continue to be explored by the team to be able to find a scheme in partnership with a registered social landlord in order to further mitigate this risk.
- 4.9.4 A further recommendation was added to the capital strategy report at the request of the January Executive to write to the Secretary of State to ask whether these receipts could be used for schemes such as Kenilworth. At the time of writing this report a letter was being drafted.

#### 4.10 **Capital Resources Housing Revenue Account**

4.10.1 The HRA had 28 RTB sales by the end of the third quarter (18 RTB sales by the same point last year). The forecast for the year remains unchanged at 35 sales although there is a risk that sales may be higher. Gross and net sale proceeds and average discount given is shown in the following table:

<b>Table four: RTB Receipts 2019/20</b>						
<b>RTB Receipts</b>	<b>RTB Admin</b>	<b>Allowable Debt</b>	<b>LA Assumed Income</b>	<b>New Build Receipts</b>	<b>Payment to Government</b>	<b>Total RTB Receipts</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
2018/19 Actual	40,300	696,056	357,497	3,055,519	864,541	<b>5,013,913</b>
2019/20 Quarter 1 Actual	11,700	223,555	90,159	765,525	215,812	<b>1,306,751</b>
2019/20 Quarter 2 Actual	16,900	415,143	90,159	1,616,032	215,812	<b>2,354,046</b>
2019/20 Quarter 3 Actual	7,800	127,852	90,159	571,166	215,812	<b>1,012,790</b>
2019/20 Projection Update	<b>45,500</b>	<b>958,188</b>	<b>360,637</b>	<b>3,690,903</b>	<b>863,248</b>	<b>5,918,476</b>

4.10.2 The average cost of building a new council home is £165,000. As per the chart below, the amount allowed by legislation to apply to a new council home from the average receipt of £243,750 is £59,159 which is not sufficient to build a replacement.



4.10.3 The updated HRA Business Plan revised the approach to borrowing in light of the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap by the Chancellor. The approach taken is based on the HRA's need to borrow and affordability. As such the revenue contribution to capital originally identified to fund the HRA capital programme for 2019/20 and beyond has been replaced with new borrowing.

4.10.4 Prudential borrowing identified for the sprinkler system for the flat blocks and the New Build Programme will be a treasury management decision as to when external borrowing is actually taken.

4.10.5 The majority of resources available at year end are restricted use 1-4-1 receipts (£9.2Million).

## **5 Implications**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

5.1.1 This report is of a financial nature and financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

5.2.1 None identified at this time.

### **5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

5.3.1 This report is of a technical nature reflecting the projected spend for the year for the General Fund and HRA capital programme. None of the budget changes reported will change any existing equalities and diversity policies and it is not expected that these budget changes will impact on any groups covered by statutory equalities duties.

5.3.2 Schemes contained within the capital programme will have an EQIA particularly those relating to housing schemes.

### **5.4 Risk Implications**

5.4.1 The significant risks associated with the capital strategy are largely inherent within this report.

5.4.2 If the Housing & Investment team's procurement of HRA contracts is delayed it could lead to works not being completed to the current profile.

5.4.3 A significant risk exists that works deferred due to lack of funding become urgent in year, requiring completion on grounds of health and safety. A reasonable assessment has been made in the prioritisation process to try to keep this risk to a minimum, and these schemes are monitored by Assets and Capital Board.

5.4.4 There is a risk in achieving the level of qualifying HRA spend to fully utilise retained 1.4.1 receipts. Should qualifying schemes slip or new schemes fail to be developed the three year deadline for spending these receipts will not be met and will have to be returned to the Government plus interest (base rate plus 4%). Should the new schemes and/or purchases slip or fail to be delivered there is a risk that 1.4.1 receipts will have to be returned and interest payments made.

5.4.5 There are risks around achieving the level of disposals budgeted for. The estimated dates of receipts very much rely on a series of steps being successful at estimated dates. The level of receipts for the General Fund is a significant source of funding for its capital programme. The Council manages this risk by reviewing and updating the Strategy quarterly, including resources where a sale is likely to complete. This will enable action to be taken where a receipt looks doubtful.

- 5.4.6 The Capital programme is funded from a number of sources including capital receipts and borrowing. The timing and value of the capital receipt cannot be known with certainty.
- 5.4.7 When cash balances are above that required for the day to day running of the council the treasury management policy is to use internal borrowing. When actual borrowing is taken interest rates may be higher than those prevailing now. The Council manages this risk by reviewing and updating its cash flow forecast and Treasury Management strategy regularly.
- 5.4.8 If SBC have to fund the Bus Station project, there is likely to be an impact on the current capital programme and the General Fund in the form of borrowing costs. The Capital Strategy to February Council set out the possible impacts of having to fund all the possible impacts of having to fund the bus station from SBC resources.

## **5.5 Climate Change Implications**

- 5.5.1 The council's buildings across the town do not meet the climate change agenda in terms of energy efficiency or divestment of use of fossil fuels and in their current condition they would undermine the Council's attempt to be carbon zero by 2030.
- 5.5.2 However, there is an opportunity with the local asset review agenda to have design principles built into renewed assets in terms of energy efficiency and sustainable energy sources. This should be a core principle of any future designs arising from the local asset reviews. There would be a further benefit of reduced energy costs.
- 5.5.3 The climate change agenda is far wider than just the buildings the Council uses, the Council are also examining the vehicle fleet the Council uses and consideration will be given to reducing the carbon impact of the fleet moving forward.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- BD1 – FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20-2024/25

## **APPENDICES**

- A – General Fund Capital Strategy
- B – HRA Capital Strategy

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>General Fund - Schemes</b>									
	Stevenage Direct Services	2,645,010	1,445,716	1,937,870	(707,140)	5,191,900	2,745,900	2,471,800	1,232,000	132,000
	Housing Development*	4,157,430	1,352,560	2,774,400	(1,383,030)	5,760,730	2,404,430	11,219,590	7,848,010	0
	Finance and Estates	13,773,370	31,737	427,120	(13,346,250)	13,587,350	15,000	76,020	15,000	15,000
	Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology	897,860	252,632	860,000	(37,860)	620,980	273,400	104,220	104,220	104,220
	Housing and Investment	506,930	170,289	449,700	(57,230)	950,350	570,500	277,000	157,000	60,000
	Regeneration	9,850,150	5,978,974	9,850,150	0	9,280,590	0	2,474,000	13,384,000	13,384,000
	Communities and Neighbourhoods	405,030	188,344	320,270	(84,760)	420,260	305,000	255,000	60,000	20,000
	Planning and Regulatory	614,760	404,194	572,600	(42,160)	186,160	340,000	340,000	340,000	340,000
	Deferred Works Reserve	14,600	0	146,410	131,810	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
	<b>Total Schemes</b>	<b>32,865,140</b>	<b>9,824,447</b>	<b>17,338,520</b>	<b>(15,526,620)</b>	<b>36,198,320</b>	<b>6,854,230</b>	<b>17,417,630</b>	<b>23,340,230</b>	<b>14,255,220</b>
	<i>* adjusted to reflect the Housing WOC Business Plan agreed by Council 22 May 2019</i>									
	<b>General Fund -Resources</b>									
BG902	Capital Receipts	2,409,092		1,628,877	(780,215)	5,921,629	2,067,479	2,824,075	17,974,758	13,634,040
	New Build 1-4-1 Receipts - for RP Grants	1,500,000		1,499,400	(600)	0	0	0	0	0
BG904	Grants and other contributions	294,359		235,299	(59,060)	1,691,075	797,004	4,343,535	3,916,192	0
B860	S106's	69,995		39,995	(30,000)	45,000	15,000	0	0	0
	LEP	9,574,560		9,574,560	0	5,875,590	0	0	0	0
	RCCO	659,286		605,526	(53,760)	138,120	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
	Regeneration Asset Reserve	75,590		75,590	0	200,000	0	0	0	0
B916	Capital Reserve (Revenue Savings)	1,314,000		1,314,000	0	1,420,000	1,070,000	1,070,000	1,070,000	488,708
BG903	Capital Reserve (Housing Receipts)	361,068		361,068	0	364,243	367,886	371,565	375,280	128,472
	New Homes Bonus	358,170		308,170	(50,000)	514,554	362,500	226,000	0	0
	Prudential Borrowing Approved	14,350,650		1,106,600	(13,244,050)	17,362,820	1,702,400	4,209,390	0	0
	Short Term borrowing and funded from private sale	1,898,370		589,435	(1,308,935)	2,665,289	467,961	4,369,065	0	0
	<b>Total Resources (General Fund)</b>	<b>32,865,140</b>		<b>17,338,520</b>	<b>(15,526,620)</b>	<b>36,198,320</b>	<b>6,854,230</b>	<b>17,417,630</b>	<b>23,340,230</b>	<b>14,255,220</b>
				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>General Funds Receipts BG902</b>									
	<b>Unallocated B/fwd</b>	(3,330,472)		(3,330,472)		(3,825,619)	(562,715)	(3,019,947)	(2,102,951)	(3,315,628)
	In Year Receipts	(2,247,342)		(2,279,142)		(3,248,160)	(7,190,000)	(2,375,040)	(23,556,500)	(13,384,000)
	Used in Year	2,409,092		1,628,877		5,921,629	2,067,479	2,824,075	17,974,758	13,634,040
BG905	Ring Fenced Receipts Used to Repay ST Borrowing	155,118		155,118		589,435	2,665,289	467,961	4,369,065	0
	<b>General Fund Receipts Unallocated C/fwd</b>	<b>(3,013,604)</b>		<b>(3,825,619)</b>		<b>(562,715)</b>	<b>(3,019,947)</b>	<b>(2,102,951)</b>	<b>(3,315,628)</b>	<b>(3,065,588)</b>
	<b>Capital Reserve Resource</b>									
	<b>Unallocated B/fwd</b>	(594,431)		(594,431)		(350,000)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	In Year Resource	(1,430,637)		(1,430,637)		(1,434,243)	(1,437,886)	(1,441,565)	(1,445,280)	(1,449,033)
	Used in Year	1,675,068		1,675,068		1,784,243	1,437,886	1,441,565	1,445,280	617,180
	<b>Capital Reserve Unallocated C/fwd</b>	<b>(350,000)</b>		<b>(350,000)</b>		<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(831,854)</b>

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Stevenage Direct Services</b>									
	<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>									
KC218	Hertford Road Play Area (S106 Funded)	25,000		0	(25,000)	25,000				
KE911	Play Area Improvement Programme	192,340	64,627	192,340	0	243,000	283,500	220,000		
KE097	Litter bins	125,000	72,875	95,000	(30,000)	103,000	83,000	10,000	4,000	4,000
KE329	Play Areas Fixed Play	20,810		20,810	0	10,000	10,000			
KE494	Green Space Access Infrastructure	45,000	36,415	36,420	(8,580)					
GROWTH	Green Space Access Infrastructure	50,000		0	(50,000)		148,000	153,000	128,000	128,000
	<b>Other</b>									
KG002	Garages	1,153,890	930,482	1,153,890	0	3,657,400	1,952,400	1,952,400	375,000	
KE487	Cavendish Depot - Road Markings and Barriers	12,750		12,750	0					
KE495	Cavendish Depot - Renovation/Yard Drainage	10,000		10,000	0	90,000				
KE517	Cavendish Depot - Fire Alarm Upgrade			16,440	16,440					
KE496	Refurbishment of Weston Rd Cemetery Office	6,500		0	(6,500)					
KS263	Waste and Recycling System	110,000		30,000	(80,000)	80,000				
KE226	Allotment Maintenance System					10,000				
KE519	FVP Dam Works					25,000				
KE520	Welfare improvements at out based hubs				0	10,000				
	<b>Vehicles, Plant, Equipment</b>									
KE349	Waste Receptacles	15,000	11,255	15,000	0	15,000				
KE497	Trade Waste Containers	20,000		0	(20,000)	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	
Various	Vehicle/Plant replacement Programme	858,720	330,062	355,220	(503,500)	903,500	249,000	116,400	705,000	
	<b>Total Stevenage Direct Services</b>	<b>2,645,010</b>	<b>1,445,716</b>	<b>1,937,870</b>	<b>(707,140)</b>	<b>5,191,900</b>	<b>2,745,900</b>	<b>2,471,800</b>	<b>1,232,000</b>	<b>132,000</b>

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Housing Development Scheme (Joint GF/HRA)</b>									
KG030	Grants To Registered Providers	591,600	829,465	591,000	(600)					
KG030	Grants To Registered Providers contingency	908,400		908,400	0					
KG032	Building Conversion into New Homes - Ditchmore Lane	257,000	464,049	515,000	258,000	0				
Various	Housing Development Scheme (Joint GF/HRA)*	<b>1,700,430</b>	<b>59,046</b>	<b>60,000</b>	(1,640,430)	<b>4,176,360</b>	<b>2,404,430</b>	<b>8,712,600</b>	<b>7,848,010</b>	<b>0</b>
KG033	Private Sales Schemes - Wedgwood Way	0		0	0					
KG038	Wholly Owned Housing Development Company (WOC)	700,000		700,000	0	1,584,370		2,506,990		
	<b>Total Housing Development (including grants to Registered Providers)</b>	<b>4,157,430</b>	<b>1,352,560</b>	<b>2,774,400</b>	<b>(1,383,030)</b>	<b>5,760,730</b>	<b>2,404,430</b>	<b>11,219,590</b>	<b>7,848,010</b>	<b>0</b>
	<i>* adjusted to reflect the Housing WOC Business Plan agreed by Council 22 May 2019</i>									
	<b>Finance &amp; Estates</b>									
KG025	Garage Site Assembly	100,000	14,848	15,000	(85,000)	85,000				
KR912	Investment Property	13,244,050		0	(13,244,050)	13,244,050				
KR914	IDOX Property Management Software	17,200		0	(17,200)	17,200				
KR915	Energy Performance Surveys and Proposed Building Works	15,000		0	(15,000)					
KR916	Commercial Properties Refurbishment (MRC Programme)	387,120	16,889	387,120	0	226,100		61,020		
KR147	Commercial Properties - Asbestos Removal	10,000		0	(10,000)					
NEW	Works to improve vacant premises prior to re-letting			25,000	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
	<b>Total Finance &amp; Estates</b>	<b>13,773,370</b>	<b>31,737</b>	<b>427,120</b>	<b>(13,346,250)</b>	<b>13,587,350</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>76,020</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>
	<b>Corporate Projects, Customer Services &amp; Technology</b>									
	<b>IT General</b>									
KS251	Harmonising Infrastructure Technology (for shared service)	0	4,020	0	0					
KS268	Infrastructure Investment	617,080	145,658	595,660	(21,420)	579,020	271,720	104,220	104,220	104,220
KS276	Next Generation Telephony		9,817		0					
	<b>Total IT General</b>	<b>617,080</b>	<b>159,495</b>	<b>595,660</b>	<b>(21,420)</b>	<b>579,020</b>	<b>271,720</b>	<b>104,220</b>	<b>104,220</b>	<b>104,220</b>
	<b>Employer of Choice (EOC)</b>									
KS260	Replacement HR & Payroll System	1,240	1,240	1,240	0					
KS269	New Intranet	33,260	33,260	33,260	0					
	<b>Total EOC</b>	<b>34,500</b>	<b>34,500</b>	<b>34,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Connected to Our Customer (CTOC)</b>									
KS270	Online Customer Account (formerly Capita Advantage Digital)	0	2,125	0	0					
KS271	Corporate Website - Redesign	106,510	45,010	105,440	(1,070)	9,090	680			
KS274	New CRM Technology	139,770	11,503	124,400	(15,370)	32,870	1,000			
	<b>Total CTOC</b>	<b>246,280</b>	<b>58,638</b>	<b>229,840</b>	<b>(16,440)</b>	<b>41,960</b>	<b>1,680</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total Corporate Projects, Customer Services &amp; Technology</b>	<b>897,860</b>	<b>252,632</b>	<b>860,000</b>	<b>(37,860)</b>	<b>620,980</b>	<b>273,400</b>	<b>104,220</b>	<b>104,220</b>	<b>104,220</b>

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Housing and Investment</b>									
	<b>Play Centres</b>									
KC914	Pin Green - Recover Flat Roof	21,000	18,605	21,000	0					
KC913	Bandley Hill - External Doors		0		0					
KC915	Bandley Hill - Replace Hall Floor Covering	12,500	11,723	12,500	0					
	<b>Community Centres</b>									
KE902	Community Centres General	32,000	10,891	20,800	(11,200)					
KE471	St Nicholas - Boiler and Hot Water Installation Upgrade	40,000	10,360	40,000	0					
KE515	St Nicholas Annexe - External Decorations	20,000	873	0	(20,000)					
KE472	The Oval - Replace Radiators	8,000	8,110	8,110	110					
KE499	The Oval - Replace Windows	11,000	10,768	11,000	0					
KE484	Springfield House - Boiler upgrade	0	(31,945)	0	0					
KE488	Springfield House - Boundary Wall	52,150	39,004	52,150	0					
KE474	Timebridge - Boiler and Hot Water replacement (3/5th of Cost to SBC)	0	2,654	0	0					
Growth	Community Centres: 2019/20 Backlog H&S Works				0	12,850				
Growth	Community Centres Urgent and H&S Works				0	21,000	33,500	60,000		
Growth	Community Centres: Planned Preventative Works: to replace boiler at Bedwell CC					100,000				
	<b>Park Pavilions</b>									
KE907	Park Pavilions General	9,000	543	27,730	18,730					
KE475	Chells - Decommission Shower & Provide Hot Water To Changing Rooms	21,380	2,516	9,380	(12,000)					
KE500	Ridlins - M&E Refurbishment of AHU Plant & Controls	25,000	15,716	25,000	0					
KE479	Canterbury Way - Demolition	25,000	2,810	37,000	12,000					
KE493	King George V - Electrical Mains Intake & Supply Head	10,860	11,008	11,010	150					
	<b>Cemeteries</b>									
KE904	Cemetery Buildings	15,000	676	7,650	(7,350)					
	<b>Depots</b>									
KE501	CavendishRd - Re-roofing (Ascertain Level of Works Required)	15,000	654	1,000	(14,000)					
Growth	Depots: Urgent and H&S Works				0	290,000				
Growth	Depots: Planned Preventative Works (incl £500k reroof)				0	30,000	475,000	25,000		
	<b>Other</b>									
Growth	MSCP: Urgent and H&S Works				0			20,000		
	<b>Council Offices</b>									
KR900	Council Offices	19,380	844	36,100	16,720					
KR141	Corporate Buildings - Essential Health & Safety Electrical Works	19,270	850	19,270	0					
KR142	Corporate and Commercial Buildings - Condition survey	5,000	218	5,000	0					
KR149	Daneshill House - Test & Risk Assessment Remedial Works	15,000	654	15,000	0					

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Housing and Investment cont.</b>									
Growth	Daneshill: 2019/20 Backlog Urgent and H&S Works				0	15,000	18,000			
Growth	Daneshill: Urgent and H&S Works				0	45,000			65,000	
	<b>Operational Buildings</b>									
KE449	Indoor Market Fire Alarm Rep		(27)							
KE503	Indoor Market - Urgent Health & Safety Works	0	873	13,900	13,900					
KE489	Museum Store		(12,880)		0					
KR917	BTC - Roof Replacement Preliminary Works	15,000	409	4,500	(10,500)	10,500				
Growth	BTC 2019/20 Backlog H&S Works				0	30,000				
Growth	BTC Urgent and H&S Works				0	100,000	38,000			
Growth	BTC Planned Preventative Works					256,000	6,000	172,000	92,000	60,000
	<b>Town Centre</b>									
KR136	Preparation Works to Units 1,4,5 of the former QD Building	7,890	7,038	7,890	0					
KR138	Town Square Assets - Condition Survey	10,000	10,710	10,710	710					
KE504	Station Ramp	52,500	2,290	8,000	(44,500)	40,000				
KR145	Town Chambers / Square - External Facade Structural Repairs	45,000	44,345	45,000	0					
	<b>Total Housing and Investment</b>	<b>506,930</b>	<b>170,289</b>	<b>449,700</b>	<b>(57,230)</b>	<b>950,350</b>	<b>570,500</b>	<b>277,000</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>
	<b>Regeneration</b>									
KE384	Town Centre Improvements Phase 2 incl Wayfinding signage	0	(40,478)	0	0					
Various	Land Assembly	6,018,730	4,943,444	6,018,730	0	0	0	0	0	0
KE438	Public Realm Improvements to Market Place	0	0.00	0	0					
KE439	Town Square Improvements (GD1)	3,131,420	847,367	3,131,420	0	2,505,000				
TBA	Town Square Improvements (units 3 to 29)	0		0	0					
KE466	Bus Interchange (GD3)	500,000	228,641	500,000	0	5,875,590				
KE469	Leisure Centre (GD1)	0		0	0					
KE506	Public Sector Hub	200,000		200,000	0	900,000		2,474,000	13,384,000	13,384,000
	<b>Total Regeneration</b>	<b>9,850,150</b>	<b>5,978,974</b>	<b>9,850,150</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,280,590</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,474,000</b>	<b>13,384,000</b>	<b>13,384,000</b>

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Community &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>									
KC900	Arts and Leisure Centre - Pipework	231,000	115,103	231,000	0					
KC202	Fairlands Valley Park - Aqua	27,660	15,895	15,900	(11,760)	11,760				
KC228	Stevenage Golf Centre - Boiler Replacement	8,660	8,657	8,660	0					
KC224	Leisure Stock Condition	19,810	2,350	19,810	0		20,000			
KC225	Bandley Hill Play Centre - Treehouse	29,900	29,900	29,900	0					
KC229	Bandley Hill Play Centre - Fencing Replacement	23,000	1,003	0	(23,000)	8,000				
KC230	Pin Green Play Centre Equipment	35,000	0		(35,000)	35,000				
KE224	CCTV - Replacement Cameras	20,000	15,000	15,000	(5,000)	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
KE507	Cycleways Installations (subject to £100k Arts Council grant bid)	10,000	436		(10,000)	10,000				
GROWTH	SALC and the Swim Centre Urgent and H&S Works				0	200,000	280,000	100,000		
GROWTH	Stevenage Arts & Leisure Estimated 20 electrical distribution boards				0				30,000	
GROWTH	SALC, Swim Centre, and Fairlands Valley Sailing Centre 2019/20				0	73,500				
GROWTH	Backlog H&S Works				0					
GROWTH	Stevenage Arts & Leisure Water leak				0	30,000				
GROWTH	Fairlands Valley Park Sailing Centre - Boathouse				0	12,000				
GROWTH	Stevenage Swimming Centre Pool circulation pumps				0					15,000
GROWTH	Stevenage Swimming Centre Electrical distribution boards				0				25,000	
GROWTH	SLL Leisure management - end of contract capital provision				0			150,000		
GROWTH	Boat house as essential H&S works for dry rot				0	15,000				
	<b>Total Community &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>	<b>405,030</b>	<b>188,344</b>	<b>320,270</b>	<b>(84,760)</b>	<b>420,260</b>	<b>305,000</b>	<b>255,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>

## APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/20				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020	Q3 Revised Budget	Variance Working v Revised Budget	Q3 Revised Budget				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>Planning &amp; Regulatory</b>									
KE119	Off Street Car Parks (Multi Storey Car Parks)	189,620	189,619	189,620	0		250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
KE508	Multi-storey Car Park - New Entrances/Resurfacing	15,000		15,000	0					
KE**	Car Park Equipment - Digitalisation			20,000	20,000					
KE516	Town Centre Ramps Improvements	45,000	18,000	30,000	(15,000)	15,000				
KE201	Hard standings	50,000	8,994	30,000	(20,000)	70,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
KE100	Residential Parking	123,160	86,067	100,000	(23,160)	23,160				
KE100	Residential Parking	30,000		30,000	0					
KE470	Electric Car Charging Points	15,000	300	15,000	0					
KE217	Parking Restrictions	69,700	55,323	69,700	0	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
KE509	Onstreet Contactless pay	10,000		10,000	0					
KE443	Parking Enforcement - Old Town Permit Parking Area Implementation	12,000	2,250	0	(12,000)	12,000				
KE444	Coreys Mill Lane - Additional Parking Capacity	25,280	25,275	25,280	0	26,000				
KE518	Wall Reconstruction			8,000	8,000					
GROWTH	Workplace Travel Plan			0	0	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
KG010	House Renovation/Improvement Grants	0	180	0	0					
KG011	Disabled Facilities Grants	30,000	18,186	30,000	0					
	<b>Total Planning &amp; Regulatory</b>	<b>614,760</b>	<b>404,194</b>	<b>572,600</b>	<b>(42,160)</b>	<b>186,160</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>
KR911	Deferred Works Reserve	14,600		146,410	131,810	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000

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Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/2020				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget £	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020 £	Q3 Revised Budget £	Variance Working v Revised Budget £	Q3 Revised Budget £				
	<b>SUMMARY</b>									
	Capital Programme Excluding New Build	21,218,830	10,733,455	18,018,830	(3,200,000)	21,870,440	18,633,070	17,655,150	16,238,210	19,215,640
	New Build (Housing Development)*	11,095,050	9,536,827	11,101,300	6,250	29,884,480	39,483,800	19,868,970	14,760,700	13,300,720
	Special Projects & Equipment	155,000	122	155,000						
	IT Including Digital Agenda	1,094,620	228,307	666,330	(428,290)	798,240	135,180	51,330	51,330	51,330
	<b>TOTAL HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>33,563,500</b>	<b>20,498,712</b>	<b>29,941,460</b>	<b>(3,622,040)</b>	<b>52,553,160</b>	<b>58,252,050</b>	<b>37,575,450</b>	<b>31,050,240</b>	<b>32,567,690</b>
	<i>* adjusted to reflect the Housing WOC Business Plan agreed by Council 22 May 2019</i>									
	<b>HRA USE OF RESOURCES</b>									
BH930	MRR (Self Financing Depreciation)	21,542,451		18,961,481	(2,580,971)	11,233,751	16,678,468	13,211,525	14,369,424	14,792,126
	Revenue Contribution to Capital									11,719,160
BH901	New Build Receipts	2,633,769		3,092,700	458,931	7,303,251	7,129,662	5,480,697	3,967,734	3,702,600
BH903	Debt Provision Receipts	720,000		720,000		861,300	898,200	936,400	975,900	1,058,400
BH905	Section 20 Contribution					3,173,114	1,857,238	1,351,733	(159,288)	76,069
	Land Receipts					400,000	4,250,000	919,473	1,183,821	1,219,335
	S106					417,264		30,000	232,649	
	Developer Contributions (Kenilworth)	24,971		24,971		3,087,370	1,610,582	5,622		
	Grant	85,800		85,800						
	Borrowing	8,556,508		7,056,508	(1,500,000)	26,077,110	25,827,900	15,640,000	10,480,000	
	<b>TOTAL HRA RESOURCES FOR CAPITAL</b>	<b>33,563,500</b>		<b>29,941,460</b>	<b>(3,622,040)</b>	<b>52,553,160</b>	<b>58,252,050</b>	<b>37,575,450</b>	<b>31,050,240</b>	<b>32,567,690</b>
		(0)		(0)					(0)	
	Major Repair Reserve Bought Forward (BH930)	(10,919,793)		(10,919,793)		(4,114,762)	(5,367,435)	(1,532,228)	(1,474,884)	(911,610)
	Depreciation (increasing MRR)	<b>(12,156,450)</b>		<b>(12,156,450)</b>		<b>(12,486,424)</b>	<b>(12,843,261)</b>	<b>(13,154,181)</b>	<b>(13,806,151)</b>	<b>(14,482,764)</b>
	MRR Used (decreasing MRR)	21,542,451		18,961,481		11,233,751	16,678,468	13,211,525	14,369,424	14,792,126
	Major Repair Reserve Carried Forward	<b>(1,533,792)</b>		<b>(4,114,762)</b>		<b>(5,367,435)</b>	<b>(1,532,228)</b>	<b>(1,474,884)</b>	<b>(911,610)</b>	<b>(602,249)</b>
	Total RTB Receipts Bought Forward	(10,132,532)		(10,132,532)		(9,431,466)	(5,178,539)	(5,870,401)	(4,123,443)	(4,057,680)
	Total RTB Receipts Received	(4,131,079)		(4,131,079)		(4,276,382)	(8,719,724)	(4,670,139)	(4,877,871)	(5,275,185)
	Total RTB Receipts Used by General Fund (RP)	591,600		591,600						
	Receipts used for Registered Providers									
	Repayment of One for One Receipts	905,384		427,846		364,758				
	Debt Provision Receipts Used for Provision of Interest on Repaid One for One Receipts									
	Total RTB Receipts Used by HRA & General Fund (for RP)	3,353,769		3,812,700		8,164,551	8,027,862	6,417,097	4,943,634	4,761,000
	Total RTB Receipts Carried Forward	<b>(9,412,858)</b>		<b>(9,431,466)</b>		<b>(5,178,539)</b>	<b>(5,870,401)</b>	<b>(4,123,443)</b>	<b>(4,057,680)</b>	<b>(4,571,865)</b>

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/2020				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget £	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020 £	Q3 Revised Budget £	Variance Working v Revised Budget £	Q3 Revised Budget £				
	<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXCL. NEW BUILD</b>									
	<b>Planned Investment including Decent Homes</b>									
KH157	Decent Homes - Redecs	20,000	752	20,000		20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	
Various1	Decent Homes - Internal Works	1,618,710	816,379	718,710	(900,000)	2,605,670	1,802,910	1,779,870	14,403,740	
Various2	Decent Homes External Works	205,000	(113,062)	205,000						
Various3	Decent Homes - Roofing									
Various4	Decent Homes - Flat Blocks	12,280,160	6,130,354	11,480,160	(800,000)	13,402,600	12,852,780	11,780,400		
KH300	MRC Miscellaneous	260,000	194,153	260,000						
KH205	Communal Heating	1,200,000	1,358,509	1,200,000		1,313,300	1,316,820			
KH092	Lift Installation - Inspection & Remedial Works	437,800	504,839	437,800		303,070	265,390			
KH287	Temporary Lift Provision - Flat Blocks					450,000	450,000			
KH291	Sprinkler Systems - Flat Blocks	1,989,440	87,170	489,440	(1,500,000)	1,500,000				
KH294	High Rises - Preliminary Works	190,000	8,343	190,000						
	<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>									
KH085	Fire Safety	81,400	45,938	81,400		80,190	80,410	79,380		
KH112	Asbestos Management	379,870	198,328	379,870		374,250	375,250	370,460		
KH114	Subsidence	102,540	76,170	102,540		101,020	101,290	100,000		
KH144	Contingent Major Repairs	378,940	122,920	378,940		425,480	435,560	440,000		
	<b>Estate &amp; Communal Area</b>									
KH223	Asset Review - Challenging Assets	110,000	179,181	110,000		606,140	607,770	600,000		
KH224	Asset Review - Sheltered (non RED)	1,300,000	669,590	1,300,000		505,120				
	<b>Other HRA Schemes</b>									
KH174	Energy Efficiency Pilot Projects	15,200	5,867	15,200		15,150	15,190	15,000		
KH094	Disabled Adaptations	649,770	448,025	649,770		569,520	585,320	599,950		
	New Business Plan expenditure					1,098,930	(275,620)	1,870,090	1,814,470	
	<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXCL. NEW BUILD</b>	<b>21,218,830</b>	<b>10,733,455</b>	<b>18,018,830</b>	<b>(3,200,000)</b>	<b>21,870,440</b>	<b>18,633,070</b>	<b>17,655,150</b>	<b>16,238,210</b>	

Cost Centre	Scheme	2019/2020				2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
		February Final Working Budget £	Actuals to 31 Jan 2020 £	Q3 Revised Budget £	Variance Working v Revised Budget £	Q3 Revised Budget £				
	<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME NEW BUILD</b>									
KH233	New Build Programme*	11,095,050	9,536,827	11,101,300	6,250	29,884,480	38,781,910	18,965,290	13,829,910	12,342,000
	Build for sale						701,890	903,680	930,790	958,720
KH209	Ineligible part of Oval									
	New Build - Archer Road									
KH233	<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME NEW BUILD</b>	<b>11,095,050</b>	<b>9,536,827</b>	<b>11,101,300</b>	<b>6,250</b>	<b>29,884,480</b>	<b>39,483,800</b>	<b>19,868,970</b>	<b>14,760,700</b>	<b>13,300,720</b>
	<i>* adjusted to reflect the Housing WOC Business Plan agreed by Council 22 May 2019</i>									
	<b>SPECIAL PROJECTS &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>									
	<b>HRA Equipment</b>									
KH015	Capital Equipment (including Supported Housing Equipments)	30,000	122	30,000						
KH278	Vans for RVS	125,000		125,000						
	<b>Sub Total Special Projects &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>155,000</b>						
	<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>									
	<b>IT General (IT)</b>									
KH218	ICT Programme (Business Plan)					109,530				
KH268	Infrastructure Investment	343,290	71,732	293,390	(49,900)	285,190	133,830	51,330	51,330	51,330
KH235	ICT Equipment	10,000		10,000						
KH296	Keystone Module (to support fire safety)	32,000	43,035	32,000						
KH297	Tablets (x144)	5,330	1,026	5,330						
	<b>Total General IT</b>	<b>390,620</b>	<b>117,773</b>	<b>340,720</b>	<b>(49,900)</b>	<b>394,720</b>	<b>133,830</b>	<b>51,330</b>	<b>51,330</b>	<b>51,330</b>
	<b>Employer Of Choice (EOC)</b>									
KH259	Replacement HR & Payroll System	610	611	610						
KH269	New Intranet	16,380	19,882	19,880	3,500					
	<b>Total EOC</b>	<b>16,990</b>	<b>20,492</b>	<b>20,490</b>	<b>3,500</b>					
	<b>Connected To Our Customers (CTOC)</b>									
KH270	Online Customer Account (formerly Capita Advantage Digital)									
KH271	Corporate Website - Redesign	54,870	23,187	54,320	(550)	4,680	350			
KH288	New CRM Technology	369,770	13,628	124,400	(245,370)	262,870	1,000			
	<b>Total CTOC</b>	<b>424,640</b>	<b>36,815</b>	<b>178,720</b>	<b>(245,920)</b>	<b>267,550</b>	<b>1,350</b>			
	<b>Housing All Under One Roof programme (HAUOR)</b>									
KH283	Housing Improvements	155,960	17,975	55,950	(100,010)	100,010				
KH260	On-Line Housing Application Form	41,750	17,500	48,700	6,950	(6,950)				
KH286	Housing Document Management System	52,660	3,099	5,100	(47,560)	47,560				
KH293	Online Tenants Self-Service	12,000	14,653	16,650	4,650	(4,650)				
	<b>Total HAUOR</b>	<b>262,370</b>	<b>53,227</b>	<b>126,400</b>	<b>(135,970)</b>	<b>135,970</b>				
	<b>TOTAL ICT INCLUDING DIGITAL AGENDA</b>	<b>1,094,620</b>	<b>228,307</b>	<b>666,330</b>	<b>(428,290)</b>	<b>798,240</b>	<b>135,180</b>	<b>51,330</b>	<b>51,330</b>	<b>51,330</b>

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