

**The minute of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 January 2022 for
BOS/21/02 Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Four-year Outlook**

**BOS/21/02 DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) AND FOUR - YEAR
OUTLOOK**

- 23.1 Councillor Simon Barrett introduced the report to the Committee, outlining that HRA account had been in a deficit due to additional spending in building services. This had been due to an increased cost of resources as competitive labour resources had led to an increased use of subcontractors. There had also been a rent increase of CPI+1.
- 23.2 Councillor Melanie Barrett questioned the cause of the overspend in building services. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that the overspend had occurred for a variety of reasons such as the increased cost of materials over the past year. In addition to this there had been additional training for staff in order to decrease the reliance on outside contractors. There had also been costs to replace vehicles and to change the fleet to HVO.
- 23.3 Councillor Adrian Osborne queried whether anti-social behaviour had any impact on the cost of any additional work. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that as it had been dealt with internally by the housing team.
- 23.4 Councillor Adrian Osborne queried other income in terms of recovering legal cost. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that if there had been damage to a property the Council may take legal action to get reimbursed for this damage, however, the Council would use insurance provision to fund this.
- 23.5 Councillor Adrian Osborne queried what renewable heat had been installed in line with the renewable heat incentive. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that the incentive had been to install air source heat pumps and the team had been seeking grants to install these where possible.
- 23.6 Councillor Adrian Osborne questioned the social housing resources that the Council used to lessen the costs of using hotels. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that there had been areas of the housing stock that were able to be used as temporary accommodation, and the Council also had units for domestic abuse and were able to lease properties to the County Council to lessen use of hotels as temporary accommodation.
- 23.7 Councillor Jane Gould questioned whether there were sufficient funds to insulate and retrofit existing properties. The Assistant Director – Housing responded that the Council and the Energy Saving Trust had a stock profile of all properties that had enabled the Council to prioritize where work was needed. Councillor Jan Osborne added that the Council's design guide would go to Cabinet in spring to set out the aspirations in terms of retrofitting existing properties.
- 23.8 Councillor Mary McLaren if a central system, which kept record of money owed by individual residents would be beneficial. The Assistant Director – Corporate Resources responded that this was an ongoing major project however, there had

been issues in terms of software. The Assistant Director – Housing added that tenancy officers work with the shared revenue partnership in order to see all of what is owed by an individual. Councillor Jan Osborne added that the rent source system had also been in place in order to identify arrears and help residents get support in this area.

23.9 Councillor Melanie Barrett raised that she would like to see a reduction in use of sub-contractors in the future and allow more work to be delivered in house.

23.10 The Assistant Director – Housing referred to the quarterly financial outturn report and suggested that the accompanying quarterly financial HRA Outturn report could provide more detailed information on positive and adverse variances with detailed explanations.

23.11 Councillor Jane Gould praised the additional training for surveyors in order to allow for more in house services, however, money spent on retrofitting should be prioritized to insulation.

23.12 Councillor Melanie Barrett proposed the recommendation as follows:

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook.
- That the Overview and Scrutiny recommends that the information about the use of sub-contractors be included in the quarterly performance monitoring report. (Financial HRA Outturn report)

23.13 Councillor Adrian Osborne seconded this motion.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:-

1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook.

1.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny recommends that the Information about the use of sub-contractors be included in the quarterly performance monitoring report. (Financial HRA Outturn report)