

Councillor Nicol declared a financial interest on the following item as the spouse of the owner of Commercial Property and withdrew from the meeting for this item taking no part in the discussion or decision making.

#### **FC86. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT & COUNCIL HOUSE RENTS 2013/14 – 2015/16**

With reference to minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 February 2013 (Paragraph PR94 refers), there was submitted joint report (circulated) dated 5 February 2013 by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services and the Chief Finance Officer (a) presenting a draft Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2013/14; (b) making recommendations on the level of council house and garage rents for 2013/14, and (c) proposing indicative rent levels for the years 2014/15 to 2015/16.

Councillor Mahoney, seconded by Councillor Black moved that Council:-

- (1) approves the Draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2013/14, with the following specific recommendations;
- (2) Rent increase of 3.6% to be applied from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. The average fortnightly charge would therefore increase from £115.90 to £120.06, based on the 24 fortnightly periods with no rent being charged during the fortnightly periods commencing 24 June 2013 and 23 December 2013, as well as week commencing 30 March 2014, as this represents week 53;
- (3) Utilisation of c£2.5m from the Housing Revenue Account reserves;
- (4) Lock-up garage rentals to increase from an average of £5.33 per week to £5.52 per week;
- (5) Garage site rentals to increase from £75 per annum to £76 per annum;
- (6) Castings Hostel rentals increase from £137.69 per room per week to £142.65 per week (excluding fuel charges);
- (7) Homeless property rentals increase from an average of £159.62 per week to £165.37 per week, and
- (8) Notes the indicative budgets and rent increases for 2014/15 and 2015/16 as representing the best information available at this time.

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Jackson moved the following in substitution for the motion.

- (2) A rent increase of 2.7% (RPI), be applied with the first year shortfall of £400,000 being accommodated from reserves while a full and comprehensive Best Value Review is carried out into all aspects of management of the HRA to conclude before the 2014/15 budget process has been completed

With paragraphs (3) – (7) being amended accordingly and with the addition of the following recommendation at 10.8.

Council notes with concern the draconian and totally negative impact of the Westminster Government's Welfare reforms on a high percentage of our most vulnerable tenants.

Council therefore resolves not to seek eviction of any tenant who can demonstrate that their arrears relate to the introduction of benefit changes such as the bedroom tax.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by roll call, there being 30 members present, with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (16) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Patrick; Councillors Black, Blackwood, Buchanan, D Goldie, G Goldie, Gow, MacDonald, McLuckie, Mahoney, C Martin, Dr C R Martin, Murray, Nimmo and Paterson.

For the amendment (14) – Councillors Alexander, Balfour, Carleschi, Chalmers, Coleman, Hughes, Jackson, McCabe, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Ritchie, Spears and Turner.

Accordingly, **AGREED** the terms of the motion.