

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

21 APRIL 2017

REFERENCE REPORT FROM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

A.2 CORPORATE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2016/17 (Report prepared by Anastasia Simpson)

BACKGROUND

At the Corporate Management Committee meeting on 13 March 2017 the Committee raised the comments to Cabinet in response to the Corporate Budget Monitoring Report, Third Quarter 2016/17.

The comments for Cabinet are detailed below:

Income from Section 106 Agreements

(a) no monies should ever be left in the “Less than one year column for Section 106 Agreement unallocated/uncommitted monies” i.e. the money should always have been allocated/committed or spent before that point;

Housing Revenue Account

(b) a robust system should be put in place to protect Council as much as possible from costs arising on-going major repairs/improvements to Council dwellings especially where these are as a result of tenants’ actions;

(c) Are the HRA properties periodically fully inspected and if not, why not?; and

Supporting People Funding

(d) Essex County Council (ECC) should be urged to reconsider its decision to end the Supporting People funding. The Committee is disappointed that this Council did not make a public protest at the time especially given the short timescale given before ECC’s decision came into effect and is concerned that this may have set a precedent for future ECC decisions. The Committee is also concerned that the blame for any future decision to remove Sheltered Housing Wardens as a result of budgetary pressures will now be placed at the door of this Council.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET

Cabinet is now asked to consider the comments of Corporate Management Committee:

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that:

(a) no monies should ever be left in the “Less than one year column for Section 106 Agreement unallocated/uncommitted monies” i.e. the money should always have been allocated/committed or spent before that point;

(b) a robust system should be put in place to protect Council as much as possible from costs

arising on-going major repairs/improvements to Council dwellings especially where these are as a result of tenants' actions;

(c) Are the HRA properties periodically fully inspected and if not, why not?; and

(d) Essex County Council (ECC) should be urged to reconsider its decision to end the Supporting People funding. The Committee is disappointed that this Council did not make a public protest at the time especially given the short timescale given before ECC's decision came into effect and is concerned that this may have set a precedent for future ECC decisions. The Committee is also concerned that the blame for any future decision to remove Sheltered Housing Wardens as a result of budgetary pressures will now be placed at the door of this Council.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments are detailed in Appendix A.

A2 Appendix A

CORPORATE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2016/17 PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSES

ITEM NUMBER	COMMENT	RESPONSE FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER
A)	No monies should ever be left in the "Less than one year column for Section 106 Agreement unallocated/uncommitted monies" i.e. the money should always have been allocated/committed or spent before that point;	Noted.
B)	A robust system should be put in place to protect Council as much as possible from costs arising on-going major repairs/improvements to Council dwellings especially where these are as a result of tenants' actions;	Costs arising from tenant damage can and are charged back to the tenant where it is appropriate. This topic has recently been discussed within the service as it has not always been possible to follow up unpaid invoices as part of a formalised legal / bailiff cost recovery process.
C)	Are the HRA properties periodically fully inspected and if not, why not?	Properties are inspected fully when they become void or when a tenant requests a mutual exchange. All gas appliances are inspected annually as this is a legal requirement. Once a tenancy has commenced a property is not normally inspected unless a tenant raises a repair issue or something untoward is noticed by the Tenancy Management team as part of their management of our housing stock. For dwellings subjected to planned maintenance such as window or roof replacement an inspection will be carried out as part of those works.
D)	Essex County Council (ECC) should be urged to reconsider its decision to end the Supporting People funding. The Committee is disappointed that this Council did not make a public protest	Along with other Councils and service providers TDC did raise concerns about the funding cuts directly

	<p>at the time especially given the short timescale given before ECC's decision came into effect and is concerned that this may have set a precedent for future ECC decisions. The Committee is also concerned that the blame for any future decision to remove Sheltered Housing Wardens as a result of budgetary pressures will now be placed at the door of this Council.</p>	<p>with ECC commissioners, including highlighting the likely impacts.</p> <p>The decision to end Housing Related Support (HRS) funding for the provision of Sheltered Housing Support and Careline alarm provision in the sheltered housing schemes across Essex has now been made by ECC's Cabinet. The contract TDC had with Ecc for provision of this funding ran until 31st March 2017.</p> <p>There have also been reductions in funding for floating support services and supported housing for young persons along with a withdrawal of funding for home improvement agencies across Essex. Total funding reductions are believed to be £5.5 million.</p> <p>As part of their review of HRS funding ECC invited local housing authorities and registered housing providers to participate in consultation groups. TDC took up a place on two of the consultation groups but mid way through this process ECC took a decision as to how the funding would be distributed for 2017/18.</p> <p>The Council, along with other councils and registered providers, expressed concerns about the reductions and the</p>
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		<p>way in which the decision had been taken directly to the responsible ECC commissioner at various meetings that have taken place since. ECC commissioners were called to explain the decision at an Essex Chief Executive Authority meeting.</p> <p>Following concerns raised by both Councils and other providers about changes to the funding for supported housing for young persons (a decision that had been taken by ECC earlier in 2016), TDC actively engaged in two dedicated consultation events.</p> <p>A public protest was not considered appropriate given the level of engagement with ECC over the proposals.</p> <p>Both TDC and Colchester Borough Council took a paper to the Colchester Hospital A&E Delivery Board in order to highlight the funding reduction issues with health service colleagues.</p> <p>Through the review of the sheltered housing provision that is currently under way the reasons and background to any funding cuts will be explained fully to reduce the chances of any blame being placed at the door of TDC.</p>
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