

# **HOUSING COMMITTEE**

**16 JANUARY 2019**

Present: Councillor E Kerry (Chair)

Councillors: S A Bagshaw  
L A Ball BEM  
M J Crow (substitute)  
D A Elliott (substitute)  
J C Goold  
G Harvey  
J K Marsters  
J W McGrath  
J M Owen  
J C Patrick  
A W G A Stockwell

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Radulovic MBE.

34. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

35. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

36. **RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT**

The Resident Involvement Strategy 2015-2018 focused on developing a partnership approach with residents to improve their capacity to share views and opinions on the Housing Service. Since the Strategy was written there had been changes to the approach in conducting resident involvement, with an increased focus on informal methods of engagement.

**RESOLVED that the new Resident Engagement Strategy be based on the key themes as included in the report.**

37. **ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS POLICY**

The Housing Act allows for tenants of different types varying rights to make alterations and improvements to their homes. Tenants must however request permission for any alterations and improvements in order for the Council to ensure that works are carried out to the appropriate specification, in accordance with legal guidelines and completed by competent tradespeople. The Policy provides a framework for the types of alterations and improvements that are permissible by the Council and what additional

measures or enquiries that tenants are required to undertake for works to be approved.

**RESOLVED that the Alterations and Improvements Policy be approved.**

38. HOUSEMARK ANNUAL REPORT

Members received an update on the contents of the Council's annual benchmarking report from HouseMark.

39. REVIEW OF THE CONCESSIONARY TV LICENSING SCHEME

Members were informed that television licensing regulations allow for tenants who meet certain criteria to apply for an Accommodation for Residential Care concessionary TV licence. Residents aged 75 years or over receive a free TV licence. The Council had participated in the ARC scheme for several years and covered the cost of the licence. The Committee considered the option of the Council applying for protected rights for tenants currently covered by the concessionary TV licence at a cost to the Council.

**RESOLVED that the Council applies for protected rights for tenants currently covered by the Accommodation for Residential Care Licence, and this cost being paid by the Council.**

40. JOINT WORKING AGREEMENT WITH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Responsibility for enforcement of fire safety legislation in dwellings was split between the Fire and Rescue Service and district councils, depending on the circumstances. Where the roles were not clearly defined in law, this could lead to confusion, duplication, or premises 'slipping through the net'. For this reason, the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and the district councils in the county produced a Joint Working Agreement several years ago to clarify roles. A revised document, taking into account changes in legislation, was considered.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. **Broxtowe Borough Council be the signatory to the Joint Working Agreement with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.**
2. **The Chief Executive be authorised to sign the Agreement on behalf of Broxtowe Borough Council.**

41. HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION LICENCE FEES

On 6 April 2006, the Housing Act 2004 introduced mandatory licensing for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) that comprised three or more storeys and accommodated five or more occupants. Government guidance advised that licence fees be set at a level that covers the Council's costs of administering the service. The fee was set by the then Housing, Health and Leisure Select Committee at its meeting on 29 March 2006. The Committee was informed that 2018 had seen the expansion of the compulsory licensing of HMOs to include properties that comprised two or more

storeys and accommodate five or more occupants. The proposed licence fees were £560 for a full licence application or renewal or £449 if the landlord was a member of a recognised landlords' association or is making an application in respect of a second or subsequent HMO

**RECOMMENDED to the Finance and Resources Committee that the fees for HMO licence applications for introduction on 1 April 2019.**

42. BUSINESS PLANS AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2019/20 – 2021/22

The Committee received a report on the progress against outcome targets identified in the Housing Business Plan. It was noted that the target had been achieved for reduction of empty homes and that further work was required to progress the training for the Retirement Living Service.

**RESOLVED that the Housing Business Plan be approved.**

**RECOMMENDED that the Finance and Resources Committee recommends to Council that the following be approved:**

- a) The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2019/20 (base) including any revenue development submissions.
- b) The capital programme for 2019/20 to 2021/22.
- c) The fees and charges for 2019/20.

43. WORK PROGRAMME

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.**