

Housing Revenue Account 2002/2003

Labour Group Amendments to Officer Budget

Introduction

The starting point for the budget is the officer budget presented separately. The Labour Group budget is an amendment to that budget.

Increased Spending

All spending items are for one year only. As well as the additional, or restored, funding proposed there are changes to certain schemes to make them more cost-effective in the medium-term. For instance, expanding the garden scheme to all tenants at cost will enable more overheads to be recovered and the overall cost reduced.

Heading	Description	Amount
Electrical Testing Programme	Extend to make up for two year gap in programme since 2000. Total budget proposed £550k.	£250k
Garage Rents	Restore parity (before VAT) of private and council tenants (with 3.5% increase to Council rent levels).	£50k
OAP Decorations	Restore £100k of the £150k cut in officer budget. Tighter control of the budget will be required in order to keep within budget.	£100k
Elmore Team	Reverse cut in officer budget.	£53k
Garden Scheme	Fully fund existing scheme. Also expand the scheme by offering garden work to all tenants at cost in order to reduce overhead costs of the scheme.	£165k
Oxford in Bloom	Restore cut in officer budget	£20k
Estates Shops	Work to reduce anti-social behaviour: minor works and/or supporting CANACT team.	£10k
	Total	£648k

Funding

Heading	Description	Amount
Balances	Transfer from HRA Balances (currently estimated at £1.2m)	£285k
Pre-paint Joinery and Painting Programme	Reduce to painting communal areas and non-window work only.	£200k
Contingency budget	Delete for one year only	£75k
Bad Debt Provision	Reduce by £25k to £50k to take into account progress made by debt reduction work.	£25k
Inflation: Staff Costs	1% reduction in staff cost inflation to 3% (in line with Labour proposals on the General Fund)	£50k
Documents Review	Postpone for 12 months.	£15k
	Total	£650k

Major Repairs Allowance

The Labour Group proposals for the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) budget for 2002/2003 directs spending towards increasing the number of properties available for letting. With over 1000 families in temporary accommodation it is crucial that as many properties as possible are available for let rather than standing empty. As well as helping to house people it will increase the amount of rent coming into the Housing Revenue Account and reduce the costs of Homelessness to the taxpayer.

Item	Additional Description	Amount
Windows	Continue programme of window replacement. Prices are falling so a small decrease in budget will be able to achieve the same number of windows as the current year.	£1875k
Man Voids/Refurbs/ Sheltered schemes	Direct funding towards bringing units back into use for letting as quickly as possible	£ 625k + £1,100k b/f
Heating – new/upgrades	New heating systems	£ 500k
Major Void Works	Works on bringing houses and flats back into use for letting.	£ 600k
Extensions	Increasing the number and size of family homes.	£ 338k
Aerial Upgrades	Continue programme	£ 25k
Re-roofing	Continue programme	£ 150k
Insulation	Continue programme	£ 100k
Controlled Entry	Continue programme of Controlled Entry systems.	£ 100k
Structural Work	Continue programme	£ 150k
Fire Detection – Towers	Fire detection system, sprinklers etc in all five tower blocks.	£ 225k
Aids and Adaptations	Continue programme	£ 350k
Total		£5,037,807
		(includes 10% fee)

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