

EXECUTIVE – 20 NOVEMBER 2013

RE: TENANCY/PROPERTY AUDIT

**REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
(COMMUNITY DIRECTION)**

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To propose undertaking a full tenancy and property audit of our tenants/tenancies.
- 1.2 To use the results of the tenancy and property audit to inform information held on tenants, to assist in tenancy management, to gain a view on the internal condition of properties and to undertake a rent review of Council rents.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Executive approve the undertaking a tenancy and property audit.
- 2.2 That Executive approve a supplementary budget request of up to £50,000, to be financed from HRA balances to finance the costs associated with executing and undertaking a tenancy/property audit.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

- 3.1 In order to ensure robust and effective management of our housing stock and tenants, accurate information is needed on both our properties and tenancies.
- 3.2 With regard to tenants, currently information held is incomplete, particularly where tenants have been in resident for a number of years. Increasingly services to tenants are reactive, due to the fact that individual needs and issues are not known until they manifest themselves into problems. By gaining a baseline position on our tenants a better understanding of the future and current need will be gained in order to inform service configuration.
- 3.3 Understanding the internal condition of properties will enable tenancy conditions to be enforced if there are issues with damage caused by tenants. This will have a beneficial impact on the long term condition of properties.
- 3.4 Gaining information on property type/facilities will also enable the property attributes to be updated and will inform a rent review of properties. Carrying out a rent review will provide the opportunity to base rents on current, up-to-date data.
- 3.5 The outputs of these exercise would show adherence to the “collect once, use numerous times” (COUNT) which is deemed best practice from a data quality point of view.

4. **METHOD OF UNDERTAKING PROPERTY/TENANCY AUDIT**

- 4.1 The audit work required to collect the data can be carried out internally, with the employment of temporary surveyors or through the engagement of a consultant. The preferred method would be the engagement of a consultant which would ensure an objective, independent oversight, quality control and would overcome internal

capacity issues preventing current officers carrying out the review. An estimate of the cost of the work is up to £50,000.

- 4.2 An internal governance structure would be set up to over see the project, led by the Head of Finance and supported by the Chief Officer (Housing, Community Safety and Partnerships). This project will also involve input from other departments using this information (e.g. revenues and benefits and housing repairs) to ensure it meets the requirements of other users.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the cost of this work is funded from HRA balances and as such, a supplementary budget request to a maximum of £50,000 is requested from Executive to fund this expenditure.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (KB)**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the cost of this work is funded from HRA balances and as such, a supplementary budget request to a maximum of £50,000 is requested from Executive to fund this expenditure. The HRA balance is currently as at 1st April 2013 was £1.891million
- 5.2 Any outputs from the review which result in changes to rent levels would need to be input into the HRA 30 year Business Plan to ensure the ongoing viability of balances and reserves.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (AB)**

- 6.1 Any information held about tenants must be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Care must be taken that the information collected is done so fairly and lawfully and that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose it is collected for. In addition the information should not be held for longer than is necessary.

7. **CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 This report supports the following Corporate Plan aims:
- Empowering communities
 - Supporting individuals

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 8.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 8.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
None		

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

The outcome of the work will enable the service to develop to better address tenants needs.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: HRA Investment Plan and self financing papers

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