

Low rent increases and £20m investment in housing improvements

Recommendations to the Budget Council today include a below inflation rent increase for over 5,200 council tenants. Also under consideration is a £20m investment programme of housing improvements.

The Government set the cap for this year's rent increase at 7%. We are proposing an increase of 5% because we recognise the financial pressures faced by many of our tenants.

There is no cap for people living in shared ownership properties. Rent increases could have been set as high as 11.1%. We are also proposing to cap these rents at 5%.

Those renting a garage will see a rent increase of 3%. This is in line with our wider policy on fees and charges.

Effective management of our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget has enabled us to keep rent increases lower than the government's price cap.

Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Housing and Communities, Cllr Julia McShane said:

"We are concerned about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on communities. Although some of our tenants can meet their rent, we want to support all our tenants as much as possible. Keeping our annual rent increases low will help many households.

"As part of a range of wider improvements to services we propose to employ two officers. They will support our tenants with money and benefit advice.

"We will also be investing £20 million in our capital programme. Our focus will be on energy efficiency improvements and health and safety enhancements."



We will be improving the energy efficiency of homes. This includes new doors, windows, insulation, heating, and hot water systems. Health and safety work planned includes new fire alarms, smoke detection, improved electrics, and new lifts.

The proposed HRA revenue budget meets our obligation to deliver a balanced budget. It creates more opportunities to improve services to tenants and ensures that our housing stock meets health and safety standards.