

# Public Document Pack

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Am unrhyw ymholiad yn ymwneud â'r agenda hwn cysylltwch â Sharon Hughes  
(Rhif Ffôn: 01443 864281 E-bost: [hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk))

**Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 14 Gorffennaf 2021**

Annwyl Syr/Fadam,

Bydd cyfarfod o'r **Pwyllgor Craffu Tai ac Adfywio** yn cael ei gynnal trwy Microsoft Teams ar **Dydd Mawrth, 20fed Gorffennaf, 2021** am **5.30 pm** i ystyried materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda canlynol. Gall cynghorwyr a'r cyhoedd sy'n dymuno siarad am unrhyw eitem wneud hynny drwy wneud cais i'r Cadeirydd. Mae croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, a dylid rhoi cyfnod rhybudd o 3 diwrnod gwaith os ydych yn dymuno gwneud hynny.

Bydd y cyfarfod hwn yn cael ei recordio a bydd ar gael i'w weld trwy wefan y Cyngor, ac eithrio trafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig. Felly, bydd delweddau/sain yr unigolion sy'n bresennol ac/neu sy'n siarad yn ystod ar gael i'r cyhoedd trwy'r recordiad ar wefan y Cyngor yn [www.caerffili.gov.uk](http://www.caerffili.gov.uk)

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Harrhy'.

**Christina Harrhy**  
PRIF WEITHREDWR

## A G E N D A

Tudalennau

- 1 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb
- 2 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.

Atgoffi'r Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion o'u cyfrifoldeb personol i ddatgan unrhyw fuddiannau personol a/neu niweidiol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw eitem o fusnes ar yr agenda hwn yn unol â Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000, Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor a'r Cod Ymddygiad ar gyfer Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- 3 Pwyllgor Craffu Tai ac Adfywio a gynhaliwyd ar 20fed Ebrill 2021. 1 - 4
- 4 Ystyried unrhyw fater a gyfeiriwyd at y Pwyllgor hwn yn unol â'r drefn galw i mewn.
- 5 Blaenraglen Waith y Pwyllgor Craffu Tai ac Adfywio. 5 - 14
- 6 I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau\* Cabinet canlynol:-
1. Regeneration Board - Project Proposals – 21st April 2021;
  2. UK Government Funding for Local and Regional Economies - The Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and UK Community Renewal Fund – 19th May 2021;
  3. Street Naming and Numbering – Proposed Charge to Add/Rename/Remove a Residential Property Name – 7th July 2021.

*\* Os oes aelod o'r Pwyllgor Craffu yn dymuno i unrhyw un o'r adroddiadau Cabinet uchod i gael eu dwyn ymlaen ar gyfer adolygiad yn y cyfarfod, cysylltwch â Sharon Hughes, 01443 864281, erbyn 10.00 a.m. ar ddydd Llun, 19eg Gorffennaf 2021.*

I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau Craffu canlynol:-

- 7 Monitro Cyllideb Cyfrif Refeniw Tai - Alldro 2020/21. 15 - 28

## Cylchrediad:

**Cynghorwyr** M.A. Adams (Is Gadeirydd), J. Bevan, D. Cushing, C. Elsbury, R.W. Gough, L. Harding, A.G. Higgs, G. Kirby, Ms P. Leonard, Mrs G.D. Oliver, B. Owen, Mrs D. Price, J. Ridgewell (Cadeirydd), Mrs M.E. Sargent, W. Williams a B. Zaplatynski

A Swyddogion Priodol

## SUT FYDDWN YN DEFNYDDIO EICH GWYBODAETH

Bydd yr unigolion hynny sy'n mynychu cyfarfodydd pwyllgor i siarad/roi tystiolaeth yn cael eu henwi yng nghofnodion y cyfarfod hynny, weithiau bydd hyn yn cynnwys eu man gweithio neu fusnes a'r barnau a fynegir. Bydd cofnodion o'r cyfarfod gan gynnwys manylion y siaradwyr ar gael i'r cyhoedd ar wefan y Cyngor ar [www.caerffili.gov.uk](http://www.caerffili.gov.uk) ac eithrio am drafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau mewn perthynas â'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr hawl i gael mynediad at wybodaeth sydd gennym amdanoch a'r hawl i gwyno os ydych yn anhapus gyda'r modd y mae eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei brosesu.

Am wybodaeth bellach ar sut rydym yn prosesu eich gwybodaeth a'ch hawliau, ewch i'r Hysbysiad Preifatrwydd Cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Llawn ar ein gwefan <http://www.caerffili.gov.uk/Pwyllgor/Preifatrwydd> neu cysylltwch â Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol drwy e-bostio [griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk](mailto:griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk) neu ffoniwch 01443 863028.



## **HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY,  
20TH APRIL 2021 AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Whitcombe - Chair  
Councillor Mrs C. Forehead - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

C. Elsbury, G. Kirby, B. Owen, W. Williams and B. Zaplatynski.

Cabinet Members:

Cllr. S. Morgan (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise).

Together with:

M. S. Williams (Corporate Director for Economy and Environment), R. Kyte (Head of Regeneration and Planning), A. Dallimore (Regeneration Services Manager), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer), C. Evans (Committee Services Officer) and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

### **RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chairperson reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click here to view.](#)

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, D. Cushing, R. W. Gough, L. Harding, A. G. Higgs, Ms P. Leonard, Mrs G. D. Oliver, Mrs D. Price, Mrs M. E. Sargent and L. Phipps (Cabinet Member for Housing and Property).

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

**3. MINUTES – 9TH MARCH 2021**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9th March 2021 (minute nos. 1 - 8) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

**5. HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined details of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the period April 2021 to March 2022 and included all reports that were identified at the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9th March 2021. Members were asked to consider the Forward Work Programme, alongside the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, prior to publication on the Council's website.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms voting this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Councils' website.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

**6. REGENERATION PROJECT BOARD – MONITORING REPORT 2020**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise presented the report which provided the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the projects being taken forward with the support of the Regeneration Project Board and Cabinet. It was highlighted that in May 2018 Cabinet agreed a Regeneration Project Board would be set up with a cross-party political representation of Councillors plus key officers. This group is supported by a Regeneration Assessment Panel consisting of officers from a range of service areas. It was further highlighted that at the subsequent June 2018 Board meeting a Project Prioritisation Toolkit was approved for the Board to prioritise projects and this was subsequently agreed by Council on 17th July 2018.

The Scrutiny Committee was advised that in January 2019 Cabinet resolved to release £1.2m of reserves for the Regeneration Board prioritised projects, bringing the Total Development Fund budget allocation to £1.5m. To date, £1,392,200 has been allocated towards prioritised capital regeneration schemes, across the County Borough, leaving a residual balance of £107,800 from the total budget allocation. Members were informed that approval for the allocation of the residual £107,000 Regeneration Development Funds

towards a scheme at Bedwas Bridge is subject to Cabinet consideration on the 21st April 2021; and the report also asks Cabinet to note the allocation of £20,689.00 Licence to Innovate Funding for a Gelato Counter for Coffi Vista, Caerphilly.

Councillor B. Owen sought clarification and further information regarding the various projects, in terms of a percentage of where the money is being spent across the county borough.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning provided clarity on the masterplan for Risca to Newbridge and the Scrutiny Committee was informed that an Officer has been appointed to the Strategic Planning Team, whose dedicated resource is to prepare the masterplan. Members were advised that the Officer will arrange a meeting with both Ward Members and Community and Town Councils for their involvement and direct input into the masterplan. The Officer highlighted that whilst significant investment has gone into Caerphilly Town, the Council has been successful in securing in the region of £2.8m to undertake significant improvements and work at Cwmcarn Forest Drive. The Scrutiny Committee was informed that at present the focus has been on Caerphilly Town because of the emphasis of Welsh Government and the Valleys Task Force on Caerphilly Town, however historically up to 2015 the focus was on Newbridge and circa £15m was spent on regeneration initiatives. Members were advised that the authority has to focus resources strategically, but also take advantage of funding pots and where they are targeted.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Regeneration and Planning outlined a timeline for the masterplan and agreed to confirm details via e-mail.

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee noted the progress made on progressing significant regeneration schemes of strategic importance by the Regeneration Project Board to date.

The meeting closed at 5.53 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2021, they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR

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## HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH JULY 2021

**SUBJECT: HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

### 5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period July 2021 to March 2022.
- 5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the

cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

#### 5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

### 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

### 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

### 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

### 9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

### 10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

### 11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer [jacquem@carphilly.gov.uk](mailto:jacquem@carphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees: Dave Street, Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing  
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director of Communities



Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer  
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,  
Legal Services  
Councillor John Ridgewell Chair of Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny  
Committee  
Councillor Mike Adams Vice Chair of Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny  
Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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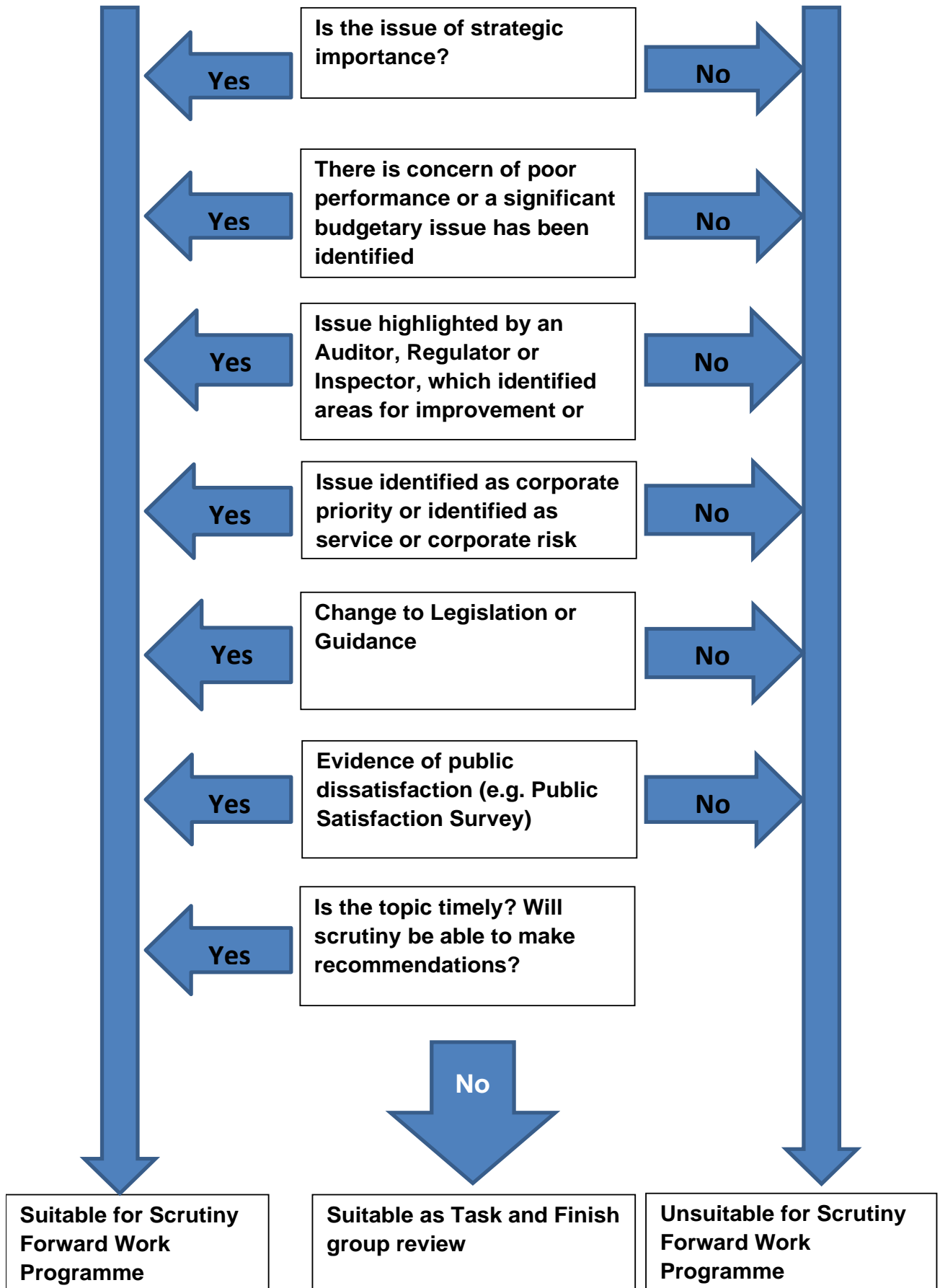
Forward Work Programme - Housing & Regeneration				APPENDIX 1
Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
20/07/21 17:30	HRA Budget – Outturn Report 2020/21			Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
07/09/21 17:30	Directorate Performance Report – Caerphilly Homes Year End Report 2020/21	The Directorate Performance Assessment brings together a range of information and intelligence into one picture to answer the self-assessment question of 'how well are we performing and how do we know?'	Wilkins, Fiona;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
07/09/21 17:30	Communities Directorate DPA end of year (20/21) performance report		Williams, Mark S;	Cllr. George, Nigel;
07/09/21 17:30	Welsh Government Prospectus and Social Housing Grant Programme Delivery Plan (PDP)	To consider the proposals contained in the Caerphilly Homes Welsh Government Prospectus and the PDP which relate directly to the allocation and distribution of Social Housing Grant funding from Welsh Government 2021/22 onwards.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
07/09/21 17:30	Information Item - Communities Directorate Revenue Grants 2021-22	To provide information to Members relating to revenue grants for 2021-22 for Communities Directorate.	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
07/09/21 17:30	Information Item - Communities Directorate Revenue Budgets 2021-22	To provide Members with details of the 2021/22 revenue budgets for Communities Directorate.	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
07/09/21 17:30	Information Item - Budget Monitoring Report (Period 3)	To inform Members of the most recent budget monitoring position for 2021/2022 for Communities Directorate Service Divisions	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
07/09/21 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report (Period 3)		Allen, Lesley;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
19/10/21 17:30	Oakdale Development Site	For Cabinet to consider the development options presented by Willmott Dixon on behalf of Caerphilly Homes, on the basis of need and viability with regard to the site of the former Oakdale Comprehensive School.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
19/10/21 17:30	Newbridge to Risca Regeneration Masterplan		Kyte, Rhian;	
19/10/21 17:30	HRA Budget Monitoring Report (Period 5)		Allen, Lesley;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
30/11/21 17:30	Budget Monitoring Report (Period 5)	To inform Members of the most recent budget monitoring position for 2021/2022 for Communities Directorate Service Divisions	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
01/02/22 17:30	HRA Charges (rent increase) report		Street, Dave;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
01/02/22 17:30	Budget Monitoring Report (Period 7)	To inform Members of the most recent budget monitoring position for 2021/2022 for Communities Directorate Service Divisions	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
01/02/22 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report (Period 7)		Allen, Lesley;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
15/03/22 17:30	HRA Budget Monitoring Report (Period 9)		Allen, Lesley;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
15/03/22 17:30	Directorate Performance Report – Caerphilly Homes 6 monthly update		Street, Dave;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
15/03/22 17:30	Information Item - Budget Monitoring Report (Period 9)	To inform Members of the most recent budget monitoring position for 2021/2022 for Communities Directorate Service Divisions	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;

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21/07/2021 10:30	Inclusion Strategy	To seek Cabinet approval of the Inclusion Strategy, associated with well-being, behaviour and exclusion for schools.	Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Whiting, Ross;
21/07/2021 10:30	Proposals for the operation of the Community Empowerment Fund	To seek Cabinet approval of the fund criteria and grant management of the community empowerment fund	Richards, Sue; Peters, Kathryn;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
21/07/2021 10:30	NEETs Strategy	To update Cabinet on the identification and engagement of young people at risk of NEET – issues and methodology. To identify the key actions necessary to reduce the number of NEET young people in the County Borough	Warren, Paul;	Cllr. Whiting, Ross;
01/09/2021 10:30	Car Parking Charges	Cabinet to consider the future of car parking charges in town centre car parks after the period of free parking which expires on 30th September 2021.	Williams, Mark S;	Cllr. Pritchard, James;
01/09/2021 10:30	Covid Recovery Framework Progress Report	To provide Cabinet with a progress update in relation to the Covid Recovery Framework.	Harrhy, Christina;	Cllr. Marsden, Philippa;
15/09/2021 10:30	Welsh Government Prospectus and Social Housing Grant Programme Delivery Plan (PDP)	To seek Cabinet approval for the distribution of SHG (Social Housing Grant) and the Prospectus document requirement by Welsh Government	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa;
15/09/2021 10:30	New Respite Facilities	To update Cabinet on the proposal to develop 2 separate respite care facilities, one for adults and one for children with additional needs	Jenkins, Gareth; Street, Dave;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;

<p>15/09/2021 10:30</p>	<p>Day Services</p>	<p>To update Cabinet on the experiences of the pandemic and developing services for the future. This will require significant changes to the way services have traditionally been provided on a Monday-Friday building based provision, to a mixed provision of community activities including work based options and building based sessions</p>	<p>Williams, Jo; Street, Dave;</p>	<p>Cllr. Cook, Shayne;</p>
<p>29/09/2021 10:30</p>	<p>Dog Control PSPO Proposals</p>	<p>To update Cabinet on the results of a public consultation exercise with respect to the exclusion of dogs from marked sports pitches on a seasonal basis and to seek cabinet approval to proceed with the resultant implementation of a public space protection order.</p>	<p>Hartshorn, Robert;</p>	<p>Cllr. George, Nigel;</p>
<p>29/09/2021 10:30</p>	<p>Annual Report Against the Corporate Plan 2018-2023</p>	<p>To update Cabinet on the annual report which will set out how the Council performed against the Corporate Plan.</p>	<p>Roberts, Ros;</p>	<p>Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;</p>

**Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation**



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## HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH JULY 2021

**SUBJECT: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING – OUTTURN  
2020/21**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2020/21 financial year. The HRA capital programme which is predominantly funded by the HRA is also included within this report

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Members will be aware of the distinction between the HRA, which is funded by rental income received from council tenants, and General Fund Housing activities, which fall under the General Fund and are funded via the Council taxpayer. Although there is a clear separation of these funds, the majority of council tenants rent is funded from housing benefits which are derived from the taxpayers' purse and therefore value for money must always be sought.
- 2.2 The HRA budget for 2020/21 is £51.7m with its main components consisting of £11.7m of salaries (net of WHQS funding), £8.3m of capital financing charges, £8.8m of building maintenance & response repairs, £2.8m of internal service recharges, and £17.8m of revenue contributions to fund the WHQS programme. The spend on the HRA is self-financed mainly by the rental income we collect from our Council Tenants, of which about 72% is funded by Housing Benefits. At the end of this financial year the HRA has an underspend of £10m. Members will note this is a significant increase on previous projections, as a consequence of repeated lockdown restrictions that have impacted on the ability to progress with the WHQS programme in tenants' homes. The main variances on the HRA are explained below.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

#### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To ensure that Members are informed of the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account.

#### **5. THE REPORT**

##### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 The HRA has an under spend of £10m at the end of 2020/21 financial year, which represents about 19% of the total HRA budget. The main variances are summarised below, and full financial details are provided in Appendix 1. This includes variances projected as a result of Covid-19.

##### **5.2 Salaries & Mileage (£994k under spend)**

- 5.2.1 Salaries and associated costs within the HRA are currently expected to underspend by some £994k against a £11m salary. There are some offsetting over and under spends in this area given the volume of staff which includes sickness cover, request for reduced hours and timing for filling vacant posts. During the coronavirus pandemic, all staff received full salaries with no furloughing assistance. However, some staff were redeployed to assist in critical areas such as Free School Meal loading and deliveries, assisting vulnerable people including the buddy scheme, and setting up and operating a financial crisis helpline. The HRA covered the costs for the redeployment in these areas.

##### **5.3 Non-Pay Related (£1.14m under spend)**

- 5.3.1 Part of this underspend (£480k) is associated with office related costs such as stationery, photocopying and postage, mainly as a result of offices not being occupied because of lockdown. However, due to the need to extend the lease on Cherry Tree House, to enable social distancing to be maintained until the offices in Tir Y Berth and Rhymney depot can be completed, there were additional costs of some £50k on the rent, business rates, cleaning and utilities, that have offset these savings.
- 5.3.2 A further £658k underspend is attributable to budgets that are service specific such as, shop management, allocation recharges, tenant participation and utility charges within our sheltered schemes. Some costs however have increased due to the Covid-19 restrictions such as security of void properties (£51k), and Council Tax charges on void properties (£87k). These costs which are as a consequence of Covid-19 restrictions, were initially claimed on the Welsh Government Covid-19 LA Financial Hardship Fund, but Welsh Government have recently confirmed that the HRA will not receive any assistance from this fund, on the basis that no other Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) are receiving any assistance.

##### **5.4 Building Maintenance & Response Repairs (£1.2m under spend)**

- 5.4.1 This area is currently projecting an underspend of some £1.2m. This is predominantly made up of £1.7m under spend in cyclical and revenue projects which includes damp proofing, non – DLO works, sheltered & infrastructure projects. This reduced expenditure is as a consequence of the Covid pandemic. Response Repairs, however, have experienced an overspend of £588k which is as a result of less fee income due to the reduction of work during the pandemic

- 5.4.2 Operatives have only been allowed to enter tenants' homes for essential repairs. Unfortunately, further lockdown restrictions were imposed which has prevented work (other than essential) to be carried out for most of the year. Void work was also transferred to WHQS to maintain the workforce during the pandemic resulting in less income for HRO.
- 5.4.3 Housings response to the Coronavirus in terms of repairs, includes 2,654 out of hours emergency repairs completed within 2 hours, 6,104 emergency heating repairs, 1,275 out of hours emergency gas repairs. In addition, in order to safeguard our operatives, the acquisition of PPE has been made including 54,704 pair of nitrile gloves, 12,057 face masks and 2,800 coveralls distributed to staff.
- 5.4.4 As a result of incorporating the costs of delivering the Building Maintenance service within the HRA, the in-house holding account was set up to monitor the in-house workforce costs that are recharged to the WHQS capital programme and also the PAMS (Post Asset Management Strategy) programme, which was due to run concurrently this year when the WHQS programme ended in June 2020. A budget of £10.8m has been allocated in 2020/21 along with an income recharge to the capital programme so that the HRA has a nil cost. The spend on this budget was £7.3m resulting in a saving of £3.5m that will fall onto the capital programme. This is as a consequence of not being able to progress with the WHQS programme during lockdown. Some resources were however transferred to void properties and empty buy-back stock, which was originally intended to be completed Post WHQS, but some staff were also redeployed to critical services. As restrictions were lifted and tenants allowed our operatives to re-enter their homes following the development of detailed risk assessments, spend started to increase, although due to the Government guidance on working under Covid-19 conditions, work took longer to complete, as we are expected to retain 2 metres under social distancing rules, and limit the number of operatives within the property. However further restrictions later in the year prevented the momentum and that pace will now be picked up during 2021/22 when the backlog of work needs to be completed. This also had a detrimental effect on the commencement of the PAMS programme which has been reprofiled to fit in with the revised completion of WHQS. Welsh Government have recently confirmed that the extended deadline for authorities to achieve WHQS is now December 2021. Members are informed, however, that Caerphilly Homes was on target to meet our June 2020 deadline had the pandemic not occurred and are confident of completion prior to the revised deadline.
- 5.4.5 A further budget is set in the HRA for the Management and Delivery of the WHQS Programme. Current projections are showing an underspend of some £157k due to staff turnover, but as per the in-house holding account, this is also recharged fully to the WHQS Capital Programme and is therefore a nil cost to the HRA.
- 5.5 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (£576k under spend)**
- 5.5.1 The total debt for the HRA as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 is £121.9m. There is a CFR budget of £8.3m which includes a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) of £2.7m to repay the HRA debt and £5.6m of interest charges. The HRA debt consists of historical debt and the debt which was taken up in 2015 as part of the Buy Out of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy (HRAS) system. More recently the CFR debt has decreased due to a reprofile of the borrowing needed to part fund the WHQS Programme (£23m in 2018/19 & £17.9m in 2019/20 which was taken out the following years).
- 5.5.2 It was clear as progress was made during the year that the cost for completing the WHQS programme would increase, to allow for the additional demands imposed upon us by the Government, so that we could enter tenants homes safely, and , it was thought that these additional costs would require an increase in borrowing this year to support it. In the last quarter, restrictions have not been lifted as anticipated, and the spend on the WHQS

programme will therefore not reach the level expected in this financial year. Additional borrowing will therefore no longer be needed this year.

- 5.5.3 Further borrowing had been estimated in 2020/21 to complete the programme and in future years to progress with the PAMS programme together with an element for New Build proposals, and early indications suggest a further £6m will be needed to complete the WHQS programme under the new social distancing measures. This will continue to be reviewed once the real impact of Covid-19 can be established. However, as the surplus from this year will be carried over into next financial year, this should fund the additional cost to complete the WHQS programme.

## 5.6 **Income (£177k under recovered)**

- 5.6.1 Variations represent less than 1% of the total income budget and includes a 7.5% reduction on the service charges to tenants due to Covid, and an increase in voids due to the pandemic restrictions.

## 5.7 **Bad Debt Provision (£1.5m underspend)**

- 5.7.1 Within the first 3 months of lockdown, rent arrears increased by £1m compared to the same period the year before. We believe there is a number of factors for this rise. Firstly, the Government placed an embargo on actioning evictions and court referrals for possession orders, until the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 (actioning evictions has since been extended to June 2021) which meant we could not pursue those tenants who were already in the system prior to lockdown for breach of tenancy, and only a few payments were made during this time from these tenants, which has worsened the position, despite continuous attempts to make contact and offer support. Secondly, our tenants did not have access to all the normal facilities for payment, in particular our cash offices, meaning some tenants did not have immediate alternatives to make payments. Prior to the March lockdown, a substantial number of tenants used our face to face facilities at the cash office (37%) or door-step collection service (4%). Significant staff resources were needed to contact these tenants to arrange suitable alternatives of payment e.g. Post Office, and online facilities. Also, some of our tenants were shielding or self-isolating so could not physically make payments or have access to a rent collector service, as that was also withdrawn during lockdown. Initially there was also an increase in Universal Credit claims suggesting financial hardship for some of our tenants.
- 5.7.2 Every effort was made to support all our tenants during this period, and this is still ongoing. Reassurance calls were attempted to every tenant ensuring they had the required level of support or signposted where appropriate. No debt recovery took place due to the embargo, but reassurance letters were sent out to those in arrears that could not be contacted by phone, asking them to contact the rent department so that support could be offered. Additional staff have also been appointed to assist with the rent recovery process and to provide support and financial assistance where possible to those in financial hardship.
- 5.7.3 The Tenancy Support and Welfare Benefits Team are involved as soon as a tenancy starts, welfare benefit checks are completed and financial “health checks” are undertaken to ensure benefits are maximised. Any barriers to the sustainment of the tenancy are identified and addressed immediately. E.g. high debt levels. The team collaborate with other departments within the Authority to offer a wide range of services e.g. employment support.
- 5.7.4 A total of £2.4m additional annual income was generated for tenants as a direct result of the support offered by the Housing Rent Team.

- 5.7.5 Welsh Government now require a 6-month notice period (which is in place until June 2021) before an application for a possession order can be made to the County Courts. Any Notice of Seeking Possession Orders (NOSP) issued up to this date must therefore have a 6-month notice period and long-standing cases for eviction will not be considered whilst in local lockdown. There is also a priority order for courts to consider which includes anti-social behaviour cases, extreme arrears of more than 12 months, domestic abuse, fraud and subletting cases. The Housing Rents Teams principle objective is the management and sustainment of tenancies. Eviction is a last resort and all other avenues to sustain tenancies will be considered first, fully embracing the Welsh Government aims of no evictions into homelessness.
- 5.7.6 As we progressed throughout the year, the arrears level started to reduce, suggesting that some tenants have started to pay their arrears. There has also been a lot of support to those tenants who originally paid at the cash office, and a significant shift has been made to other payment methods such as BACS, Post Office & Internet payments. The doorstep rent collection service was suspended in March 2020 to comply with Covid guidelines. A report was presented to Policy & Resources Committee (29<sup>th</sup> Sept) and Cabinet (14<sup>th</sup> Oct) which recommended that the current service users be consulted on the termination of the doorstep collection service, and subject to the outcome of the consultation being supportive, the decision to terminate the service be delegated to the Chief Housing Officer and Cabinet member.
- 5.7.7 Furthermore, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) have altered the timing of their housing cost payments as from 14<sup>th</sup> September, so we now receive this payment on the day the tenant receives their personal allowance rather than 5-6 weeks in arrears. This will improve the arrears position when compared to the previous years, due to the payments no longer being retrospective, and although this is a welcomed change, it does make it difficult to monitor how much of the arrears are due to Covid related issues alone.
- 5.7.8 Whilst the stability of arrears is concerning, it is typical across all other Local Housing Authorities, and what is clear is that the intensive level of support offered by the rents team has actively assisted in reducing this level throughout the year. Furthermore, whilst collecting data on our arrears position, it is evident that it isn't necessarily the number of tenants in arrears increasing, but the value of arrears from existing tenants who were previously in arrears, suggesting that impact from Covid has affected those tenants who were already in arrears prior to the pandemic and are therefore already within our support system.
- 5.7.9 During the year, when arrears levels were expected to rise, there was also an expectation that the bad debt provision would need to increase to ensure adequate cover for the likelihood that a percentage of these debts would not be paid. Two factors affected this during the year. One was the actual levelling off of arrears as explained above, and, secondly the method of calculating the provision was changed. During the 2019/20 audit of the accounts, a recommendation was made to align the method of calculating the bad debt provision corporately and agree a consistent policy. The original method for council rent was based on the value of the debt. The revised bad debt policy recommends basing the provision on the length of debt. Using this method has significantly altered the profile of the debt as a higher level of provision is applied to a lower level of arrears. Under the value method, the higher the value of the debt, the higher the provision, under the age method, the longer the age of the debt, the higher the provision. This has resulted in a much-reduced bad debt provision being required and an overall saving on £1.5m on the BDP budget.

## 5.8 Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO) (£6.6m under spend)

- 5.8.1 The HRA allows for some £17.8m of revenue contributions towards the WHQS Programme and this includes an element for the WHQS management team responsible for the delivery of the WHQS Programme (which is anticipating a £157k underspend as explained in 5.4.5 above.)
- 5.8.2 The total expenditure on the HRA capital programme for the year was £20.4m which is a significant decrease compared to the last years spend of £49.5m. The total spend to date on the WHQS programme is £261m. This year also includes spend on property acquisitions and new build development work of £1.8m. The reduction in spend is as a direct consequence of not being able to progress with programmed works during the Covid-19 pandemic (with the exception of essential work), but the WHQS programme still has to be delivered. Any savings, therefore made this year, will be required to fund the programme into 2021/22 and address the backlog of work to meet its deadline by December 2021.
- 5.8.3 The HRA RCCO allocation will fund the capital spend this year in addition to the £7.3m Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) from Welsh Government. The MRA allowance will need to be utilised first as this funding does not carry over into financial years.
- 5.8.4 Borrowing of £23m was taken up for the first time since the start of the WHQS Programme to fund expenditure in 2018/19. A further £17.9m borrowing was required to fund the programme in 2019/20, however, for the reasons explained above there will be no borrowing requirement for the current year.
- 5.8.5 Further re-profiling is now necessary, and officers are working on this whilst having confirmation of the revised completion date of December 2021 by Welsh Government. Early indications are that internal works will be completed by August 2021, External works including leaseholders to be completed by June 2021 with once contract likely to extend further due to recently going into administration.
- 5.8.6 WHQS Internal works at the end of 2020/21 financial year 98.72% compliant
- 5.8.7 WHQS External works at the end of 2020/21 financial year is 99.36% compliant
- 5.8.8 Full WHQS compliance (where properties have achieved both internal and external compliance on a contract basis) is 99.02%.
- 5.8.9 External work re-started in Mid-May and 2 contractors worked through lockdown. Although the majority of this work is outside of the tenant's property, appropriate detailed risk assessments were issued by the Contractors to ensure compliance to the government guidelines of working during the pandemic was adhered to. All contracts remaining in the programme are now in progress and early indications suggest a 10% increase of costs to allow for supply issues and some restrictions when entering tenants' homes (e.g. installing doors). It is anticipated that all external works (including leaseholders) will be completed by June 2021 pending no further delays from adverse weather conditions, or further lockdowns, although one contract has recently gone into administration and officers are awaiting confirmation to be able to complete the contract, which has Early indications are this contract could extend to December 2021.
- 5.8.10 Internal works had in the main been on hold since lockdown, with the exception of essential works, particularly to a number of properties that would have been left without basic amenities during lockdown. As mentioned earlier in the report, work was transferred to

empty properties and recent buy-backs to try and continue momentum within the workforce. Pace was expected to increase when we commenced work in Mid-August, and property compliance has shown some movement. However, some tenants have refused works if they are shielding or have any medical issues or just fear about having the work completed etc, so we will record these as acceptable fails in the meantime. The remodelling on some of our sheltered schemes have also been delayed to avoid the temporary decanting of vulnerable tenants during lockdown. A reasonable assumption at this stage would be completion around August 2021 to allow for the impact of restarting contracts, risk assessments, social distancing, etc., pending no further delays from potential future lockdowns.

- 5.8.11 A Post Asset Management Strategy (PAMS) working group has been set up to ensure that the WHQS standard is continuously maintained once full compliance is achieved. A 5-year external programme is currently being worked on, but this will now need to be re-profiled to ensure the WHQS programme is completed. On a positive note, some of the work that was earmarked for the PAMS programme may be completed as part of the WHQS programme such as the buy-backs that were too late to be entered into the WHQS programme for June 2020 completion. The PAMS programme is expected to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

## 5.9 HRA Working Balances

- 5.9.1 Working balances at the start of 2020/21 financial year were £4.1m. This was expected to be fully utilised this year against the WHQS Programme. However due to the continued restrictions throughout the year, this balance, along with the £10m surplus made in year, will be carried forward to assist the programme in 2021/22, when work is expected to re-commence. £99k has also been added to earmarked provisions to assist with Welfare Reform.

## 5.10 COVID-19 (£1.86m over-spend)

- 5.10.1 Additional costs to be able to operate under Covid conditions were almost £2m during 2020/21 financial year. These costs were not anticipated so there is no budget allocated. There is a £115k funding assumption for PPE and leased vehicles which has not yet been confirmed. The largest area of cost relates to the inhouse workforce where the lockdown resulted in lost and unproductive time which could not be charged to the capital programme or response work.

Unproductive Time	£1m
PPE equip	£65k
Buddy mileage/add'n postage/IT equip	£133k
Agency contracts extended	£166k
Service charge discount	£12k
Additional vehicles for social distancing	47k
Prolonged voids	£449k
Extension of rent allowances	£109k
Funding	£115k
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1.86m</b>

- 5.10.2 In addition to this, increases within existing budgets as a result of Covid are estimated to be as follows, and have been included in variances shown elsewhere within this report.

Council tax for prolonged void properties	£87k
Security for prolonged void properties	£57k
Savings	(£839k)

**TOTAL ESTIMATED COVID COST            £1.2m**

- 5.10.3 Savings as a result of Covid are estimated to be about £839k in relation to reduced mileage, office costs & training, together with a delay in debt relief orders of £34k which are included in the variances to this report. CFR savings are also considerable due to the delay on potential borrowing to fund the completion of the WHQS programme.
- 5.10.4 To date Welsh Government has funded 38k of the above costs which relate to PPE and 50% of some IT costs. However, WG have since confirmed they will disallow any HRA claims on the basis that not all local authorities have retained their housing stock and the sector would therefore not be treated equally because transferred RSL's and traditional RSL's are not offered the same assistance.

**6.        ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1        The projected outturn position is based on actual income and expenditure details for the 2020/21 financial year. However, spend and income activity has been unprecedented during this time which makes it difficult to compare results to preceding years or indeed forecast for future years.

**7.        SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1        An IIA has not been completed to accompany this report as it is for information.

**8.        FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1        As detailed throughout the report.
- 8.2        Members should note that the impact on the HRA in terms of the coronavirus is significant and there are no appropriate measures at this time to recover these costs. The significant underspend on the HRA has managed to absorb these costs however this has resulted in less funding being carried over into 2021/22

**9.        PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1        There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

**10.       CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1       There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report

**11.       STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1       Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations

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Consultees: Cllr J Ridgewell, Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr M Adams, Vice Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr L Phipps, Cabinet Member for Housing  
D Street, Corporate Director Social Services and Housing  
S Harris, Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer  
F Wilkins, Housing Services Manager  
P Smythe, Housing Technical Manager  
J Roberts-Waite, Strategic Co-ordination Manager  
S Isaacs, Rents Manager  
K Denman, Housing Solutions Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 HRA Financial Plan 2020/21 outturn

## Appendix 1

Housing	Estimate	Projected	Variance
	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	£	£	£
<b><u>SUMMARY</u></b>			
<b>GENERAL MANAGEMENT</b>	1,759,257	1,830,687	(71,430)
<b>CAPITAL FINANCING</b>	8,348,031	7,771,807	576,224
<b>CENTRAL RECHARGES</b>	2,793,870	2,573,614	220,256
<b>STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE</b>	1,053,637	555,376	498,261
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING</b>	5,750,762	5,115,769	634,993
<b>BUILDING MAINTENANCE SERVICES</b>	31,978,154	23,641,983	8,336,171
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	51,683,711	41,489,236	10,194,475
<b>INCOME</b>	(51,683,711)	(51,507,062)	(176,649)
<b>(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT CONTRIBUTION (TO)/FROM WORKING BALANCES</b>	-	(10,017,825)	10,017,825
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	£	£	£
<b><u>GENERAL MANAGEMENT</u></b>	1,759,257	1,830,687	(71,430)
<b><u>CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS</u></b>			
Interest Charge	5,556,468	5,307,249	249,219
Principal	2,740,513	2,438,729	301,784
Debt Management	51,050	25,829	25,221
Rescheduling Discount	-	-	-
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	8,348,031	7,771,807	576,224
<b><u>CENTRAL RECHARGES</u></b>			
Central Recharges	2,301,671	2,086,467	215,204
Grounds Maintenance recharge to HRA	492,199	487,147	5,052
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	2,793,870	2,573,614	220,256

<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE</u></b>			
Housing Strategy and Development	537,382	189,315	348,067
Transforming Lives and Communities	516,255	366,061	150,194
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>1,053,637</b>	<b>555,376</b>	<b>498,261</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING</u></b>			
Landlord General	308,641	165,488	143,153
Sheltered Accommodation	1,432,175	1,292,801	139,374
Holly Road Community Support	4,129	4,687	(558)
Eastern Valley Area Housing Office	669,116	714,465	(45,349)
Upper Rhymney Area Housing Office	844,428	745,289	99,139
Lower Rhymney Valley Area Housing Office	37,450	38,260	(810)
Lansbury Park Neighbourhood Housing Office	322,430	323,640	(1,210)
Graig Y Rhacca Neighbourhood Housing Office	291,857	263,571	28,286
Housing Allocations Contribution	128,857	85,077	43,780
Tenants & Communities Involvement	473,558	250,910	222,648
Leaseholders Management	73,333	77,266	(3,933)
Tenancy Enforcement	295,830	277,416	18,414
Rents	912,690	919,423	(6,733)
Community Wardens	(43,732)	(42,526)	(1,206)
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>5,750,762</b>	<b>5,115,769</b>	<b>634,993</b>

<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>RESPONSE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE</u></b>			
<b>Employee Expenses net of recharges</b>	<b>1,260,628</b>	<b>898,372</b>	<b>362,256</b>
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance on Housing Stock</b>			
Responsive Repairs	9,438,067	9,948,617	(510,550)
Revenue Contribution to Capital – WHQS Programme	17,809,772	11,175,296	6,634,476
Group/Planned Repairs (priorities 5 & 8)	-	-	-
Void Repairs (priority 6)	-	-	-
Depot Recharges	100,000	5,274	94,726
Revenue Projects	1,444,000	143,382	1,300,618
Planned Cyclical	1,747,336	1,295,746	451,590
Planned Programme	-	-	-
	<b>30,539,175</b>	<b>22,568,315</b>	<b>7,970,860</b>
<b>Transport Related</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>49,129</b>	<b>3,371</b>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>	<b>125,851</b>	<b>126,167</b>	<b>(316)</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>31,978,154</b>	<b>23,641,983</b>	<b>8,336,171</b>

<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>			
<b><u>Rents – Dwelling</u></b>			
Gross Rent – Dwellings	(45,953,276)	(46,025,336)	72,060
Gross Rent – Sheltered	(4,158,368)	(3,965,328)	(193,040)
Gross Rent – Hostel	-	-	-
Voids – General Needs Dwelling/Sheltered	800,000	820,363	(20,363)
Additional Income O/Side Rent Debit (WHQS)	-	351	(351)
Voids – Hostel	-	-	-
<b>Net Rent</b>	<b>(49,311,644)</b>	<b>(49,169,950)</b>	<b>(141,694)</b>
<b><u>Rents – Other</u></b>			
Garages	(346,497)	(346,070)	(427)
Garage Voids	121,215	118,998	2,217
Shop Rental	(59,872)	(57,489)	(2,383)
	<b>(285,154)</b>	<b>(284,561)</b>	<b>(593)</b>
<b><u>Service Charges</u></b>			
Sheltered – Service Charges	(1,394,522)	(1,226,476)	(168,046)
Sheltered – Heating & Lighting	(113,786)	(101,873)	(11,913)
Sheltered & Dispersed – Alarms	-	-	-
Catering Recharge – Sheltered Accommodation	-	-	-
Voids Schedule Water	64,372	108,726	(44,354)
Non Scheduled Water Rates	(38,448)	(30,122)	(8,326)
Welsh Water Commission	(579,379)	(628,975)	49,596
Leaseholder – Service Charges	(10,000)	(29,931)	19,931
	<b>(2,071,763)</b>	<b>(1,908,651)</b>	<b>(163,112)</b>
<b><u>Government Subsidies</u></b>			
Housing Subsidy	-	-	-
	-	-	-
<b><u>Interest Receivable</u></b>			
Mortgage Interest	(150)	-	(150)
Investment Income	(10,000)	(143,305)	133,305
	<b>(10,150)</b>	<b>(143,305)</b>	<b>133,155</b>
<b><u>Miscellaneous</u></b>			
Miscellaneous	-	-	-
Private Alarms	-	-	-
Ground Rent	(5,000)	(595)	(4,405)
	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(4,405)</b>
<b>INCOME TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>(51,683,711)</b>	<b>(51,507,062)</b>	<b>(176,649)</b>

