

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officers:	Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive, and Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Neal Brookes, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform
Date of Meeting	20 January 2020

PROPOSED RENT REVIEW 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the level of rents and service charges to be charged in connection with Housing Revenue Account dwellings during 2020/21.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

To recommend to the Council that:

- 2.1 Rents for all Housing Revenue account properties are increased by 2.7% in 2020/21, following rent reductions over the last four years.
- 2.2 The minimum level of Housing Revenue Account balances remain protected at £1 million, as previously agreed.
- 2.3 That Housing Revenue Account service charges (as detailed in Appendix B) and that other General Fund service charges (as detailed in Appendix C) are charged as outlined.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To ensure that rent levels are appropriate and the Housing Revenue Account is financially secure as the Council delivers the Council Homes Investment Plan over the next 5 years.

Retaining the previously agreed minimum reserves level of £1 million ensures that prudent balances are maintained in the Housing Revenue Account.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Not applicable – the report once approved will become part of the Council's new approved budget

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Rents could be set at a lower level, but have already been reduced by a total of 4% over the last four years. Not to raise rents now would further reduce the capacity for investment in Council homes.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

5.0 Background Information

5.1 As part of the preparation of the draft 2020/21 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget, Members must consider the levels of rents and service charges to be set in connection with Council Housing dwellings during the next financial year.

5.2 The report, circulated to members under separate cover, details the 2020/21 Draft Budget and the proposed changes in rent and service charges.

5.3 New charges for Housing Revenue Account services and related non-Housing Revenue Account properties are also proposed.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

Report on the Proposed Rent Review 2020/21

Appendix A: HRA Draft Budget 2020/21

Appendix B: HRA charges

Appendix C: General Fund housing charges

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The rent increase is in line with the rent increase allowed by Government for 2020/21 and subsequent years, as it has been set at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) + 1%.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 These are set out in the main report.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 See section 3 above.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 The rent report is shared with the board of Blackpool Coastal Housing, which includes tenant and leasehold representatives and independent members.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process?

No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

18.2 Date of Decision:

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

19.1 Date Decision published:

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1