

Outline briefing for Economic Development & Transport Policy & Scrutiny Committee

7 September 2016

Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods

Strategic Housing

- Impact of emerging local plan
- Private sector housing strategy
- Revise the council's tenancy agreement to strengthen in areas where needed to support tenants but to also enable us to take enforcement action where needed
- Reviewing the council's approach to managing the allocation of council homes (the Community & Environment Policy & Scrutiny Committee appointed a task group to support this review and a final report was endorsed by the Committee in July 2016)
- Review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan – approved by Executive in Feb 16
- Responses to national changes
 - 1% rent reduction – Reviewing HRA Business Plan, looking at debt profile, reviewing expenditure (saving opportunities)
 - Higher value sales – looking at options for how this will impact on the council and how we can minimise the impact, the detail of exactly what will be determined 'higher value' is not yet set.
 - Life time tenancies – again looking at options on how we move this forward, what circumstances different terms of fixed term tenancies can be let understanding what works best for the council and the individual
- Council house build programme
- Replacement of Ordnance Lane

- Currently reviewing the approach to operational delivery of the housing management function – are targeting our resources in the best way to meet the long term needs of the business and individuals.
- Developing a digital/IT 'road map' future investment to support front line services and tenants.
- Introduction of mobile working to front line repairs operatives – streamlining the service and improving customer service
- Capital improvements
 - £1.5m spend on Tenants Choice to 220 homes (new kitchens, bathrooms & rewires)
 - £1.35m spend on new heating system to 650 homes
 - £500k spend on new roofs to 100 properties
 - £500k spend (potentially up to £1m subject to contractor capacity) to undertake damp works
 - £400k spend on major & minor adaptations to approximately 500 homes.
- Rent arrears at year end £535k (up from £501k) – Increase but positive performance given wider challenges of austerity and welfare reform
- Average void period (old BVPI) 20.9 days down from 25.62
- Housing Option Interviews / contacts 3438 (2015/16)
- Homeless prevention cases 630
- Statutory homeless acceptances 91 (down from 103)
- Numbers in Temp Accom 53 (target of 62)
- Rough Sleepers now 18 usually hovers around 15 & most difficult group to engage with & to change behaviour of