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2 February 2015

## **S U M M O N S**

**MEETING:** Community Board  
**DATE:** 10 February 2015  
**TIME:** 5.00 pm  
**PLACE:** Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport  
**Democratic Services contact:** Vicki Stone

LINDA EDWARDS  
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

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### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex officio)  
Chairman of P&O Board (Councillor Hook) (ex officio)

Councillor Burgess (Chairman)  
Councillor Dickson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Bateman	Councillor Hazel
Councillor Mrs Batty	Councillor Mrs Hook
Councillor Mrs Cully	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Edgar	Councillor Mrs Morgan
Councillor Foster-Reed	Councillor Murphy

## **FIRE PRECAUTIONS**

(To be read by the Chairman if members of the public are present)

**In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

**Please note that mobile phones should be switched off or on silent for the duration of the meeting.**

**This meeting may be filmed or otherwise recorded. By attending this meeting, you are consenting to any broadcast of your image and being recorded.**

**AGENDA**

**PART A ITEMS**

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

*All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any disclosable pecuniary interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.*

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2014.

4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

*(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 6 February 2015. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).*

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

*(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 6 February 2015).*

6. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE AND COUNCIL DWELLING RENTS 2015/2016

**Part I**

*This report considers the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan including the revised 2014/2015 budget and the 2015/2016 budget including recommendations on rent levels for next year.*

Contact:  
Julian  
Bowcher/Corinne  
Waterfield

7. ANY OTHER ITEMS

*-which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.*

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD  
WAS HELD 15 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 6PM**

Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Hook) (P), Bateman, Mrs Batty (P), Burgess (P), Mrs Cully, Dickson (P), Edgar (P), Foster-Reed (P), Gill (P), Hazel (P), Mrs Hook (P), Hylands (P), Mrs Morgan, Murphy

It was reported that in accordance with Standing Order 2.3.6, Councillors Hook, Gill and Wright been nominated to replace Councillors Bateman, Mrs Morgan and Mrs Cully for this meeting.

**15. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from, Councillors Bateman, Murphy, Mrs Morgan and Mrs Cully.

**16. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD HELD ON 30 JUNE 2014**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Board held on 30 June 2014, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

**17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- Councillor Edgar declared a personal interest in item 7 of the agenda as he was a Hampshire County Council Councillor but he had had no involvement in the proposed development.

**18. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

**19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

**PART II**

**20. ST VINCENT ROAD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Consideration was given to a report by the Housing Services Manager which outlined the progress made in developing plans for the future of the St Vincent Road bungalow site.

Members were advised by the Housing Services Manager that the development would consist of up to 18 affordable houses and that an open day at the site was proposed to take place this month. A drawing of the proposed houses (14 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 3 bedroom was circulated to Members.

Members welcomed the scheme and recognised the need to deliver affordable homes in Gosport for households on the housing register.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Board agrees:

- a) To waive Section 8.1;9;11 and 13 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules
- b) To appoint First Wessex as Project Manager and to the procurement of the

- c) professional team and building contractor being undertaken as set out in Paragraph 2.5 of the report; and
- d) To provide up to 18 houses on the site

**21. NEW EXTRA CARE PROVISION**

**Councillor Edgar declared a personal interest in this item remained in the meeting room and took part in the discussion and voting thereon.**

Consideration was given to a report from the Housing Services Manager which provided details of a new build extra care scheme at Addenbrooke, Slocum House and Alec Rose House that had been proposed by Hampshire County Council.

Members were advised that the proposal included the demolition of Alex Rose and Slocum house.

The Housing Services Manager advised Members that the report presented details of partnership working with Hampshire County Council.

Members were advised that the proposal would give existing Gosport Borough Council tenants from Slocum House and Alec Rose House the opportunity to return to the new properties with rent/service charges remaining the same.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Board agrees:

- a) that the Housing Services Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Community Board continues working on the detailed proposals for the redevelopment of the Addenbrooke/Slocum/Alex Rose House site to deliver an Extra Care Housing Scheme.
- b) Approval subject to a suitable right to return scheme for existing tenants as outlined in paragraph 2.4 of the Housing Services Manager's report

**22. ALVER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK**

Consideration was given to a report from the Chief Executive advising Members of the progress of a number of projects within the Alver Valley Country Park.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the Alver Valley Country Park had been identified by Natural England, Solent Enterprise Partnership (SLEP) and the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) as a location to develop green open-space of sub-regional importance.

It was further advised by the Chief Executive that Officers had been pursuing funding opportunities in respect of possible projects within the Alver Valley to encourage use of the park for residents.

Members were advised that Officers had submitted a bid to the PUSH green infrastructure fund to create a footpath linking Stokes Bay to Apple Dumpling Bridge which would run from Browndown Road to Apple Dumpling Bridge alongside the River Alver and encourage families and dog walkers to enter the country park from Stokes Bay and included 'dog dipping' areas where dogs could swim safely.

In respect to a Member's question relating to the 17 Century Village, the Chief Executive advised that proposals included a new entrance at Grange Farm from Howe Road with improved car park facilities and access improvements.

**RESOLVED:** That Members note the progress being made with projects in the Alver Valley Country Park.

**23. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that the report included information relating to the financial or business affairs of third party companies/bidders and therefore the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information as defined in paragraph 3 Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**24. EXTERNAL PAINTING AND COMMUNAL AREA REDECORATION  
(INCLUDING ASSOCIATED REPAIR WORKS) CONTRACT 2014/2021**

Consideration was given to an exempt report of the Housing Services Manager informing Members of the outcome of contractor evaluation process in the procurement of the External Painting and Communal Area Redecoration (including Associated Repair Works) Contract 2014-2021.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Board award the contract to Novus Solutions to provide the service to the Council.

The meeting concluded at: 6.30pm

CHAIRMAN

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 06

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	COMMUNITY BOARD
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	10 FEBRUARY 2015
<b>Title:</b>	BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE AND COUNCIL DWELLING RENTS 2015/2016
<b>Author:</b>	BOROUGH TREASURER AND HOUSING SERVICES MANAGER
<b>Status:</b>	FOR RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL

### **Purpose**

This report considers the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan including the revised 2014/2015 budget and the 2015/2016 budget including recommendations on rent levels for next year.

### **Recommendation**

That the Community Board recommend to Council that:

- The revised HRA Business Plan (Appendix A) and associated 2014/15 Revised Budget and 2015/16 Budget (Appendix B) is agreed.
- in line with national guidelines the average weekly Council Dwelling rent increases on average by £1.75 per week.
- the increase in rent for older style garages is increased in line with dwelling rents, as agreed in the Garage Renewal strategy.
- That formula rent be charged for properties which are relet following a void period (see paragraph 5.5).

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The report details the proposed update of the HRA Business Plan (Appendix A) including the revised budget for 2014/2015 and the budget for 2015/2016 (Appendix B).
- 1.2 The report makes recommendations on rent levels for next financial year. A schedule detailing proposed rent levels is attached at (Appendix C).

### **2.0 Report**

- 2.1 The HRA Business Plan has been updated and covers the 30 year period from 2015 to 2045. Figures detailing predicted income and expenditure levels for the next 5 years are included for reference at Appendix A. Subject to the approval of rent levels; it is possible to prepare a plan that meets our on-going priorities.

2.2 Below is a summary of some of the major points set out in the Business Plan.

- a) Continued increased investment in housing stock of over £39m (Appendix A Repairs and Capital Expenditure) during the next 5 years to reflect the expenditure requirement as identified in the Stock Condition Survey.
- b) Continue to build a Major Repairs Reserve/New Build/Debt Repayment fund to provide funding for major repairs, new build and Special Loan Repayment, with contributions potentially totalling £5m over the next 5 years. This includes sums set aside for the St Vincent development budgeted for approximately £2.5m. In December £600,000 was used to pay off a pre self-financing loan. This means that the Authority is now below its debt cap and the facility to borrow up to £600k is available if required for investment in future new build schemes. The interest saved per annum as a consequence of paying off the loan is £18,000.
- c) An amendment to future rental income streams to reflect changes to the guidance for social rent policy which will use CPI instead of RPI as its inflation measure from 2015/16.

### 2.3 Business Plan Borrowing.

The HRA's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) or underlying capital borrowing is presently £62,467 million. Under current rules, this gives the authority headroom of £600,000 available for borrowing should the need arise.

### 3.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

3.1 The HRA revised council house maintenance budget for 2014/2015 is £3,910,500 an increase of £110,500 on the original budget. The council house maintenance budget for 2015/2016 is £4,260,310.

3.2 It is anticipated that HRA balance level will remain at its current level of £991,000 by the end of the financial year 2014/2015, with an additional balance of £411,000 set aside to the Major Repairs Reserve/New Build Reserve.

A further £350,000 has been included within the budget as a result of a detailed analysis of Housing Revenue Account debtors. This exercise revealed that primarily due to system duplications an overstatement of the debtors within the balance sheet had occurred. This has been corrected in the current year and processes have been amended to prevent a reoccurrence of this issue in the future.

The substantive variances to the original 2014/15 maintenance budget have occurred in the following areas:



- An increase of approximately £100,000 to the response repairs budget to reflect the level of expenditure incurred during the first six months of the year.
- The administration budget heading has also increased due to additional staffing and associated costs.

3.3 It is anticipated that the HRA balance will remain at £991,000 in 2015/2016. A surplus of £1,047,000 is budgeted to be transferred to the Major Repairs/New build reserve leading to a total balance of £2,308,000 by the end of 2015/16, enabling the Council to start its own new build programme. This increase in HRA balances is essential as this Council looks to build Council properties and invest in its remaining housing stock. There will no longer be a subsidy safety net for authorities that go into deficit with their HRA so it is essential that prudent levels of reserves are maintained.

#### **4.0 HRA Capital Programme**

4.1 The revised HRA Capital Programme for 2014/15 is £3,485,000 and is £6,060,000 for 2015/2016 which includes £2,500,000 identified for the St Vincent development.

4.2 All capital expenditure for future years is funded directly from HRA revenue and reserves as part of the self financing agreement.

#### **5.0 Rent Level Proposals**

5.1 The Government policy of Rent Restructuring came into effect in 2002/2003 and this authority has used this guideline to formulate rent policy since that date. The formula used to calculate the rent increase for 2014/15 is the one used since 2002/03 and is RPI plus 0.5% plus £2 per week. From April 2015 a new formula will be introduced for social housing rent increases. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) 1.2% for 14/15 will be used as the inflationary measure plus 1%. This is set to run for ten years and offers strong protection for the tenants; although it does reduce the income budgeted for in the HRA business plan.

5.2 The average target formula rent is now at £85.60 per property per week and the actual average rent with the proposed increase will be at £82.07. The councils rent still remains below target rent even after this increase.

5.3 Rents will increase by £1.75 a week on average. It is also proposed that service charges for tenants also increase by £0.20 per week on average in order for this Council to recover the costs of providing these services for its tenants.

5.4 It is proposed to implement the increase in rent levels for older style garages, as previously agreed in the Garage strategy.

- 5.5 In practice, due in part to the annual limit on weekly rent increases between 2001-02 and 2014-15 some properties will not have reached formula rent by April 2015. The DCLG have reinforced their assertion that Councils should charge formula rent where a property is relet following a void period.

## **6.0 Hostel Provision**

- 6.1 The Council has invested in increased hostel provision which will help it meet its responsibilities in this area. Agnew Family Centre has been operating at full capacity since it officially opened in November 2012. The works to upgrade Barclay House have been completed within budget. This should ensure that the Council is protected from the financial impact of homelessness increasing and in addition safeguarding against the risk of escalating costs of bed and breakfast accommodation.

## **7.0 Capital Improvements/Repairs and Maintenance**

- 7.1 A breakdown of the expenditure on capital improvements and repairs and maintenance is included at Appendix D to this report. Since the introduction of self-financing and the removal of the HRA subsidy regime, there is more revenue money available to invest in the housing stock. This is reflected in the figure of £6.985m that will be spent in 2014/15.
- 7.2 The table included at Appendix D splits the expenditure into its capital and revenue headings and details the main areas of expenditure under each heading. The work priorities have been identified by the stock condition surveys undertaken.

## **8.0 Risk Assessment**

- 8.1 Self financing means that much of the risk involved with the upkeep, maintenance and management of council housing has moved from Central Government to Local Authorities. Therefore the establishment of a Major Repairs Reserve is considered essential. Establishment of a reserve is also essential to the future funding of HRA projects, including new build programmes, safeguarding non-insurable risks and allowing the Council to take the opportunity to carry out any special debt repayment (potentially leading to discounts) should the economic conditions favouring such measures arise.
- 8.2 As a result of the Government's proposals to reform the housing finance system and the transfer of risk, it is essential that the rent increase for this year brings this authority closer to the guideline rent level set by the Government as this is the final year where this policy will be used. As mentioned in 5.1 above, a new guideline will be in operation from April 2015.

- 8.3 In addition whilst, current balance levels were considered adequate for the previous arrangements relating to the HRA the new risks associated with Self Financing make it essential that balances/reserves are increased to the levels detailed in the Business Plan.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

- 9.1 The Council's ability to influence rent levels has been determined by the rent convergence guidance since 2003/04. The Social rent policy guidance has been amended from April 2015 as discussed in paragraph 5.1
- 9.2 It is proposed that the average rental increase of £1.75 per week is approved. The Business Plan is reliant upon achieving rent level increases linked to inflation at CPI +1% for the next ten years. This increase will enable significant benefits with increased investment, financial certainty and the opportunity to build new dwellings.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	As set out in the report
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	The Council is under a duty to set a budget which prevents a debit balance arising on the Housing Revenue Account
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	No direct implications
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	The HRA Business Plan is a Service Improvement Plan item
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	More effective performance management, which includes making the best use of our assets, is a strategic priority in the Corporate Plan.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	As detailed in paragraph 7.
<b>Background papers:</b>	Garage Strategy(June 2009) /HRA Business Plan 2012-2042(Jan 2012)
<b>Appendices/Enclosures:</b>	
Appendix A	HRA 30 Year Business Plan extract
Appendix B	HRA Budget
Appendix C	Rent Analysis Extract
Appendix D	Repairs budget
<b>Report author/ Lead Officer:</b>	Tim Hoskins / Julian Bowcher / Corinne Waterfield

[illegible]

## APPENDIX B

	ORIGINAL 2014/15 £'000	REVISED 2014/15 £'000	ORIGINAL 2015/16 £'000
<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
Dwelling Rents	13,710	13680	13947
Shops and Garages	236	232	239
Service Charges	590	565	425
	<b>14,536</b>	<b>14,477</b>	<b>14,611</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	3,356	3648	3700
Maintenance Costs	3,800	3910	4260
Rents,Rates,Taxes,Other Charges	243	505	146
Depreciation/capital funding	3,485	3485	3560
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>10,884</b>	<b>11,548</b>	<b>11,666</b>
<b>Net Cost Of Services</b>	<b>-3,652</b>	<b>-2,929</b>	<b>-2,945</b>
Item 8 Debit	1,929	1936	1918
HRA Investment Income	-13	-18	-20
	<b>1,916</b>	<b>1,918</b>	<b>1,898</b>
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>-1,736</b>	<b>-1,011</b>	<b>-1,047</b>
<b>Housing Revenue Account Balance</b>			
Surplus at beginning Of Year	981	991	991
Surplus/(-) Deficit for Year	0	0	0
<b>Surpus at end of Year</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>991</b>
<b>Major Repairs/new Build/Loan repayment</b>			
Surplus at beginning Of Year	497	850	1261
Surplus/(-) Deficit for year	1,736	411	1047
Surplus at end of year	2,233	1261	2308

rents ,rates taxes includes £350k set aside for debt adjustment

net operating expenditure includes a sum of £600k loan repayment in December 2014

							<b>APPENDIX C</b>
<b>Stock Numbers</b>	<b>Excludes Agnew,Barclay Hostels</b>						
<b>Type</b>			<b>Bedrooms</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4/5</b>			<b>Total</b>
<b>Bedsit</b>	12						12
<b>Bungalow</b>	316	63	11				390
<b>Flat</b>	942	58	17				1017
<b>House</b>	10	295	891	81			1277
<b>Maisonette</b>	23	105	58	2			188
<b>Sheltered Bedsit</b>	13						13
<b>Sheltered Bungalow</b>	38						38
<b>Sheltered Flat</b>	125	6					131
<b>Total</b>	<b>1479</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>83</b>			<b>3066</b>
<b>Increase amount in Numbers</b>							
<b>Increase £</b>							
<b>Type</b>	<b>bedrooms</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>upto £1</b>	<b>Upto £2</b>	<b>Upto £3</b>		<b>Total</b>
Bedsit	1			12			12
Bungalow	1			316			316
Bungalow	2			63			63
Bungalow	3			11			11
Flat	1	7	14	920	1		942
Flat	2	3		55			58
Flat	3		1	16			17
House	1			10			10
House	2			291	4		295
House	3	1		304	586		891
House	4/5			4	77		81
Maisonette	1			23			23
Maisonette	2		5	100			105
Maisonette	3			58			58
Maisonette	4				2		2
Sheltered Bedsit	1			13			13
Sheltered Bungalow	1			38			38
Sheltered Flat	1			125			125
Sheltered Flat	2			6			6
		<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2365</b>	<b>670</b>		<b>3066</b>
<b>Average Rent in bedroom size</b>							
			<b>Bedroom</b>				
<b>Type</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4/5</b>			<b>Total</b>
Bedsit	61.08						61.08
Bungalow	76.71	86	94.68				85.80
Flat	70.9	83.68	87.55				80.71
House	77.87	86.44	94.13	99.62			89.52
Maisonette	74.13	82.88	86.19	97.9			85.28

		<b>APPENDIX D</b>
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Budget 15/16</b>
1	Responsive Repairs (inc Gas & Major Responsive)	£2,020,000
2	Voids (inc Home Imp/Dec Vouchers)	£545,000
3	Bulk Waste	£80,000
4	Structural (inc Garage & Misc Demolition)	£135,000
5	Estate Improvements (inc Tenant Led Fencing & OAP Redecs)	£221,000
6	Cyclical (inc Gas Servicing, Ext Painting, Compliance)	£726,500
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,727,500</b>
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Budget 15/16</b>
9	Asbestos (Surveys & Removals)	£150,000
10	Fire Risk Assessments (inc Associated Work)	£50,000
11	Disabled Aids & Adaptations (inc Major & Minor)	£300,000
12	Contingent Major Repairs (inc Professional Fees)	£115,000
13	Energy efficiency (inc External Wall Insulation)	£430,000
14	Estates Capital (inc Additional Parking & Env Improvements	£45,000
15	Roof Works (inc Gutters & Fascias)	£220,000
16	Windows & Doors	£105,000
17	Kitchens & Bathrooms	£957,500
18	Electrical Upgrades	£170,000
19	Heating Upgrades	£475,000
20	Sheltered Scheme Improvements	£240,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,257,500</b>
	<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>£6,985,000</b>