

**A MEETING OF THE HOUSING BOARD
WAS HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2007**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Cully) (ex-officio) (P), Councillors Allen, Burgess, Cully (P), Foster (P), Foster-Reed (P), Gill (P), Mrs Mudie (P), Philpott (P), Rigg (P) and Mrs Wright (P).

Also in attendance: Tenant Representative – Mrs Janne Carter

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillors Hook and Langdon would replace Councillors Burgess and Allen for this meeting.

37 APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Allen and Burgess.

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

39 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

40 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART I

41 COUNCIL DWELLING RENTS 2007/08

The Board considered the Part II report of the Financial Services Manager and Housing Services Manager (a copy of which is attached in the Minute Book as Appendix 'A') considering the Board's revised 2006/2007 budget and the 2007/2008 budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and made recommendations on rent levels for the following year.

The Financial Services Manager confirmed that references in the report to page numbers in the draft budget book should be amended, in that Item 1.1 should read 'page 19' and item 3.1 should read 'page 46'.

The Chairman moved and it was agreed that this report should be considered as a Part I item.

RECOMMENDED: That the Board recommends to Council that with effect from 2nd April 2007 the Housing Revenue Account revised 2006/2007 budget and the 2007/2008 budget be approved including:

- (a) Average weekly Council Dwelling rents increase of 4.9%.
- (b) Garage, carports and parking lot rents increase of 3.0%.

PART II

42 HOUSING GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007/2008

The Board considered the report of the Borough Treasurer and Housing Services Manager (a copy of which is attached in the Minute Book as Appendix 'B') regarding the Board's revised 2006/2007 budget and the 2007/2008 budget for the Housing General Fund and recommends thereon the Policy and Organisation Board for inclusion in the Council's overall budget proposals.

A Member questioned the reduction in the Housing General Fund budget for 2007/08 as against the original and revised budgets for 2006/07 and the concern that homelessness and bed and breakfast costs could increase leaving a shortfall. The Housing Services Manager explained that a business plan to provide a hostel was being produced which would reduce our reliance on expensive bed and breakfast accommodation. Members were also informed of homelessness percentages in the Borough, that the Housing Options Team was working on homelessness using the range of initiatives available to prevent homelessness. It was further explained that the service was under pressure in some areas such as people with mental health difficulties and services for those between 16 and 25 years.

A Member questioned the provision for garage repairs in the Capital Programme in the light of the garage review due to be completed in Spring 2007. The Housing Services Manager advised that the Repairs Programme for 2007/08 would be presented to the Board on 7 March 2007.

The draft Capital Programme 2006/07 to 2011/12 for the Board was included in the budget book that had been circulated to Members previously.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends to the Policy and Organisation Board its requirements for the Revenue Budget (revised 2006/07 and estimate 2007/08) and the Capital Programme 2006/07 to 2011/2012.

The meeting commenced at 6pm and concluded at 6.13pm

CHAIRMAN