

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 22 May 2023

Report Title

Ward Housing Hub Budget 2023/24 carry forward report

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

James Smith, Tenant Engagement Manager

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough Wide

Report Summary

On the 29th of December 2019, Cabinet agreed the implementation of 25 Ward Housing Hubs with an allocated base budget of £4000 per Ward and the remainder of the annual budget provision then being allocated based upon the percentage of Council homes within each Ward. It was also agreed that the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Head of Finance (Adults, Public Health and Housing), is authorised to increase the Ward Housing Hubs budget (on a ward-by-ward basis) by the value of the Ward Housing Hub underspend in the preceding year within the 4 year cycle.

This report seeks approval to carry forward the underspend from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

Recommendations

1. That the Assistant Director of Housing approves the carry-over of the 2022/23 Ward Housing Hub budget underspend to 2023/24.

List of Appendices Included

N/A

Background Papers

Cabinet Report- Area Housing Panels Review 18th March 2019

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

N/A

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Ward Housing Hub Budget 2022/23 carry forward report

1. Background

- 1.1 On the 29th of December 2019, Cabinet agreed the implementation of 25 Ward Housing Hubs with an annual allocated base budget of £4000 per Ward and the remainder of the annual budget provision then being allocated based upon the percentage of Council homes within each Ward. 25 Ward Housing Hubs were subsequently implemented on 1st April 2020, with budgets allocated based upon the above formula.
- 1.2 A roll-forward facility was also approved by Cabinet to enable the annual budget to be increased each financial year by the value of any underspend from the preceeding year, on a Ward-by-Ward basis. The roll-forward facility to operate within a four-yearly cycle, mirroring the local elections cycle.
- 1.3 The elections were delayed in 2020 due to COVID-19. Following the elections in 2021, Members were elected for a three-year period. The Ward Housing Hub budgets set in 2021/22 were aligned on this basis with the budget roll forward facility for the three-year period ending on 31st March 2024. All remaining budget provision must be fully spent by this date. From 2024/25 a new four yearly budget cycle will commence.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 There is a total Ward Housing Hub budget underspend of £234,375 to be rolled forward, on a Ward-by Ward basis, from 2022/23.
- 2.2 Processes are being put in place to ensure budgets are allocated and spent prior to the 2023/24 financial year end.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 That in accordance with the December 2019 Cabinet approval, the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Head of Finance (Adults, Public Health and Housing), authorises the increase in the 2023/24 Ward Housing Hubs budget (on a ward-by-ward basis) by the value of the underspend from the 2022/23 financial year.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Corporate Finance have been consulted and have determined the Ward Housing Hub budget value to be rolled forward into 2023/24, detailed at para 2.1 above.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Assistant Director of Housing has overall accountability for delivering the Ward Housing Hub spend for 2023/24.

- 5.2 The budgets will be allocated to each Ward following approval.
- 5.3 Progress will be discussed regularly at the Housing Involvement Panel and regular updates will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Housing.
- 6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**
- 6.1 There are no procurement implications arising from the recommendation in this report.
- 6.2 Following approval of the roll-forward, a budget adjustment will need to be actioned by Finance to allocate the £234,375 to the relevant Ward budgets for 2023/24.
- 6.3 The underspend on Ward Housing Hub budgets from 2022/23 has increased the HRA revenue balance. The budget adjustment in 2023/24 will be funded from these resources.
- 7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**
- 7.1 There are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report.
- 7.2 The relevant authorisations are in place and consultation with Finance has taken place in respect of this decision to roll forward the Ward Housing Hub budget underspend from 2022/23 to 2023/24.
- 8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**
- 8.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
- 9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**
- 9.1 Ward Housing Hub projects can positively impact children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**
- 10.1 Housing, Rotherfed and Neighbourhood Co-ordinators will ensure that budget spend can be influenced by a diverse range of tenants, contributing to the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022-25 through the following:
1. Understanding, listening, and engaging across all communities
 2. Involving tenants in improving their communities as a result of Ward Hub project
 3. Empowering people to engage and challenge discrimination and to promote good community relations.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Ward Housing Hub funding will continue to fund projects which make environmental improvements and which are carbon friendly.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The Council has a contract in place with Rother Fed (local tenant federation) who support tenants to make applications for Ward Housing Hub funding.
- 12.2 Performance management reports are submitted to the Council on a monthly and annual basis to ensure contractual obligations are being met.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The risk of failing to deliver the increased Ward spend in 2023/24 will be mitigated by ensuring that the Tenant Engagement Team keep track of budget spend and regularly communicate with Neighbourhoods Teams, local Councillors and Rotherfed, to ensure that monies are spent on projects that benefit local communities. Corporate Finance will also regularly monitor budget expenditure and spend forecasts.

14. Accountable Officers

James Smith, Tenant Engagement Manager, Housing and Estate Services, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

James Clark, Assistant Director of Housing, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

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