

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 16 October 2014

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan

Subject: HRA Financial Plan – Half-Yearly Update

Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Communities (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)



Recommendations Required:

- (1) That the Six-Month Review of the HRA Financial Plan 2014/15 from CIH Consultancy, the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants, attached as an Appendix be considered; and**
- (2) That the Scrutiny Panel provides any comments or concerns to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Communities accordingly.**

Report:

1. At its meeting in March 2014, the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered the draft HRA Business Plan for 2014/15 and recommended its adoption to the Housing Portfolio Holder, which was subsequently approved. An important part of the HRA Business Plan is the HRA Financial Plan, which sets out the anticipated HRA income and expenditure over the next 30 years.

2. The Cabinet has asked the Housing Scrutiny Panel to review updates to the HRA Financial Plan twice each year, at its scheduled meetings in October and March. In addition, senior Housing and Finance officers also formally review the Financial Plan in July and January each year too.

3. CIH Consultancy has acted as the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants for a number of years and, at its March 2012 meeting, the Cabinet agreed that the Council should contract with CIH Consultancy to act as the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants for a further three years until 2015, subject to satisfactory price and performance. This was in view of:

- the knowledge and experience that they have amassed about the Council's housing finances and operational workings over past years;
- the need to ensure a continuity of service and knowledge; and
- the fact that officers and members have been impressed with the quality of advice and service provided by CIH Consultancy at a competitive fee;

4. Accordingly, a three-year agreement with CIH Consulting has been signed.

5. CIH Consultancy has undertaken its Six-Month Review of the current HRA Financial Plan, to take account of the Council's current financial position and national and local policies. Their Six-Month Review Report, setting out the changes and current financial position, is attached as an Appendix.

6. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the Six-Month Review Report and to provide any comments or concerns to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Communities accordingly.