



Ref No: EQ467750865

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Title of report: Council Housing Rents 2023/24

Report : The report details the annual rent increase for council housing, how that increase was reached and the recommended way forward

What evidence/data is being used to support this equality analysis? Please select all that apply.: Findings from surveys, focus groups & consultations, Published data - e.g Census, State of Ipswich report

Service area: Tenancy Services

Corporate Manager: Gavin Fisk

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Links to supporting documents where available:

Please upload any supporting documents:

What is proposed?: The report proposes an increase to social housing rents of 7%.for the financial year 23/24

The report proposes an increase to affordable housing rents of 7% for the financial year unless this brings the rent above the Local Housing Allowance Rate, in which case the rent will be capped at this rate.

The report proposes to maintain the current housing garage and hardstanding rents for the financial year 23/24. Rentals of garages are outside the scope of the Government's rent policy.

The report also seeks approval to amend the sheltered housing service and utility charges for the financial year 23/24 to ensure costs are recovered. These costs are based on a scheme by scheme basis and based on actual usage

Why are the changes being introduced?: The Council must set rents in accordance with the

Government's policy statement on rents for social housing.

The Council relies upon its rental income stream to fund all council house activity including management, maintenance and improvements.

Increasing the rent in line with Government policy helps to ensure the financial stability of the Housing Revenue Account

What evidence is being used to support this Equality Impact Assessment, and how is it being used?: Data from the 2020 Tenant Survey

Tenant profiling data

Rent account information

Government's policy statement on social housing rents 2019

Government's Rent Standard 2020

How will this change be implemented?: This change will be implemented following approval from Council giving all tenants the required written notice

Age: Negative

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This particularly benefits vulnerable groups and helps to minimise negative impacts generally, and specifically in relation to older and younger tenants. Tenants living in sheltered housing are more likely to be negatively impacted by the increase in rents and service and utility charges.

The impact can be minimised as the welfare benefit system is there to support those on a low income. 79% of Sheltered Housing tenants receive housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs. For those tenants with full housing benefit and Universal Credit housing costs entitlement the increase will be covered. For those with partial entitlement their benefit will be recalculated and adjusted as appropriate according to their circumstances.

The Council is able to provide advice and support and refer for specialist debt, budgeting and welfare benefit advice through its Money Advice contract with Anglia Care Trust. Sheltered Housing tenants have the support of a Scheme Manager to assist them where required.

The Council will continue to promote the advice and support available through conversations with all tenants and also regularly through its tenant newsletters.

Processes and systems are in place to ensure early monitoring and intervention in cases of rent arrears to support tenants and sustain tenancies.

A Reasonable Adjustment policy is in place.

Service and Utility Charges increases will be capped at £2

Disability: Negative

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. Disabled adults tend to be more likely to live in low-income households than non-disabled adults. Additionally, disabled people are more likely not to be working, and where they are working, are more likely to be earning less than non-disabled people. Therefore, any rent increase is more likely to have a negative impact on this protected characteristic.

The impact can be minimised as the welfare benefit system is there to support those on a low

income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally, and specifically for this protected characteristic.

The Council is able to provide advice and support and refer for specialist debt, budgeting and welfare benefit advice through its Money Advice contract with Anglia Care Trust. The Council is also able to signpost to the Disability Advice Bureau.

The Council will continue to promote the advice and support available through conversations with all tenants and also regularly through its tenant newsletters.

Processes and systems are in place to ensure early monitoring and intervention in cases of rent arrears to support tenants and sustain tenancies.

A Reasonable Adjustment Policy is in place.

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income. The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

Race: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

Pregnancy & Maternity: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This particularly benefits vulnerable groups and helps to minimise negative impacts generally, and specifically in relation to this protected characteristic.

Religion or Belief: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be

any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

Gender Reassignment: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

Sex: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income.

The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

Sexual Orientation: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: No impact has been identified.

All tenants will benefit from the overall investment in council housing. There is not expected to be any particular negative impact on this specific group.

The Council will continue to support tenants on low incomes or experiencing financial difficulties to enable them to manage their finances and maximise their income. The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are entitled to in order to maximise income. This helps to minimise negative impacts generally.

I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives: I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives

The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s): The report indicates that there are no unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation issues resulting from the 7% rent increase.

The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s): Tenancy Services treat all tenants with protected characteristics equally. All tenants will benefit from overall investment in the council housing.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s): The Council seeks to ensure that all eligible tenants receive the welfare benefits they are

entitled to in order to maximise income. This particularly benefits vulnerable groups and helps to minimise negative impacts generally, and specifically in relation to older and younger tenants. The Council is able to provide advice and support and refer for specialist debt, budgeting and welfare benefit advice through its Money Advice contract with Anglia Care Trust. Sheltered Housing tenants have the support of a Scheme Manager to assist them where required. The Council will continue to promote the advice and support available through conversations with all tenants and also regularly through its tenant newsletters. Processes and systems are in place to ensure early monitoring and intervention in cases of rent arrears to support tenants and sustain tenancies.

The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s)::Tenant engagement and specifically through the income team within tenancy services.
