COUNCIL

31 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.1 EXECUTIVE DECISION(S) TAKEN AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT
To notify Members of recent Executive Decision(s) taken in the circumstances set out in the Council's Constitution in:- (a) Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (Special Urgency); and/or (b) Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Call-in and Urgency); and/or (c) Rule 6(b) of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In accordance with the requirements of Rule 16.2 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules and/or Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and/or Rule 6(b) of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, this report notifies Members of recent Executive Decision(s) taken in the circumstances set out in Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules and/or Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

RECOMMENDATION
That the contents of this report be NOTED.

PART 2 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND
The "Special Urgency" procedure in Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules provides that where a key decision cannot be reasonably deferred to allow the procedure in Rule 14 (General Exception) of those procedure rules to be followed, it may still be taken with the agreement of the Chairman of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, or failing him/her, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council. Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules provides that the "call-in" procedure will not apply to a decision if the Chairman, or failing him/her the Vice-Chairman, of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee agrees both that the decision is reasonable in all its circumstances and that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.

DECISION(S) TAKEN AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

(1) Engagement of resources from Local Government East to provide capacity within the Housing Repairs team in relation to the maintenance of Council Housing Stock

On 24 February 2026, in view of the urgency of the issue concerned, and in accordance with Rule 18(i) of the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules, I sought and subsequently obtained the Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent, that my urgent decision, on behalf of the Cabinet, relating to authorising the use of up to £310,000 from the Housing Revenue Account Reserves, to fund the engagement of resources from Local Government East, to address an urgent need to provide capacity within the Housing Repairs team, to meet the Council's statutory obligation in relation to the maintenance of Council Housing Stock, could be taken under the special urgency procedure and therefore be exempted from the call-in procedure.

My urgent decision, on behalf of the Cabinet and using the special urgency powers, provided within Schedule 3 (Responsibility for Executive Functions) and Access to Information Procedure Rule 15 (Special Urgency), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, and the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer was as follows:

"To authorise the use of up to £310,000 from the Housing Revenue Account Reserves to fund the engagement of resources form Local Government East, to address an urgent need to provide capacity within the Housing Repairs team to meet the Council's statutory obligation in relation to the maintenance of Council Housing Stock."

It was felt that any delay likely to be caused by the normal key decision process and/or the call-in process would have seriously prejudiced the Council's and the public's interest for the following reasons:-

"Due to the urgent need for the Council to enable there to be a management structure within the housing repairs service by entering into an agreement with LGE, for a period of up to six months, via the use of reserves within the HRA, by the 5th March 2026, the decision to use HRA reserves is proposed using special urgency powers, as set out in Part 3, Schedule 3 of the Constitution.

In addition, in order to meet the deadline to sign up the specialist resource, by 5th March 2026, permission will need to be granted by the Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to exempt this decision from both the Forward Plan and the 5 day call in period, through the special urgency provisions. This will be made through using Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, as set out in Part 5.8 of the Constitution."

BACKGROUND PAPERS

(1) Engagement of resources from Local Government East to provide capacity within the Housing Repairs team in relation to the maintenance of Council Housing Stock

Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Paul Honeywood)'s consent to allow the urgent decision of the Leader of the Council, on behalf of the Cabinet, to be exempt from call-in and that the Special Urgency Procedure as

set out in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (Part 5.8), could be used.

APPENDICES
None