

<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX1/2021
<b>Relevant Officers:</b>	Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive, and Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Neal Brookes, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	25 January 2021

## **PROPOSED RENT REVIEW 2021/22**

**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 2021/22.

**2.0 Recommendation(s):**

To recommend to the Council:

2.1 That rents for all Housing Revenue account properties are increased by 1.5% in 2021/22, following rent reductions in the four years to 2019/20.

2.2 That 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 2c, to the Executive report) and that other General Fund service charges (as detailed in Appendix 2d, to the Executive report) 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 Homes Investment Plan is delivered over the next few years.

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

- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Not applicable - the report once approved will be part of the Council's new approved budget
- 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**
- 4.1 Rents could be set at a lower level, but following rent reductions from 2015/16 to 2018/19 increases are required to enable investment in new Council homes and decarbonisation of existing stock.
- 5.0 Council priority:**
- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".
- 6.0 Background information**
- 6.1 As part of the preparation of the draft 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget, Members must consider the levels of rents and charges to be set in connection with Council Housing dwellings in the next financial year.
- 6.2 The report, attached at Appendix 2a to the Executive report, details the 2021/22 Draft Budget and the proposed changes in rents and charges.
- 6.3 New charges for Housing Revenue Account services and related non-Housing Revenue Account properties are also proposed.
- 6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 7.0 List of Appendices:**
- 7.1 Appendix 2a: Report on the Proposed Rent Review 2021/22  
 Appendix 2b: Housing Revenue Account Draft Budget 2021/22  
 Appendix 2c: Housing Revenue Account charges  
 Appendix 2d: General Fund housing charges

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 These are set out in the report at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 The proposed rent increase is line with the rent increase allowed by Government for 2021/22, as it has been set at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 These are set out in the report at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 The Council is committed to achieving climate change targets by 2030 and there are also national policies requiring decarbonisation of housing stock. In common with all other stock holding local authorities Blackpool has many units currently heated by carbon derived options and investment in new technologies and solutions is required.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

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

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

**15.0 Key decision information:**

15.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

15.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 19/2020

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

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

**16.0 Call-in information:**

16.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

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

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**17.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: 15 January 2021      Date approved:

**18.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

18.1 Councillors Campbell and Hobson both declared personal interests, the nature of the interest being that they were both Non-Executive directors of Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited

**19.0 Executive decision:**

19.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

To recommend to the Council:

1. That rents for all Housing Revenue account properties are increased by 1.5% in 2021/22, following rent reductions in the four years to 2019/20.
2. That the minimum level of Housing Revenue Account balances remain protected at £1 million, as previously agreed.
3. That Housing Revenue Account service charges (as detailed in Appendix 2c, to the Executive report) and that other General Fund service charges (as detailed in Appendix 2d, to the Executive report) are charged as outlined.

**20.0 Date of Decision:**

20.1 25 January 2021

**21.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

21.1 To ensure that rent levels are appropriate and the Housing Revenue Account is financially secure as the Council Homes Investment Plan is delivered over the next few years.

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

**22.0 Date Decision published:**

22.1 26 January 2021

**23.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

23.1 Councillor L Williams, in the Chair

Councillors Benson, Brookes, Campbell, Farrell, Hobson, Kirkland, Smith and Taylor

**24.0 Call-in:**

24.1

**25.0 Notes:**

25.1