



## Cabinet

27<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Item

**9(ii)**

Report of	Assistant Director for Place and Client Services	Authors: Darren Brown ☎ 282891 Clare Lawrance ☎ 282506
Title	Housing Investment Programme (HIP) 2021/22	
Wards affected	All	

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a summary of the proposed allocation of **£40.292million** of new resources to the Housing Investment Programme for 2021/22, along with the sources of funding. It also includes at Appendix A an indication of the potential expenditure requirements and funding sources for the years 2022/23 to 2025/26.

### 2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the Housing Investment Programme for 2021/22.
- 2.2 To note the Capital Medium Term Financial Forecast (CMTFF) set out at Appendix A.

### 3. Reasons for Decision

- 3.1 Each year as part of the process to agree the Council's revenue and capital estimates the Cabinet is required to agree the allocations to the Housing Stock Investment Programme. These allow for work to be undertaken to maintain, improve, and refurbish the housing stock and its environment.
- 3.2 Members annually agree to accept a proposed 5 year Housing Investment Programme (HIP) in principle as the framework for procuring housing related planned works, improvements, responsive and void works and cyclical maintenance.
- 3.3 The proposed investment programme is linked to the Asset Management Strategy (AMS) and reviewed annually in the light of available resources and for each annual allocation to be brought to Cabinet for approval as part of the overall HIP report.
- 3.4 The Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) Board have considered the content of the Cabinet report submitted and is now seeking approval for the 2021/22 Capital programme.
- 3.5 This report seeks the release of funds under grouped headings as described in the AMS and supported by the Management Agreement dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013, which governs the contractual relationship between Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and CBH.

### 4. Supporting Information

**Key Issues for 2021/22**

- 4.1 This is the tenth year of HRA Self-Financing, and the continued investment in the housing stock and other projects is reflected in this report.
- 4.2 Cabinet have agreed further significant investment in the Councils housing stock during 2020/21, which is reflected in this report. This includes the delivery of the 100 new Council homes project, and the HIP Climate Emergency Response works.
- 4.3 A revised Asset Management Strategy was produced as a result of the Housing Futures Programme, and the outputs have been included in this report. The Council is reviewing its Asset Management Strategy in 2021, and the results will be considered by Cabinet later in the year alongside a refreshed HRA Business Plan.
- 4.4 This report is considered as part of agreeing the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates as the funding for the HIP, which covers capital investment in the housing stock, is very much linked to the overall level of resources for housing.

## **5. Funding the Housing Investment Programme**

- 5.1 2021/22 is the tenth year of the HRA self-financing regime. This fundamentally changed the way in which Council Housing is financed, and as a consequence a financial model for the HRA has been developed, which forecasts the HRA and HIP for each of the next 30 years, using a range of assumptions on areas such as inflation, stock numbers, future expenditure & income levels etc. This is considered further in the 2021/22 HRA Estimates report elsewhere on the agenda. The source of resources, and the priority order in which it is assumed they will be used to fund capital expenditure in the 2021/22 HIP budget and financial forecasts are as follows;

- Specific Areas of Finance (e.g. Grants),
- Capital Receipts,
- Major Repairs Reserve (Depreciation),
- Revenue contributions to capital (RCCO),
- New Additional Borrowing

- 5.2 The assumption made when prioritising resources to fund the HIP is that resources specifically designated to the programme will be used first, followed by capital receipts. This is so the receipts can be re-invested in affordable housing, and be retained locally and not be clawed back by Central Government under the capital receipts pooling arrangements. The next form of resource to be used is the Major Repairs Reserve, which is the reserve that is built up from the depreciation charge to the HRA. This is the resource that is set aside to maintain the housing stock in its current form & condition. If there are insufficient resources within the Major Repairs Reserve to fund all of the capital works in the year, then the next call on funding is revenue. The amount of this resource will depend on the level of balances within the HRA and the extent to which they are directed to the HIP, as opposed to other budget priorities.
- 5.3 Finally, should there be insufficient revenue resources to fund the overall programme the assumption is that the Council will undertake HRA borrowing to fully fund the HIP. This is assumed to be the lowest priority source of funding, to minimise the resultant additional interest costs that would be incurred by the HRA. Further borrowing will be undertaken following the prudential borrowing code, which states that it must be affordable. Should the Council decide it does not want to undertake additional HRA borrowing or use revenue resources etc, then the Council would need to re-consider the programme of works proposed and the corresponding budget provision. This could include foregoing works, or re-profiling the year in which they are undertaken.

## **6. 2021/22 Programme of Works**

- 6.1 The requested budget allocation for the 2021/22 programme is £40.292million. A further breakdown of the areas of work that are planned to be undertaken is shown at paragraph 9.
- 6.2 As part of the management agreement which commenced in August 2013 between the Council and CBH, the management fee was expanded to reflect the wider range of services CBH now provides on behalf of the Council, so it incorporates the fee for managing the capital programme. Members are therefore asked to note that the requested budget allocation in paragraph 6.1, and the budget sums included in paragraph 9 and Appendix A all include the fee for managing the capital programme, which for 2021/22 totals £1,270,400. A further breakdown of the management fee is included in the HRA Revenue Estimates report elsewhere on the agenda.
- 6.3 Cabinet have previously considered proposals for new projects using HRA borrowing, such as continuing new build plans and increasing Council housing stock through acquisitions. These proposals continue to be reflected in the Housing Investment Programme, with further information provided in the following paragraphs.

## **7. HRA Capital Medium Term Financial Forecast - 2021/22 to 2025/26**

- 7.1 As previously stated, Cabinet agreed in principle to accept a proposed 5 year HIP subject to overall budget considerations. As a result, expenditure proposals have been included in the capital medium term financial forecast at Appendix A and updated to take account of previous years being completed and new updated year's being introduced.

### *New Build*

- 7.2 The budget for 2021/22 includes a provision of £0.900million to continue works on Phase 2 of the re-development of garage sites, and undertake Phase 3 feasibility work. It also includes a provision of £1.0million to purchase properties developed by Colchester Amphora Homes for the Council. It should be noted that a number of assumptions have to be made on the timing and cost of these projects, but the budgets will be monitored and revised as part of the annual budget setting and capital monitoring processes. Further estimated provision has been made in subsequent years for these schemes in the CMTFF.

### *Acquisitions*

- 7.3 A provision of £6.5million has been made to continue the programme of buying properties, through a combination of properties offered back to the Council through the Right to Buy legislation, and via the open market. Further estimated provision has been made in subsequent years for these schemes in the CMTFF. In addition, at its meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, Cabinet agreed additional investment to deliver 100 new Council homes by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, which were in addition to the existing acquisitions programme. A provision of £12.1million has therefore been included to reflect the proportion of these 100 homes that will be acquired in the 2021/22 financial year.
- 7.4 A provision of £5.988million has been made for the cost of the refurbishment of Elfreda House in 2021/22. Further provision has been made in subsequent years in the CMTFF for completion of this scheme, and continued investment in the Sheltered Housing refurbishment programme.
- 7.5 At its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, Cabinet agreed to include provision in the 2021/22 budget and subsequent years for "HIP Climate Emergency Response Works", in order to improve energy performance of the Councils housing stock. As a result a provision of £3.422million has been included in the 2021/22 programme.
- 7.6 The estimated RCCO in 2021/22 is £3.790million, which is broadly in-line with the assumptions in the business plan. In the years prior to HRA Self-Financing, the RCCO had been used to fund non-works programmes. However, as indicated in the HIP report

agreed by Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012, RCCO's have been available to support the works element of the capital programme for 2013/14 onwards. These increased contributions have been affordable as under HRA Self-Financing the Council retains all rental income.

- 7.7 Members will be aware that the Council entered into agreement with DCLG in 2012 to retain additional RTB receipts to deliver new affordable housing. As a reminder, retained receipts can only be used on delivering new additional units of accommodation, not on refurbishing existing schemes. The proposals already approved by Cabinet and included in the CMTFF should minimise the amount that has to be repaid to Government.

## **8. Priorities for the Council**

- 8.1 To implement the Colchester Housing AMS, that has been updated to reflect the revised investment plan, as the basis for long term planning, provision and sustainability of Colchester Borough Council's housing assets.
- 8.2 To allocate appropriate funding to CBH within the resources that are available to enable stock investment to proceed, improving housing conditions for our tenants.
- 8.3 To ensure that having achieved delivery of the decent homes' targets in December 2011 that the overall level of decency is maintained at the end of any one financial year but ensure compliance on a five-yearly basis.
- 8.4 To build upon current monitoring arrangements and ensure programme delivery and the effective targeting of resources particularly in respect of maintaining the value of the asset and providing Adaptations for our customers with disabilities.

## **9. Proposals**

- 9.1 The report sets out below a summary of the proposed allocation of new resources for 2021/22 as defined by the AMS, as well as those outlined in this report, with the following comments setting out the basis of the allocation.
- 9.2 **Capital Investment Programme - £6.811million –** This allocation supports the AMS and acknowledges the work required to allow the decency standard to be maintained, in the current existing stock and resulting from the acquisitions programme, therefore this substantial proportion of the overall allocation is recommended.
- 9.3 **Aids & Adaptations - £0.642million -** This continues to support the budget at historic levels. The proposed allocation achieves the requirement to adapt Council dwellings to meet the special needs of our customers and also meet the high priority that Members place on this service.
- 9.4 **Emergency Failures (statutory obligation) and Voids - £0.695million –** This allocation supports the AMS and the experience gained through the management controls being exercised. It reflects the necessity to recognise capital works in the voids process along with emergency failures.
- 9.5 **Emergency failures structural works - £0.364million –** As with the previous allocation this reflects the AMS and the experience gained through the management controls being exercised. The work is generally associated with premature failure of structural elements.
- 9.6 **Environmental Works - £0.887million -** This allocation supports the AMS by continuing to address the improvements to the overall estate living environment. It will include door

entry systems, block communal improvements, boundary works and PVC installations to continue to reduce the revenue reliance on painting programmes.

- 9.7 **Asbestos, Legionella, Fire Safety and Overall Contingency - £0.709million** – This allocation recognises the need to continue to proactively manage our statutory obligations in the defined areas and provides a general contingency to cover the whole of the programme together with survey work
- 9.8 **Garages - £0.214million** – This investment in the garage stock is intended to secure additional revenue income that will support the business plan in future years. We have seen a return on the investment made in previous financial years by increased garage tenancies and fewer empty garages on the sites that have been refurbished.
- 9.9 **Sheltered Accommodation Improvements - £5.988million** – This allocation supports the continuation of the overall refurbishment programme. Individual delivery contracts will be reported to Cabinet as tenders are returned.
- 9.10 **Non-Works Programmes - £0.060million** – This allocation is for capital costs linked to the further development of the Housing management system.
- 9.11 **Acquisitions - £18.600million** – As set out in the main body of the report, this allocation supports the potential to Buy Back properties offered back to the Council through the Right to Buy legislation and purchasing properties on the open market, including through the 100 Council homes programme. This allocation provides the opportunity to use funding through retained 1-4-1 Right to Buy receipts (up to 30% of total cost), with the balance of 70% coming from prudential borrowing.
- 9.12 **New Build - £1.900million** – As set out in the main body of the report, this allocation supports the plans previously considered by Cabinet.
- 9.13 **Climate Emergency Response - £3.422million** – As set out in the main body of the report, this allocation supports the plans previously considered by Cabinet.

## **10. Strategic Plan References**

- 10.1 The HIP links to the following areas of the Councils strategic plan:
- 10.2 The Better Colchester Strategic Plan 2020-2023 sets out clearly the Councils priorities. The services and projects delivered by CBH contribute directly to the following priority areas and their goals:
- **Creating safe, healthy and active communities**
    - Build on community strengths and assets
    - Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people
    - Provide opportunities for young people
  - **Delivering homes for people who need them**
    - Increase the number, quality and types of homes
    - Prevent households from experiencing homelessness
  - **Growing a better economy so everyone benefits**

- Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth
- Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses flourish

## **11. Consultation**

- 11.1 The Council conducted the bi-annual STAR survey through ARP Research in April 2018, and will be doing so again in 2021 (delayed in 2020 due to Covid-19), with the specific aim of obtaining customer feedback through a survey of general needs tenants, all sheltered tenants and leaseholders. In 2018, there was an increased response rate from tenants and leaseholders on previous surveys. Questions were centred on Colchester Borough Homes performance, tenant satisfaction with their homes, neighbourhood and services. The survey also attempted to identify tenants' priorities on where we focus the provision of non-statutory services. It is planned to repeat the STAR survey during 2021 and the report of the results will be made available to Cabinet and Members, to inform decision-making.
- 11.2 The Council now has a new Strategic Plan and as a consequence will be reviewing its HRA Asset Management Strategy in 2021 and carrying out further consultation as part of this work. The new strategy will need to respond to the 'climate emergency' declared by the Council and tackle the climate challenge within the HRA. An updated Asset Management Strategy will be presented to Cabinet for approval at the end of the Summer 2021

## **12. Publicity Considerations**

- 12.1 Any housing investment has a significant impact on the quality of life for local people. As a consequence the targeting and effectiveness of the programme has huge interest for members and the public as a whole. It is recognised that ongoing publicity will need to be conducted particularly as existing programmes continue and new capital programmes are introduced. Updates will be publicised to the customers in the areas to receive work during the year.

## **13. Financial implications**

- 13.1 As set out in the report.

## **14. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 14.1 An impact assessment has been prepared and can be viewed through the following link

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/12743/Commercial-Services>

## **15. Community Safety Implications**

- 15.1 Through the delivery of improvements to our housing assets and the built environment, the Council seeks to achieve improved outcomes for residents across the borough. This contributes to a reduction in the occurrence of anti-social behaviour, and the incidences of crime through investment in external elements of properties, e.g. UPVC windows and doors, and door entry systems. The impact of HIP works are therefore generally thought to be positive.

## **16. Health and Safety Implications**

- 16.1 CBH will be responsible for implementing the delivery of this programme in a manner that reflects Health and Safety legislation, although the Council does retain the responsibility to ensure that all procedures are in place and being implemented.

## **17. Risk Management Implications**

17.1 Risk management will be considered as the programme is developed, particularly the issues around the introduction of new programmes of work.

**18. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

18.1 The environmental and sustainability implications of individual work programmes will be thoroughly assessed and considered through the procurement process for each contract.

***Appendices***

- Appendix A – HRA Capital Medium Term Financial Forecast 2021/22 to 2025/26

***Background Papers***

- None

## HRA Capital Medium Term Financial Forecast – 2021/22 to 2025/26

## Appendix A

<b>Expenditure</b>	Notes	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Stock Investment Programme etc		13,102	10,879	10,424	10,019	10,252
Sheltered Accommodation Review		5,988	4,918	1,167	2,367	2,440
Adaptations		642	665	700	710	732
<b>Stock Investment Sub - Total</b>		<b>19,732</b>	<b>16,462</b>	<b>12,291</b>	<b>13,096</b>	<b>13,424</b>
New Build		1,900	17,700	18,265	13,911	-
Acquisitions		18,600	6,598	6,664	-	-
ICT		60	61	62	64	66
<b>Other Works Sub - Total</b>		<b>20,560</b>	<b>24,359</b>	<b>24,991</b>	<b>13,975</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Total Programme</b>		<b>40,292</b>	<b>40,821</b>	<b>37,282</b>	<b>27,071</b>	<b>13,490</b>

<b>Resources</b>	Notes	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Major Repairs Reserve		6,000	6,156	6,384	6,616	6,903
Revenue Contribution to Capital		3,790	3,910	3,613	3,879	4,866
Retained RTB Receipts Reserve		4,370	1,881	1,522	345	-
New Borrowing		26,132	28,874	25,763	16,231	1,721
<b>Total Funding</b>		<b>40,292</b>	<b>40,821</b>	<b>37,282</b>	<b>27,071</b>	<b>13,490</b>