

Report

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Report to:	Housing and Technical Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2010
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	Budget and Rent Setting 2011/2012
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Provide an update on consultation with tenants on budget and Rent Setting for 2011/2012

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that progress in relation to arrangements for consultation on Budget and Rent Setting for 2011/2012 be noted.

3. Background

3.1. As part of discussions with tenant representatives regarding setting rents for 2010/2011, it was agreed that there was a need to consider the financial issues faced by the Council on an ongoing basis. A report to the Central Liaison Group on 28 January 2010 approved a recommendation to establish a Budget Scrutiny Group.

3.2. The Budget Scrutiny Group comprises tenant representatives from the Central Liaison Group and the local housing forums and is chaired by the Head of Support Services.

3.3. The Group met for the first time on 25 May 2010 and agreed its remit and workplan which included co-ordinating tenant involvement in the rent setting process for 2011/2012. At the next meeting on 22 June 2010 the key area of discussion were proposals for consultation on setting the rents for 2011/2012.

4. Setting the Rents for 2011/2012

4.1. Discussions have taken place with the Budget Scrutiny Group over the last few months to plan how to take forward consultation on budget and rent setting for 2011/2012.

4.2. The Group have agreed that the annual rent setting process together with all deliberations on Council budgets must be concluded by the first week in December 2010. This is to ensure the views expressed by tenants during all the consultation on the rent levels can be compiled and summarised to be considered at the special meeting of the Housing and Technical Resources Committee in February 2011 where the rent charge for the coming financial year will be recommended to the Council for approval.

4.3. Taking the above into consideration, it was agreed that consultation would take place on the following basis:-

- Tenants Conference 18 September 2010
- Extended meetings of the local housing forums October/November
- "Question Time" event 2 December 2010

5. Consultation on Setting the Rents for 2011/2012

5.1. Tenants Conference

5.1.1. The tenant's conference took place between 10.00am - 1.30pm on Saturday 18 September 2010 in the Banqueting Hall, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton.

5.1.2. The conference was publicised in a number of ways including:-

- an article in the local papers
- an article on the Council's website
- letters sent to tenants' groups, local housing forum members and to individuals on the interested individual register

5.1.3. The conference which began the rent setting process for 2011/2012 focused on:-

- how housing budgets work
- what the plans are for future housing improvements
- how the Council ensures it is getting value for money
- what this means for Council house rents

5.2. Extended meetings of the local housing forums

5.2.1. Advertisements will be placed in all local papers inviting tenants to attend special meetings of the local housing forums during October/November to hear about the options and to give views on the options for setting the rents. Information will also be put on the Council's website. Notices will also be sent to all tenants and residents' groups and individuals on the extended consultation list advising of the special forum meetings.

5.3. "Question Time" event

5.3.1. To conclude the consultation a tenant "Question Time" event will be staged on 2 December 2010 which will be facilitated by South Lanarkshire Tenant Development Support Project (SLTDSP). Council officers involved in the budgeting and rent setting process for Housing and Technical Resources will be invited to attend the event. Tenants will have an opportunity to ask questions of the officers, including the Head of Support Services.

6. Next Steps

6.1. The Budget Scrutiny Group continue to meet to review and update on progress on the consultation for setting the rents for 2011/2012.

6.2. Regular progress reports will be presented to the Central Liaison Group and the Central Liaison Sub-group.

6.3. The views expressed during the consultation will be compiled and summarised into a report which will be considered at the special meeting of Housing and Technical Resources Committee in February 2011 where the rent increases for the coming financial year will be recommended to the Council for approval.

6.4. As noted at the outset the Budget Scrutiny Group will also continue to meet to provide an ongoing basis for considering the financial issues faced by the Council.

7. Employee Implications

7.1. None.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. None.

9. Other Implications

9.1. There are no other implications for sustainability or risk in terms of the information contained in this report.

10. Equalities Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Lindsay Freeland
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

30 August 2010

Link(s) to Council Objectives and Values

◆ Improve the quality, access and availability of housing

Previous References

◆ None

List of Background Papers

◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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