

HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

12 September 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Birch (Chair), Haywood (Vice-Chair), Bence, Bicknell, Butcher, J English, Long, Pendleton, Wiltshire, Dr Walsh and Yeates

Councillors Cooper, Mrs Cooper and Gunner were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

233. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

234. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

235. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee held on 20 June 2023 were approved by the Committee as a correct record, with the Chair confirming that she would sign them at the conclusion of the meeting.

236. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no items for this meeting.

237. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

238. BUDGET 2024/25 PROCESS

The Interim Financial Services Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report. He highlighted the key dates set out in paragraph 3.7 and the Budget Process 2024/25 Flowchart set out in Appendix A.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. It was asked how members could access the range of reports produced as part of the budget process once they became available. It was confirmed that these reports would be made available to all members of the Council via both the public and members' area of the website.

The Committee noted the Budget process for 2024/25 as outlined in the report.

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

239. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Interim Financial Services Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report. He highlighted Table 1 that set out the 2023/24 revenue out turn forecast as at Quarter 1, which anticipated an underspend of £400,000; and the forecast outturn position for the HRA at Table 3 that would result in an overspend of £179,000.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members.

- It was asked whether the deficit in the HRA account was due, in part, to the number of agency staff currently employed by the council and how the Council intended to reduce reliance on agency staff? The Interim Head of Housing confirmed the number of agency staff employed within the Housing Service was continuing to reduce and would reduce further in the next two months.
- The Group Head of Housing and the Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to investigate the reasons for the £50,000 compensation costs and provide members with a written answer.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager advised that contract renegotiations between Freedom Leisure's utility suppliers had reduced their rates. As at the end of Quarter 1 there been no decrease in income expected from Freedom Leisure.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to provide further details of the underspend regarding the vacant post, at paragraph 3.4 of the report, and if the vacancy had resulted in a negative impact on the service.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to provide details to members, outside of the meeting, of the timing difference between budget setting and the beginning of the financial year for the £40,000 variance. The council's budget had been revised after the close of the 2022-23 accounts and any underspends rolled forward to the current financial year, ensuring current schemes in the work programme can still be delivered. He undertook to provide more detail concerning the revised Capital budget relating to Housing Improvements and Stock Development, outside of the meeting.
- The Interim Group Head Housing added that the variance was the result of a more focused approach to undertake repairs and maintenance where properties were reaching their end of life. The boiler replacement programme would meet the Council's decarbonisation targets in terms of sustainable solutions as these solutions were introduced.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager explained that whilst the Housing Revenue Account reserve had fallen below the £2m threshold, steps were being taken to address the deficit. It was anticipated it would take three to four years to bring back into balance, the details of which were set out in the original council budget report.
- Concern was expressed at the high cost of Deprecation, and it was asked how long it would be before positive results were seen? The Interim Financial Services Manager advised that depreciation had already reduced by £1 million during 2022-23. Officers would continue to review the Depreciation Policy and both Housing and Finance would work together to look into the impact.

- Concern was expressed about the void's figures and the loss of rental income and the importance of bringing these properties back into use was expressed. The Interim Financial Services Manager advised the voids figures related to a standard 2.5% assumption for a loss in housing rental income each year and stated this percentage was standard across every local authority. He also confirmed that garage rents had last been reviewed during 2022-23.
- A breakdown of the compliance work taking place as part of budget monitoring was requested, with concern expressed that the work undertaken was either not required, the council was paying too much for this work or was not being carried out to a good standard. The Interim Group Head Housing confirmed compliance was a statutory requirement, with certain functions required to ensure the safety of residents. The Regulatory Notice had recently been removed and officers were confident the service was now following processes appropriately. Having achieved the standards required by the Regulator and the recommendations of the independent consultant. He confirmed all sub-standard work should be reported to the council to be investigated. The Council had a good inspection regime to check the required work is undertaken. Councillor Bicknell referred to a meeting compliance he had requested with officers.
- There was concern that some information requested by members, to enable them to make an informed decision, had not been forthcoming from officers.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager confirmed that the Council's Depreciation Policy was agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee and published on an annual basis prior to the close of accounts. It was reviewed on an annual basis to ensure any depreciation charged to the Revenue account was in line with expectations. A benchmarking exercise was carried out against other local authorities.
- A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. He shared most of the concerns expressed by members. He expressed concern as to the number of variants to the forecast already made during Quarter 1 and advised some of the figures he had challenged with officers. However, he was pleased to see the costs for Leisure Management had reduced. Referring to paragraph 3.10, he asked why costs had increased above budget despite agency staff decreasing? He asked officers and the Committee how they would guarantee the savings, detailed at paragraph 3.11, would be made. More confidence was needed that the budget will be put on a positive trajectory. The Interim Group Head of Housing explained that agency costs were not included in the budget for established salaries and were not budgeted for. Therefore, any agency costs would create an overspend. Work carried out so far had led to improvements and a £1million adjustment being made. Financial Services had already achieved a considerable improvement, supported further by work taking place on the Service Plan to identify savings across the operational area.
- In response to a question asking if there would be a reduction in the quality of the service with front loaded expenditure on agency costs, the Interim Group Head of Housing clarified that, once agency staff were replaced with permanent staff, costs reverted back to those allowed for in the base budget.

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

When preparing the budget officers identified the expected overspends and looked for underspends elsewhere to mitigate the impact. It would not result in a reduction in staff.

The Committee noted the report.

240. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. A comment was made that report authors should be in attendance at the meeting.

During the discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bence that a new KPI should be created concerning incidences of Council housing subletting tenancy fraud, this was seconded by Councillor Bicknell and upon completion of a vote was **CARRIED**.

A further KPI was proposed by Councillor Bence that a new KPI be created concerning the non-payment of service charges for communal areas by owners of flats sold under the Council's right to buy scheme, this was seconded by Councillor Pendleton and upon completion of a vote was **CARRIED**.

Continuing the discussion, concern was raised regarding underperforming CP16. The Interim Head of Housing explained the current IT system would be replaced in May 2024. Configuration of the future voids process had commenced with officers confident that the migration would improve compliance. A supplier purchasing framework had been introduced to improve consistency and reduce costs. He referred to the work being undertaken by the council's Legal Team to bring in measures to ensure work was completed on time whilst putting less pressure on the contractor. Concern was expressed that the council's main contractor did not incur penalties for poor performance and members asked that officers consider reinstating penalties in future contracts. Members were advised early indications showed the voids outturn was starting to improve and steps were being taken to recruit someone with the correct technical experience to improve the situation. Members were reminded of the member briefing session on the HRA, on Monday 18 September, would give members the opportunity to scrutinise the voids process.

A member raised concern about the number of out of order toilets and of a broken window at the Wave leisure Centre.

The Committee

RECOMMENDED TO THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE that

- 1) a KPI is created concerning incidences of Council housing subletting tenancy fraud; and;

- 2) a KPI is created concerning the non-payment of service charges for communal areas by owners of flats sold under the Council's right to buy scheme.

Members then noted the report update provided.

241. PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR HOUSING SERVICES - QUARTER 1  
PERFORMANCE FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Interim Business Improvement Manager was invited to present the report to members. Attention was drawn to appendix 1 that set out the key measures, including benchmarking, to assess the Housing Service's performance. These figures would be shared with residents via a new performance webpage to ensure transparency and updated quarterly.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Referring to paragraph 3.4, concern was expressed that performance for quarter 1 had declined in nine areas, in particular the declining performance regarding emergency repairs. The Interim Head of Housing acknowledged this decline and advised performance, in terms of timescales, had been raised with the responsive repairs' contractor. As stated earlier during the meeting, steps were being taken to resolve these matters with the contractor through the flexibility of the contract and it was expected that improvements would be seen within the next few months. In response Councillor Pendleton commented that she did not want to see further decline and asked the Chair to ensure the Committee was regularly kept updated outside of the meeting.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager agreed to include in future reports the actual figures for temporary accommodation and, if achievable, to provide a breakdown of where in the District they were placed. The Housing Options Manager confirmed that as of 11 September 2023, 203 households were in emergency and temporary accommodation combined.

Concern was raised about the shortfall in rent collections, The Interim Head of Housing explained improving rent collections to upper quartile performance, to between 98% and 100%, was an area of focus in the Service Plan. The detrimental impact of arrears on tenants was acknowledged and work would continue to improve recovery rates. The Interim Business Improvement Manager added that a dedicated Financial Inclusion Officer and Tenancy Sustainment Officer assisted tenants in financial difficulty.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager undertook to clarify the different housing arrears figures set out in the report.

The Housing Options Manager provided explanation of the bandings and bidding process in relation to the housing list, details of which were on the council's website. She undertook to provide the Allocations Policy to the Committee, outside of the meeting.

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. Reference was made to past performance of the Housing Service during his time as Leader of the Council. He had supported projects, when led to believe these would result in significant improvements. Whilst he acknowledged there had been some improvements, he expressed disappointment that performance was not improving quickly enough and asked when Quartile 1 performance would be reached. The Interim Head of Housing advised the aim was to achieve quartile 1 performance regarding the priorities identified by residents. He suggested a report could be presented to the Committee outlining the plan for each priority and when it was expected quartile 1 would be received. Officers had not set out a timescale with a trajectory for improvements but were able to carry out this work and would report the results to the Committee.

The Committee noted the progress detailed in the report.

#### 242. COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND DETERMINATIONS

The Chair invited the Interim Business Improvement Manager to present the report to members. An update was provided on the response times for August 2023 which had achieved a 65% response rate for Stage 1 complaints and, as anticipated, some of the improvements had resulted in improved performance following quarter 1 and improvements to Stage 2 complaints of up to 40%. The report detailed the work being undertaken to improve performance and to understand the reasons for the complaints received to see what action could be taken to avoid the high number of complaints.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Concern was expressed of the high proportion of complaints relating to the repairs service, the number of complaints responded to in time and those upheld. The Interim Head of Housing acknowledged the concerns raised and explained that work had recently taken place on processes and resources, which had resulted in improvements starting to take place. Many of the complaints referred to work not yet undertaken and officers working to resolve these issues with the contractor.

Councillor Pendleton asked the Chair to challenge the issues raised by members at the agenda preparation meeting, so officers were able to provide answers at the meeting instead of at a later date.

The Chair drew attention to the member session on the Voids process due to take place and encouraged members to attend. The Interim Head of Housing clarified emergency repairs would not be included in this session. A request was made requesting that officers provide a monthly progress update to members on both voids and emergency repairs.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager confirmed that the average compensation of £187.00 paid for stage 1 and 2 complaints, related to the period April

to June 2023. Where the Council was at fault higher levels of compensation were being seen and it was hoped that, as officers resolved the systemic issues relating to repairs, less complaints would be received resulting a lower upheld rate.

With regards to compensation payments and the impact on the HRA account, a question was asked whether contractors were held accountable, as it was the Council being penalised for the contractors inadequate. The Interim Head of Housing advised that officers were in discussions with the contractor and with internal support services to find solutions.

The accuracy of the amount of £50,000 set out in the quarter 1 report was queried and it was suggested that the report should reflect a higher amount of £65,000 until it was known the situation was improving.

The Committee

RESOLVED

1. Noted the contents of the report
2. Noted that the council has complied with the orders made by the Housing Ombudsman in their determinations.

243. PUBLIC FACING CCTV UPGRADE

The Chair invited the Communities and Wellbeing Manager to present the report to members. The report sought approval to carry out an upgrade to ensure public facing CCTV remained in operation across Arun and was compatible with ongoing monitoring and surveillance via Sussex Police following BT's decision to retire their digital and analogue service. Chroma Vision, working with Sussex Police, had come up with a solution that would result in a reduction in costs following an upgrade to a cloud-based system.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. The Communities and Wellbeing Manager confirmed that the maintenance transmission would be an annual reduction in costs year on year. Responding to concern expressed as to where the legal obligations lay regarding the use of CCTV footage, in light of instances where Sussex Police had not responded to requests for information, discussions were taking place between the District and Borough councils in West Sussex and Sussex Police. Members were informed that these councils had expressed their concern to Sussex Police that responsibility for CCTV should remain with the Police. Sussex Police had agreed to extend their transfer deadline from 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2015. The Communities and Wellbeing Manager confirmed officers shared the same concerns raised by members and agreed that responsibility should remain with Sussex Police.

During the discussion it was proposed by Councillor Walsh that Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police.

Councillor Bence added that a key point survey to establish that before £30,000 was released to carry out the upgrade, it should be established if the technology was fit for purpose and whether the CCTV cameras were located in the correct locations to identify issues.

The Communities and Wellbeing Manager added that a heat map report had been requested from Sussex Police to establish if the CCTV cameras were located in the right locations and to identify any further needs. The report would be provided to members once it was received.

Councillor Pendleton then seconded Councillor Walsh's proposal that Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police, it was **CARRIED**.

The Community Safety Officer advised that Arun was in a better position than other councils, as a CCTV upgrade had been undertaken during 2018 and undertook to provide members with a list of the Council's public facing CCTV cameras and their locations.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Bence.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. the upgrade work totalling £30,000, allocated from existing budgets, to ensure that CCTV remains in operation across Arun and is compatible with ongoing monitoring and surveillance via Sussex Police. Resulting in reduced annual costs to maintain current CCTV system be approved.
2. Noted that external funding is being explored via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which could cover 50% of the costs and the Safer Streets funding via the Sussex Police Crime Commission. Arun District Council will seek to apply, accept, and draw down appropriate funds to cover the cost of the upgrade.
3. That Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police.



244. SHAP - (SINGLE HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME)

The Chair invited the Housing Options Manager to present the report to members. The Report asked members to approve proceeding with submitting suitable accommodation schemes for funding in accordance with SHAP grant conditions.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Members expressed their support for the implementation of suitable accommodation schemes for SHAP funding. Responding to questions the Housing Options Manager explained the accommodation would become stock owned by the council for a period of three years, dovetailing the rough sleeping project due to end 31 March 2035. In response to a question concerning the need for accommodation, the Housing Options Manager advised the gap analysis undertaken clearly identified a large need for the provision of homeless accommodation in Littlehampton, with a much lower need in Bognor Regis. The DLUHC had confirmed their support for development in Littlehampton. A member suggested that the suitability of council owned land should be investigated, and suggested Nightingales, Findon. The Housing Options Manager advised officers were aware of the HRA owned plots of land and were exploring their potential. It was noted that the development must be completed by March 2025.

The Interim Head of Housing advised that officers were actively investigating if any council owned land was suitable and whether it could be used in a financially sustainable way.

Assurance was sought that the Committee would receive a report detailing the project costs, to enable members to gain an understanding of the financial commitments in full, before the Committee reached a final decision. The Housing Options Manager responded that once the outcome of the bid was known, the financial implications would be understood, and reported to the Committee. The deadline for the bid submission was November 2023.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Pendleton.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

the submission of suitable accommodation schemes for SHAP funding be approved.

245. HOUSING HOMELESS STRATEGY EXTENSION

The Chair invited the Housing Options Manager to present the report to members. The report sought to extend the Homeless Strategy for a further year to allow a procurement process to be undertaken.

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. A member expressed strong concern about the delay in implementing the Strategy and commented that the Strategy could not be extended beyond five years. An explanation was requested as to why the Committee was being asked to agree a further extension until 2024. Responding to the concerns raised, the Interim Head of Housing corrected an error in the report and clarified that the new Strategy was required to be adopted by “2024” not “2023”, as stated under the Directorate Policy Context on page 105. He therefore confirmed that the requested extension was within the five-year period allowed. He advised that the procurement process had been delayed due to the Housing Options Manager post being vacant. The tender process was now underway, and it was anticipated a contractor would be secured within several weeks. Work was expected to commence before the end of this year and was expected to take several months to complete. Whilst the response provided by the Interim Head of Housing was excepted, further concern was expressed that it had been promised the Strategy would be on the table now. Concern was also raised that during the vacancy period, no consultants had been engaged, as it was they who would undertake most of the work. The Interim Head of Housing responded that the requirement to undertake a procurement process was the reason for the delay caused by the vacancy.

A request was made to add this item to the Committee work programme to enable progress to be monitored by the whole committee. The Interim Head of Housing explained that the evaluation process included assessment of the milestones, which would provide an indication of where the project should appear on the work programme.

A request was made that officers address the typographical error on page 105, to ensure the correct date of 2024, was amended in future reports.

A request was made, through the Chair, that close monitoring of the procurement process should take place and that a report be produced for members of the committee to ensure the project was completed.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Bence and seconded by Councillor Walsh.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

the extension of the Homeless Strategy until 2024 be approved.

#### 246. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report to members. He drew attention to the challenging timescale required to ensure the seven temporary homes, intended for use by Afghan and other refugees, were ready for use by March 2024 in order to receive funding towards the project.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Members indicated their overall support for the project. Responding to a suggestion to buy back ex-council houses sold on the housing market, the Interim Head of Housing advised that the intention was to buy new properties, as the assets were newer with less depreciation. Ex-Council houses were likely to be older properties and require renovation, so may not be ready in time to meet the funding deadline. With regards to the borrowing of the balance required to fund the project, there were a number of options available, such as the Public Works Loans Board or internal borrowing.

A member referred to the Committee's previous discussions with officers concerning interest rates and the cost of borrowing and expressed concern that officers had not reported back to members updated information, in light of recent interest rate rises. There was no clear understanding of financial commitment or explanation of the project's cost over time or the full financial costs, and it was requested this information should be brought before the Committee, so the financial implications were understood before a final decision was made. The Interim Head of Housing advised that the recommendations were designed to mitigate the challenges. Once suitable properties were identified and a price agreed, the council's evaluation software would evaluate the entire life cost of the project. The recommendation asked members to agree that once the elevation was completed the Section 151 Officer is given delegated powers, in consultation with the Leader, Opposition Leader and the Chair of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee, to approve the acquisition if a positive financial appraisal was received, which would ensure completion by March 2024.

A member asked officers to consider arranging a special meeting so that the decision could be made by the Committee as a whole and make the decision based on the financial commitment before them. The Interim Head of Housing asked the Committee to note there may be difficulties in arranging a special meeting, as when suitable properties were found it was likely there would be a short time frame to secure their purchase.

A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. He outlined the reasons why, as the Opposition Leader, felt uncomfortable being asked to consider approving the urgent decision following an expression of interest, having been given a short deadline to make his decision with a lack of financial information. He recalled that a previous meeting of this Committee, members raised concern as to the impact of borrowing costs to the council. He had been assured by the Section 151 Officer that the project would not progress if assessments found there was no financial business case and told that rigorous financial testing would be undertaken by the Finance Service before advice was given to the Committee. He expressed concern that the initial approach provided to him had changed. The Interim Housing Manager referred to an email he had since sent to the Opposition Leader setting why a different approach was being taken and included an invitation to discuss why a new approach was now being offered, and to speak to him if he had any concerns.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Bence.

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

### The Committee

#### RESOLVED that

- (a) progression of the LAHF award of £1,092,000 to acquire seven additional homes for use as temporary accommodation be approved;
- (b) the use of HRA borrowing as match funding of a minimum 60% (up to £1,640,000) be approved;
- (c) Subject to recommendation (d), the acquisition of seven new homes for up to a maximum total cost of £2,730,000 for use as temporary accommodation and in accordance with the LAHF grant conditions be approved; and
- (d) Delegates authority to the Group Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Leader, Opposition Leader and Chair of this committee, to provide final written approval of the acquisition subject to the Group Head of Finance being in receipt of a positive financial appraisal.
- (e) Noted that an appraisal of the LAHF scheme will be brought to this committee once it is completed and in use.

#### RECOMMENDED TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

- (f) that this scheme is included within the Council's capital programme at a total cost of £2.73M, with £1.09M to be funded from central government grant and £1.64M to be funded by the Council through additional borrowing.

### 247. COUNCIL HOUSING COMPLIANCE STRATEGY

*(Councillor Walsh left the meeting after the vote on this item at approximately 8.47pm)*

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report to members. He advised that the council had demonstrated to the Regulator of Social Housing it was now meeting its obligations, and hence the Regulatory notice had recently been withdrawn. Part of the continuing work was the development of an overarching Compliance Policy.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. With regards to the photographic evidence previously taken when council properties were surveyed, four years ago, the Interim Head of Housing explained that in addition the regulator expected the council to provide a methodology for its findings.

Responding to a request for physical copies of gas, electrical and asbestos certificates to be placed at each property, the Compliance Manager, Maintenance Services, advised that evidence of all inspections, surveys and tests was held electronically. He confirmed that all contractors had electronic access to view the data at any time.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Bence and seconded by Councillor Walsh.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Committee approved the adoption of the appended Compliance Strategy.

248. OUTSIDE BODIES UPDATES

The Chair advised members that there were no report updates for the meeting.

249. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair advised that the work programme for 2023/24 was for information only and asked members if they had any questions or comments.

- Review of Pets Policy: The Interim Head of Housing explained why this Policy was not on today's agenda, following its inclusion on the work programme at the last meeting. He advised before it was considered by the Committee, November at the earliest, the engagement of residents would need to take place to understand all the relevant issues, especially in light of recent dog attacks across the Country, before its consideration by members.
- Housing Homeless Strategy Extension: This item was added to the Committee work programme, as agreed under Minute 111, to enable progress to be monitored by the whole Committee.

Members then noted the work programme for 2023/24.

250. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bicknell and seconded by Cllr Bence.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That under Section 100a (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

251. INSOLVENCY COUNCIL TAX WRITE OFFS

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bence and Cllr Pendleton.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To write off the outstanding council tax charges totalling £5,181.86 which are subject to insolvency action, preventing the Council from pursuing the debtor for payment.

252. BUSINESS RATES WRITE OFFS - INSOLVENCY

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bence and Cllr Bicknell.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To write off the outstanding business rates charges totalling £22,286.70 which are subject to insolvency action, preventing the Council from pursuing the debtor for payment.

(The meeting concluded at 8.55 pm)