

## ITEM No ...2.....

**REPORT TO:** POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2021

**REPORT ON:** HOUSING (HRA) REVENUE BUDGET 2021-24 AND REVIEW OF RENTS AND OTHER HOUSING CHARGES FOR 2021/22

**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

**REPORT NO:** 42-2021

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the outcome of the rent consultation exercise in order for them to approve the Housing (HRA) Revenue Budget and rent and other housing charges for financial year 2021/22.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) note the outcome of the rent consultation exercise detailed in section 8 and Appendix 4 to this report and that the proposed rent increase below (iv) is in line with the majority view expressed by tenants through this exercise;
- (ii) approve the Housing (HRA) Revenue Budget for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report;
- (iii) note the Provisional Revenue Budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24 detailed in Appendix 1 to this report;
- (iv) approve rents be increased by 1.50% equal to an average increase of £1.17 per week and subject to a maximum increase of £1.50 with effect from 5 April 2021;
- (v) approve that all other housing charges are set as outlined in Appendix 2 to this report with effect from 5 April 2021;
- (vi) agree that the level of rents held on the Housing (HRA) be similarly applied to miscellaneous houses i.e. the properties which are leased to the Richmond Fellowship, Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership and City Development, subject to categorisation where appropriate.

### 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Approval of the proposed review of rents and other housing charges detailed in Appendix 2 would generate additional income of £760,000 and will result in the Housing (HRA) Revenue Budget being self-balancing for financial year 2021/22.

### 4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Over recent months the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and Executive Director of Corporate Services, have reviewed the Provisional Revenue Budget for the Housing (HRA) in financial year 2021/22 and the outcome of this was considered by elected members last October (Article II of the minute of the meeting of Neighbourhood Services Committee on 26 October 2020, Report No: 256-2020 refers). The total expenditure requirement for 2021/22 amounts to £55.762m and is further detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

4.2 At the above meeting elected members agreed to reduce the budgeted provision for Environmental Improvements by £312,000 and utilise this to fund additional borrowing costs that would provide a further capital investment of £6m in new build housing. The resultant changes to the revenue budget have been reflected in Appendix 1. This additional investment

was also reflected in the latest Strategic Housing Investment Plan that was approved by members in November (Item 4 from the agenda of the meeting of Neighbourhood Services Committee on 16 November 2020, Report No: 277-2020 refers), officers are developing proposals to spend these additional resources that will be brought back to members for consideration in due course.

- 4.3 The Provisional Revenue Budget for 2021/22 has also been updated to reflect any required cost pressures and savings that have been identified through the 2020/21 revenue monitoring process to date. In addition, any new cost pressures that are expected to emerge in 2021/22 are included along with any additional investment that is being made to the budget.
- 4.4 The Provisional Revenue Budget for 2021/22 includes an estimated allowance of 2% for a pay award for all staff. Allowance has also been made for other specific and general price inflation, where appropriate. The key overall variances include the following:

Staff Costs (Decrease of £321,000)

Mainly due to efficiencies from various vacant posts that have deleted from the structure following retirements etc. although this has been offset by the assumed pay award and increments payable.

Property Costs (Increase of £305,000)

Mainly reflects the increased inflationary cost in providing the extensive responsive repairs and relets service and open space maintenance, these costs relate partly to labour and can therefore fluctuate in line with assumed pay increases and other inflationary pressures.

Supplies & Services (Increase of £188,000)

Mainly reflects increased internal recharges for the Housing (HRA) share of the cost of various services including Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Safety & Alarm Response Centre have increased reflecting the increased inflationary cost of providing these services.

In addition, this reflects the additional £50,000 that has been included within the Hardship Fund to support those council house tenants suffering financial hardship in the payment of rent as a result of Welfare reforms (see paragraph 7.1 for further details).

Support Services (Increase of £68,000)

Increase mainly reflects the assumed level of inflation, this recharge mainly relates to staffing and therefore also fluctuate in line with assumed pay inflation.

Capital Financing Costs (Increase of £527,000)

The overall capital financing costs included have increased to support the delivery of the latest approved Housing HRA Capital Plan 2020-25, that provides for gross investment of more than £118m over this five-year period (Article XI of the minute of the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee on 28 September 2020, Report No: 223-2020 refers).

These borrowing costs will continue to support the delivery of key housing investment priorities included in this plan such as maintaining Council houses at Scottish Housing Quality Standard, progressing towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing and the continuation of the Council's new build council housing programme.

The above increase also reflects the adjustments outlined in paragraph 4.2 above.

Planned Maintenance (Decrease of £37,000)

Mainly reflects the increased inflationary cost, this expenditure relates partly to labour and can therefore fluctuate in line with pay increases and other inflationary pressures. In addition, resources have been provided to reflect the cost of electrical safety periodic testing programme for all council houses. These increases have been offset by the adjustments outlined in paragraph 4.2 above.

- 4.5 The Provisional Housing (HRA) Revenue Budget 2021/22 detailed in Appendix 1 makes a number of assumptions relating to other housing charges for financial year 2021/22. These charges include a proposal to freeze the current sheltered warden service charge. The cost of the sheltered warden service is fully recovered by the service charge and almost three quarters of the expenditure for the service relates to staff costs. Whilst this element of the budget will

require to be adjusted to reflect the assumed pay award, it is envisaged that through other efficiencies the overall service can continue to breakeven without having to increase the charge payable by service users.

- 4.6 In addition, these charges propose an increase for car parking in garage / lock ups and garage sites by 2% to recover the cost of maintaining these properties. Details of all these charges are included in Appendix 2.
- 4.7 Dundee City Council has in the past aimed to keep option 1 within (or as close possible to) the current rate of inflation plus 1%. This is calculated using a 'basket of indices' comprising a weighted proportion of the consumer prices index, producer prices index and local government pay awards then adding 1%. Based on the latest information available, this rate of inflation plus 1% has been calculated as 1.48%.
- 4.8 When determining standard rents to which the Housing Revenue Account relates, a local authority should not consider the personal circumstances of tenants. Under the relevant Housing legislation rents can be fixed at a level which creates a surplus on the Housing Revenue Account and this surplus can be transferred to the General Fund. If any surplus accrues it will be retained for Housing Revenue Account purposes. There is no statutory limit on the amount by which council house rents can be increased although, under the Prudential Code Councils must demonstrate that any borrowing costs included within their Revenue Budget are affordable, prudent and sustainable. This is evidenced through the preparation of prudential indicators that were included in the report on the Annual Treasury Management Activity 2019/20, (Article XIII of the minute of the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee on 28 September 2020, Report No: 226-2020 refers).
- 4.9 The report previously considered by Neighbourhood Services Committee in October outlined the following rent increase consultation options for 2021/212. Further detail of these options including the specific impact on service delivery are detailed in Appendix 3.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Increase (%)</b>	<b>Average Weekly Increase</b>	<b>Maximum Weekly Increase</b>
1	1.50	£1.17	£1.50
2	1.75	£1.37	£1.75
3	2.00	£1.57	£2.00

- 4.10 Rents in Dundee are fixed in relation to percentages of the Gross Annual Values (GAV). The GAV is intended to reflect the rent which the house might be expected to attract on the open market in ideal circumstances where there is neither a glut nor a shortage of accommodation. In these circumstances, the GAV can be assumed to have taken account of the size, type and age of the house, the area of location and amenity value. This basis has been accepted as reasonably fair and rents calculated and applied in this way maintain, generally, the proper differentials and spread the burden of increased costs over the tenants in relation to the independently assessed value of the accommodation and amenity enjoyed by them.
- 4.11 The recently issued Best Value Audit Report undertaken by the Accounts Commission noted that Dundee City Council's average council house rent was 6% lower than the Scottish average. The above proposals demonstrate the Council's continued commitment to the Fairness Agenda and seek to minimise any rent increases.
- 4.12 In preparing the above statements, the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services has taken into account the key strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Council over the period. The main factors considered were:
- the possibility of new cost pressures or responsibilities emerging during the course of the financial year;
  - the inherent uncertainty surrounding matters such interest rates and price inflation;
  - the impact of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance;
  - the on-going impact of Welfare Reforms;
  - continuing impact of Covid-19 and particular any impact on tenants' ability to pay their rent.

By way of exemplification, the following table shows the potential financial impact of any variations against the current key budget assumptions:

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Current Assumption</b>	<b>Example Variation</b>	<b>Financial Impact</b>
Pay Awards	2.0%	+0.1%	£6k
Price Inflation	Various	+0.1%	£30k
Interest Rate (CLF Average Rate)	3.55%	+0.1%	£7k

## 5 CLIMATE CHANGE

5.1 Dundee City Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019, followed by the launch of Dundee's Climate Action Plan in support of the transition to a net-zero and climate resilient future. With this declaration and action plan, the Council will develop further projects and initiatives in the coming years to assist in tackling this issue.

5.2 The Council is committed to implementing measures that improve the carbon footprint of the city and the spending proposals within this budget will provide significant resources for tackling climate change. Housing projects that are already underway and are being considered as part of the longer-term capital plan include the following:

- continued investment in external wall insulation for existing stock;
- other energy saving programmes such as loft insulation and cavity wall insulation;
- further energy saving measures included within the design of new council housing;
- installation of motion censored LED lighting within communal areas;
- other energy efficiency initiatives including installation of solar panels;
- linkages into new district heating schemes as these come on line;
- piloting emerging carbon reduction technologies as they become available.

## 6 COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

6.1 The proposed resources will also support the delivery of the recently agreed Covid-19 Recovery Plan (Article XIV of the minute of the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee on 24 August 2020, Report No: 185-2020 refers). In particular, the significant investment in construction activities will provide valuable resources to recommence construction and repairs programmes across the city with economic benefits for our in-house Construction Services Division, other external companies and the wider supply chain for these activities.

## 7 WELFARE REFORM

7.1 Discretionary Housing Payments are fully devolved to the Scottish Government. The under-occupancy charge continues to be fully mitigated by the funding provided by the Scottish Government which is included within the General Fund Revenue Budget. In addition, Universal Credit Full Service continues to be rolled out, it is expected full migration of cases from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit will not be complete until September 2024 at the earliest. Universal Credit continues to have an impact on the level of tenant rent arrears, this is monitored on an ongoing basis and support provided to tenants where appropriate. The Benefit Cap continues to restrict the level of benefit households can receive, the Council's Benefit Delivery and Advice Services Team continue to identify and work with tenants affected by the benefit cap.

7.2 The purpose of the Hardship Fund is to assist Council tenants suffering financial hardship in the payment of rent as a result of these Welfare Reforms. In addition, it is likely that Covid-19 will have a further impact on tenants' financial circumstances. In order to continue to mitigate the impact of these reforms on council tenants, the provision for the Hardship Fund has been increased by £50,000 to £500,000 from financial year 2021/22.

## **8 RENT CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Under the terms of Section 25(4) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, tenants must be consulted on any proposed increase in rents or other service charges, and the likely effect on the tenant and regard must be given to the representations made.
- 8.2 The 2021/22 rent consultation exercise was approved in October (Article II of the minute of the meeting of Neighbourhood Services Committee on 26 October 2020, Report No: 256-2020 refers). Further details including the results and various responses from Registered Tenants' Associations are included in Appendix 4 to this report.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposed rent increase will ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to meet the key housing priorities included in the Council Plan 2017-2022 (Article II of the minute of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 11 December 2017, Report 420-2017 refers). In addition, this increase will contribute towards the delivery of the overall significant capital investment programme that is planned over the next 5-year period.

## **10 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

## **11 CONSULTATIONS**

- 11.1 The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report and agree with the content.

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 None.

**ELAINE ZWIRLEIN**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**13 JANUARY 2020**



Appendix 1**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT****PROVISIONAL REVENUE BUDGET 2021-2024**

	Final Revenue Budget 2020/2021 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2021/2022 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2022/2023 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2023/2024 £000
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>				
<b>STAFF COSTS</b>				
Salaries and Wages (including NI and Supn):	6,165	5,844	5,961	6,080
Supplementary Superannuation Charges	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>208</u>
<b>TOTAL STAFF COSTS</b>	<b><u>6,365</u></b>	<b><u>6,044</u></b>	<b><u>6,165</u></b>	<b><u>6,288</u></b>
<b>PROPERTY COSTS</b>				
Rents	160	168	168	168
Non-Domestic Rates	196	197	201	205
Property Insurance	560	560	560	560
Repairs and Maintenance	11,805	12,023	12,263	12,507
Health and Safety Contracts	150	150	150	150
Energy Costs	524	541	552	563
Fixtures and Fittings	29	25	25	25
Cleaning Costs	24	24	24	24
Lost Rents and Bad Debts	2,000	2,023	2,063	2,105
Open Space and Garden Maintenance	<u>2,166</u>	<u>2,208</u>	<u>2,253</u>	<u>2,298</u>
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY COSTS</b>	<b><u>17,614</u></b>	<b><u>17,919</u></b>	<b><u>18,259</u></b>	<b><u>18,605</u></b>
<b>SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>				
Liabilities Insurance	558	558	558	558
Clothing, Uniforms and Laundry	4	4	4	4
Printing, Stationery and General Office Expenses	105	103	103	103
Professional Fees	83	90	90	90
Postages	40	40	40	40
Telephones	48	49	49	49
IT Software Maintenance	92	98	98	98
Hardship Fund	450	500	500	500
Internal Recharges	2,572	2,703	2,749	2,796
Other Supplies and Services	<u>452</u>	<u>447</u>	<u>447</u>	<u>447</u>
<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b><u>4,404</u></b>	<b><u>4,592</u></b>	<b><u>4,638</u></b>	<b><u>4,685</u></b>
<b>TRANSPORT COSTS</b>				
Repairs and Maintenance and Other Running Costs	7	7	7	7
Transport Insurance	2	2	2	2
Car Allowances	<u>39</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>39</u>
<b>TOTAL TRANSPORT COSTS</b>	<b><u>48</u></b>	<b><u>48</u></b>	<b><u>48</u></b>	<b><u>48</u></b>
<b>THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS</b>				
Voluntary Organisations	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>
<b>TOTAL THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS</b>	<b><u>34</u></b>	<b><u>34</u></b>	<b><u>34</u></b>	<b><u>34</u></b>
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES</b>				
Recharge from Central Support Departments	<u>3,390</u>	<u>3,458</u>	<u>3,527</u>	<u>3,597</u>
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b><u>3,390</u></b>	<b><u>3,458</u></b>	<b><u>3,527</u></b>	<b><u>3,597</u></b>

## **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

### **PROVISIONAL REVENUE BUDGET 2021-2024**

	Final Revenue Budget 2020/2021 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2021/2022 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2022/2023 £000	Provisional Revenue Budget 2023/2024 £000
<b>CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS</b>	<u>18,802</u>	<u>19,329</u>	<u>19,513</u>	<u>19,687</u>
<b>PLANNED MAINTENANCE</b>	<u>4,375</u>	<u>4,338</u>	<u>4,338</u>	<u>4,338</u>
<b><u>TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<u>55,032</u>	<u>55,762</u>	<u>56,522</u>	<u>57,282</u>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>				
Internal Recharge to Other Housing (Non-HRA)	62	62	62	62
Rents, Other Fees & Charges	51,996	52,017	52,017	52,017
Interest	60	60	60	60
Sheltered Housing Service Charge	2,573	2,582	2,582	2,582
Other Income	<u>341</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>281</u>
<b><u>TOTAL INCOME</u></b>	<u>55,032</u>	<u>55,002</u>	<u>55,002</u>	<u>55,002</u>
<b><u>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<u>-</u>	<u>760</u>	<u>1,520</u>	<u>2,280</u>

**REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22****REVIEW OF RENTS AND OTHER HOUSING CHARGES**

<b>Services for which charges are / could be levied <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Present Charge £</b>	<b>Proposed Charge £</b>
<b>Housing (HRA) Budget</b>		
<b>Council Houses</b> Average Rent	78.13	79.30
<b>Sheltered Housing Accommodation</b> Service charge	28.58	28.58
<u>Heating charges</u> Brighton Place	6.46	6.46
Baluniefield	7.11	7.11
<b>Car Parking <sup>(2)</sup></b> Garages / lock ups	9.30	9.50
Garage sites	2.70	2.75
<b>Other Housing Charges</b> Communal Cleaning	1.68	1.79
<u>Multi-storey laundrette</u> Auto wash (per use)	1.90	1.90
Tumble dryer (per use)	1.10	1.10
Cabinet dryer (per use)	1.10	1.10
<b>Other Housing (Non-HRA) Budget</b>		
<b>Temporary Accommodation Properties</b> Lily Walker Centre	187.90	187.90
Supported Complex – Honeygreen Road <sup>(3)</sup>	217.90	217.90
<u>Network Flats <sup>(3)</sup></u> 1 Apartment	82.45	82.45
2 Apartment	207.05	207.05
3 Apartment	308.20	308.20
4 Apartment	417.85	417.85
5 Apartment	526.00	526.00

**Notes**

(1) With exception of the multi-storey launderette charges, all above charges are on a 52-week basis.

(2) Legislation requires that income derived from these facilities be sufficient to meet the necessary expenditure incurred in providing them. When reviewing these charges, it is necessary to consider the effect of implementing the charges and the amount of income any increase would generate.

(3) The above figures reflect service charges only and exclude rental charges.

**REVENUE BUDGET 2021/2022****RENT CONSULTATION OPTIONS**

The following table provides details of each option available for tenants to indicate their preference on. For each option includes the details of the impact on service delivery of selecting this option.

<p><b>Option 1 – Rent Increase 1.50% (or average weekly increase of £1.17)</b></p> <p>This option would allow for the adjustments outlined in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.6 of this report and provides sufficient resources to allow for the current level of service to be maintained and to continue to deliver on key service priorities. This level of service includes the provision of the existing housing repairs service, external cyclical maintenance together with funding to deliver key housing priorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tenancy sustainment</li> <li>- reducing the level of households in fuel poverty</li> <li>- ongoing investment in existing stock and creation of new affordable housing</li> <li>- continued investment in environmental improvements programme</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 2 – Rent Increase 1.75% (or average weekly increase of £1.37)</b></p> <p>This option would also provide resources for the level of service outlined in Option 1. In addition, the higher increase would provide additional income of £126,000 that would allow be invested in additional borrowing. This borrowing would provide extra capital expenditure of approximately £2.4m which would be targeted specifically to progress towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing (ESSH) on all council houses. This amount of investment would <u>typically</u> provide resources to provide external wall insulation for 340 houses or installation of solar panels for 275 houses.</p> <p>As well as the continuation external wall and other insulation programmes these additional resources could be spent on a range of other energy efficiency initiatives including solar panels, linkages into new district heating schemes as these come on line and piloting emerging technologies for our houses to meet the new requirements of ESSH2.</p> <p>It should be emphasised that the above expenditure would be over and above that included in the latest Housing HRA Capital Plan 2020-25. The Council is already investing significant resources to meet these requirements and the above plan includes over £41m for this purpose. The agreement of option 2 would simply increase these resources and give an opportunity for these improvements to be delivered within a shorter timeframe.</p>
<p><b>Option 3 – Rent Increase 2.00% (or average weekly increase of £1.57)</b></p> <p>This option would also provide resources for the level of service outlined in Option 1. In addition, the higher increase would provide additional income of £252,000 that would allow be invested in additional borrowing. This borrowing would provide extra capital expenditure of approximately £4.8m which would be targeted specifically to progress towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing (ESSH) on all council houses. This amount of investment would typically provide resources to provide external wall insulation for 680 houses or installation of solar panels for 550 houses.</p> <p>As well as the continuation external wall and other insulation programmes these additional resources could be spent on a range of other energy efficiency initiatives including solar panels, linkages into new district heating schemes as these come on line and piloting emerging technologies for our houses to meet the new requirements of ESSH2.</p> <p>It should be emphasised that the above expenditure would be over and above that included in the latest Housing HRA Capital Plan 2020-25. The Council is already investing significant resources to meet these requirements and the above plan includes over £41m for this purpose. The agreement of option 3 would simply increase these resources and give an opportunity for these improvements to be delivered within a shorter timeframe.</p>

**Appendix 4****CONSULTATION PROCESS**

As part of the wider tenant engagement strategy, officers normally hold a seminar during the summer to provide tenants information about what their rent pays for and raise awareness of how rent levels are set. The event also provides an opportunity for tenants to learn what the Council's housing priorities are but importantly also gave tenants the opportunity to let the Council know what is important to them. The information from this event helps inform the rent consultation.

Due to the restrictions imposed following the Covid-19 outbreak this event did not take place this year but instead a short online survey was undertaken to give tenants the opportunity to suggest which priorities should be considered in this year's exercise. These priorities together with those we are aware of from other feedback are reflected in the options outlined in Appendix 3.

As noted above, whilst due to Covid-19, some of the traditional methods of undertaking the rent consultation were not available this year. Notwithstanding this, the Council remained committed to further consult with tenants on the budget proposals, rent levels and other housing charges through whatever means were possible, these included:

- use of telephone surveying, either directly or when tenants contact the council;
- information displayed on Dundee City Council website;
- targeted use of relevant social media platforms;
- information was displayed in any in offices that were open to public and in communal areas of other buildings e.g. multi storey developments (MSD);
- postcards were also delivered to tenants in MSD properties and ballot boxes provided for them to participate in the consultation;
- leaflets were given to tenants by council tradesmen that were carrying out repairs in their homes with details on how to get involved;
- publication of updated guidance (HRA Methodology) for tenants to understand what their rent pays for;
- through continued collaboration with Dundee Federation of Tenants Association (DFTA) and registered tenants' organisations (RTOs).

The consultation ran from 28 October 2020 to 23 December 2020. The rent consultation information outlined the three options for the rent increase and provided details of the level of service offered for each of the choices. The total number of tenants who participated in the process this year was 2,162. This equates to returns for 17% of the current housing stock and whilst this represents a decrease participation rate last year was 20%) this is considered really positive taking into account the specific challenges this year. The continued high participation rate reflects the effective teamwork across Neighbourhood Services, other council service areas and from both the DFTA and other RTOs.

The Chair of the DFTA contacted all RTOs encouraging their participation in this exercise. In addition, RTOs were also invited to formally submit their preference on the proposed options. Whilst as a result of Covid-19 not all these organisations are meeting regularly at this time, a number of specific responses were provided and are included below, other RTOs that responded indicated their support of the recommended option in paragraph 2.1 (iv).

The full results of the consultation can be summarised as follows:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Increase (%)</b>	<b>Average Weekly Increase</b>	<b>Number of Tenants</b>	<b>% of Tenants</b>
1	1.50	£1.17	1,163	54%
2	1.75	£1.37	557	26%
3	2.00	£1.57	442	20%
<b>Totals</b>			<b>2,162</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Responses for Dundee City Council Annual Rent Consultation**

*“The DFTA would like to select Option 1 as our preference, a rent increase of 1.5%. We have consulted with our members and contacted the RTOs and the majority share a similar view, that bearing in mind the uncertain and difficult times, affordability is the overriding concern and that rent increases must be kept at the minimum level possible whilst still retaining current service level standards.*”

*We received an excellent response from our members to the rent consultation survey this year. We wrote to all our mailing list and normal regular meeting attendees encouraging them to take part. The DFTA appreciate the hard work of tenants and staff in making sure the rent consultation took place in an effective manner this year, despite the challenges, and that tenants still had the chance to have their say on this important matter.”*

***Dundee Federation of Tenants Association (DFTA) Executive Committee, 11 December 2020***

*“Due to the Covid-19 we were unable to hold our usual open meeting to discuss the rent consultation with our members and other tenants within the Forthill Area.*

*Due to the above we feel that many tenants might find it difficult to keep up to date with their rent payments and could find themselves getting into arrears. Therefore, the consensus of the elected committee and some of our members we have spoken to, have agreed that we must go with (option one) for the year 2021/22.*

*We are very glad that none of the other charges are being increased. We hope by next spring we will be able to hold our RTO meeting again and bring the tenants concerns to the housing management to be addressed.”*

***Forthill Tenants Association, 10 December 2020***