



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council Equality Impact Assessment

Build! Team

January 2021

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Section 1: Summary details

<p>Directorate and Service Area</p>	<p>Growth and Economy / Build!</p>
<p>What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).</p>	<p>Proposal details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Savings of £153,200 2. Income of £95,000 <p>Savings proposal achieving (Full Year Effect): <u>£153,200</u></p> <p>Savings will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning repairs and maintenance budgets with historical spend • Adjustment of resources which will ensure that the service continues to meet customer needs. <p>Income generation with rental increase achieving (Full Year Effect): <u>£95,000</u> from 2022/23</p> <p>The Build! team collects rental income from both affordable rented homes and shared ownership properties, the latter on the remaining percentage that is retained by CDC until the owner can afford to purchase a larger share.</p> <p>The Government sets out the process and parameters which are the basis for increasing rents, so this is regulated, and we believe that this proposal is within acceptable parameters. The increase of rent would yield an additional income of £95,000.</p> <p>As part of the budget process each year the Build team model a range of rent increases prior to the confirmation of the CPI rate and consider the impact this will have on all of our individual affordable rents. An affordable rent is 80% of market rent. The new rents are then measured against the Local Housing</p>

	<p>Allowance (LHA) and compared to market and other social housing rents in the District. As an example, the rent for a one-bed flat in Town Centre House will increase next year by £0.68 to £124.88 per week: the LHA for this type of property is £149.59 per week. If we were to find that the new rent exceeds the LHA for the type of property, the rent would not be increased. This ensures that the tenants who are eligible to have their housing costs paid either through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit can continue to have the whole amount covered.</p>
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing function
<p>Summary of assessment</p> <p>Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change.</p> <p>Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?</p> <p>(following completion of the assessment).</p>	<p>There is a potential impact on communities living with deprivation; however, the proposed alignment and adjustment of the repairs and maintenance budget is not anticipated to have any significant impact upon these customers.</p> <p>The justification for the proposed rental increase is set out in section 2 below.</p>
Completed By	Jane Norman
Authorised By	Robert Jolley
Date of Assessment	11 January 2021

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>Savings proposal achieving (Full Year Effect): £ <u>153,200</u></p> <p>Savings will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning repairs and maintenance budgets with historical spend • Adjustment of resources which will ensure that the service continues to meet customer needs. <p>Income generation with rental increase achieving (Full Year Effect): £ <u>95,000</u> from 2022/23</p> <p>The Build! team collects rental income from both affordable rented homes and shared ownership properties, the latter on the remaining percentage that is retained by CDC until the owner can afford to purchase a larger share. The Government sets out the process and parameters which are the basis for increasing rents, so this is regulated, and we believe that this proposal is within acceptable parameters. An increase of rent would yield an additional income of £95,000.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>SAVINGS</p> <p>1. Repairs and maintenance</p> <p>The budgets for repairs and maintenance will be aligned with historical spend.</p> <p>2. Staff</p> <p>Adjustment of resources will be made which will ensure that the service continues to meet customer needs.</p>

INCOME

Rent changes are controlled by central Government. Government sets out both the process for rent increases and the parameters of any increased levels. Any changes in rents are specified in the tenancy agreement which stipulates the increase allowed each year (in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%, which is published in September). From 2016 to 2020 the government requested a reduction in rent of 1% each year. This year (2022-23) the proposed increase will be 1%. The range of potential increases which were modelled showed 1% as the lowest possible increase which would cover the costs of the staffing, maintenance and repair services which Build! provides to its customers. This will require review following publication of annual CPI figures and any further regulatory advice.

The rent increase will affect the 267 Build! Properties, of which 151 are affordable rental properties and 116 are in shared ownership.

The increase represents (for example) an increase of 68p per week for a one-bedroom rented flat in Town Centre House in Banbury.

There is not considered to be any adverse impact on those living with social deprivation. Processes in place ensure that tenants who are eligible to have their housing costs paid either through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit can continue to have the whole amount covered.

All increases are checked against each individual rent to ensure that they are affordable for the tenants. The Local Housing Allowance and detailed analysis, including comparison with other local social and affordable housing provider rents, are used to measure affordability. Given that rental and shared ownership packages vary considerably between different providers direct comparison is often not possible. For instance, many Registered Providers charge social rents (60% of market rate) whereas Build! charges affordable rents (80% of market rate). However, there is high confidence that the proposed increase remains broadly equivalent to the local social housing market offer.

<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Rent Increase</p> <p>All tenants will receive a letter in February of each year notifying them of the amount their rent will be from the following April; any increase agreed by Executive and Council would be communicated in that letter. These letters are sent out by Sanctuary Housing Association (who provide rent collection services for the Council / Build!) and include information about who to contact if they are going to struggle to pay the increase. Sanctuary Housing Association will then offer them advice and discuss any issues at the fortnightly meetings they have with Build's housing management team members.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>As noted above, the Government sets out the process and parameters which are the basis for increasing rents. The increase proposed is the lowest possible which would cover the costs of Build's services to its customers.</p>

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 3: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	
Person Responsible for Review	
Authorised By	