

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

**Service Plans for 2008/09, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2007/08
(Revised), 2008/09 and 2009/10 (Forecast)**

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A1

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Key Decision

Matter for Decision: In the last Committee cycle, members received the Housing Revenue Account Service Performance Review setting out the performance against objectives and targets for the first six months of 2007/08. The Service Plan for 2008/09, accompanying this agenda, now looks ahead at service proposals, objectives, targets and budget position for 2008/09 and forecast for 2009/10. This information will enable the Executive Councillor to consider whether service priorities and resources should be refocused, to enable objectives and targets for the coming year to be met.

Appendix D of the officer report sets out the overall base revenue budget position for the Housing Revenue Account. The appendix compares the proposed revised budget for the current year with that presented in the November cycle, and details the proposed budget for 2008/09 and forecast for 2009/10.

The Service Plan for the Housing Revenue Account was considered.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

Service Plans and draft Budgets are key elements of the Councils budgetary and policy framework.

The Executive Councillor agreed:

- a) To approve with any amendments, the current year funding requests and savings, (shown in Appendix A of the officer report).
- b) To approve the revised revenue budget for 2007/08, as shown in Appendix D of the officer report, which results in no net change in the use of reserves of for 2007/08.
- c) Proposals for revenue savings and bids, as set out in Appendix C of the officer report, which have been incorporated into the budgets presented for this portfolio.
- d) To approve the budget for 2008/09 as shown in Appendix D of the officer report.

Review of Charges:

- e) To approve the proposed charges for Housing Revenue Account services and facilities, as shown in Appendix B of the officer report.
- f) To approve that council dwellings rents be increased in line with rent restructuring guidelines to reach formula rent by 2016/17, with a maximum in individual increases of inflation (3.9%) plus half percent (0.5%) plus £2.00 per week with effect from 7 April 2008, in accordance with revised government guidelines for rent restructuring.
- g) To approve inflationary increases of 4.5% in garage rents in line with an average of employee and building cost inflation and inflationary increases to a maximum of 4.4% (3.9% inflation plus 0.5%) in service charges for door entry systems, lifts, stair lifts and gas maintenance, using the retail price index (RPI) at September 2007.

h) To approve that caretaking and communal cleaning charges, temporary housing premises and utilities charges, and sheltered scheme premises and utilities charges continue to be recovered at full cost.

Performance Targets:

i) The service objectives and proposals for 2008/09 and future years for services contained within the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in Appendix 1 of the service plan, and the performance indicators and targets as set out in Appendix 2 of the plan.

Reasons for the decision:

These are set out in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations for the Executive Councillor by 6 votes to 0.

Report: Agenda Item 5 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest: No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Leasehold Service Review

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A2

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Not a Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To agree charges to leaseholders to be introduced from 1 April 2008 and that further recommendations on the Leasehold Service be brought to the July meeting of the Housing Management Board.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

Cambridge City Council had 1,041 leaseholders as at 1st April 2007. The Council are currently reviewing the service as a result of the mock inspection of the Housing Service carried out by Adams Integra in May 2006, and have developed an action plan to address the twelve recommendations that were highlighted.

The Executive Councillor agreed:

- 2.1 That the management charge should reflect the actual costs of administering the Leasehold Service and a flat rate charge (currently calculated at £42.69 per annum) to all leaseholders should be introduced from April 2008. This replaces the existing proposed charge based on the 15% calculation at an average of £24.97 per annum.
- 2.2 That the Council, having reviewed the terms of the lease, should keep the existing basis of charging out services equally rather than by an alternative method.
- 2.3 That the option of revising all existing leases retrospectively is now considered too expensive to pursue.
- 2.4 That the Review of the Leasehold Service should make future recommendations to the Housing Management Board on changes to the charging out services.
- 2.5 To note the continuing review of the leasehold service as identified in appendix 1 of the officer report.

Reasons for the decision:

Detailed in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 11 votes to 0.

Report: Agenda Item 6 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Record of Executive Decision

Introductory Tenancy Review Process

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A3

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Non Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To agree changes to the Introductory Tenancy Review Process.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):
Concerns were raised following a recent appeal.

The Executive Councillor agreed:

- 2.1 To have a minimum of three people at Service Head level or equivalent on the Review Panel, one of whom must be from an organisation sufficiently distanced from the City Council for them to be regarded as independent.
- 2.2 That the procedures would state that only one Head of Service or equivalent would be a Head of Service from Housing Services.
- 2.3 That Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association would act as an independent Introductory Review Panel member.
- 2.4 To seek other similar organisations that could fulfil this role.

Reasons for the decision:

Detailed in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee voted on an amendment proposed by Mr Marais to the first recommendation (amendment highlighted in bold and underline): "To have a minimum of three people at Service Head level or equivalent on the Review Panel, **one of whom will be a City Council Housing Head of Service, one of whom will be a city councillor** and one of whom must be from an organisation sufficiently distanced from the City Council for them to be regarded as independent." The amendment was lost by 7 votes to 6.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed unanimously that the procedures show clearly that, of the Heads of Service or equivalent, only one should come from Housing Services.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the amended recommendations unanimously.

Report: Agenda Item 7 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Capital Works towards the Cambridge Standard - Ekin Road - Neighbourhood Improvement Project

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A4

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Non Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To approve capital funding for works at Ekin Road.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

City Homes spend significant resources in Ekin Road on clearing fly-tipped rubbish, repairing vandalised fencing and other communal facilities, removing graffiti and dealing with disrepair.

This is an opportunity to show how an improving housing service, aspiring to a 2 star rating, responds to highlighted opportunities for regenerating areas that fall below an acceptable standard.

The Executive Councillor:

Approved the investment of £137,000 of capital resources as part of the 2008/09 works towards the Cambridge Standard funding, to undertake required works at Ekin Road as detailed in the project appraisal at Appendix 1 of the officer report.
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Reasons for the decision:

Detailed in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations unanimously.

Report: Agenda Item 7 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Report on progress and performance in Resident Involvement (RI)

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A5

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Non Key Decision

Matter for Decision: Approving the programme of improvements in the Resident Involvement Service for 2008.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

The Improving Housing Services Panel have been overseeing Resident Involvement (RI) since summer '07. A lot of major improvements have been made in the service in the past couple of years. It is also important not to become complacent. This means pursuing in early 2008 with the final round of improvements needed to ensure the RI service reaches 2-stars.

The Executive Councillor:

Approved and supported the programme of improvements proposed for 2008.

Reasons for the decision:

Detailed in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The scrutiny committee considered and approved the recommendations unanimously.

Report: Agenda Item 7 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Cambridge Federation Grant Application

Decision of: Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Reference: HMB/080206/A6

Date of decision: 6 February 2008 (recorded on 11 February 2008)

Decision Type: Non Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To approve the level of grant funding to the Cambridge Federation for 2008/09.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

The Cambridge Federation apply to Housing Management Board annually in January for the funding that they calculate they will need in order to deliver their services for the following financial year. This report presents their application.

<p>The Executive Councillor:</p>

<p>Approved Cambridge Federation's request for £62,861 of grant funding for 2008/09.</p>
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Reasons for the decision:

Detailed in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations unanimously.

Report: Agenda Item 7 of Housing Management Board, 6 February 2008

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.