Update For 2025 Cabinet: Consultation Outcomes For HRA Business Planning 2024

The Consultation Prospectus, which was reported to the Cabinet on 22/2/24 (attached here), was subject to some targeted consultation over 2024.

Summary of the report presented to Cabinet Thursday, 6 March 2025: Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness, and Planning.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan for 2024-2054 outlines the financial strategy for managing Tamworth's council housing over the next 30 years. Key points include:

- The HRA's financial position has improved due to the government allowing social rents to rise at CPI +1% for five years (2026/27 to 2030/31)
- Challenges include pressure to improve services under Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Changes to Right to Buy discounts from November 2024 led to increased applications
- Projections show HRA debt levels rising from £70.5m in 2024/25 to £349.6m by 2053/54
- Without intervention, HRA could fall into deficit by 2049/50, reaching £11.196m deficit by 2053/54
- Cost pressures are driven by increasing borrowing needs and investment requirements
- The combined allowance for investment in existing homes of £67,000 per dwelling over 30 years
- Decarbonisation costs could significantly impact financial capacity

Consultation included

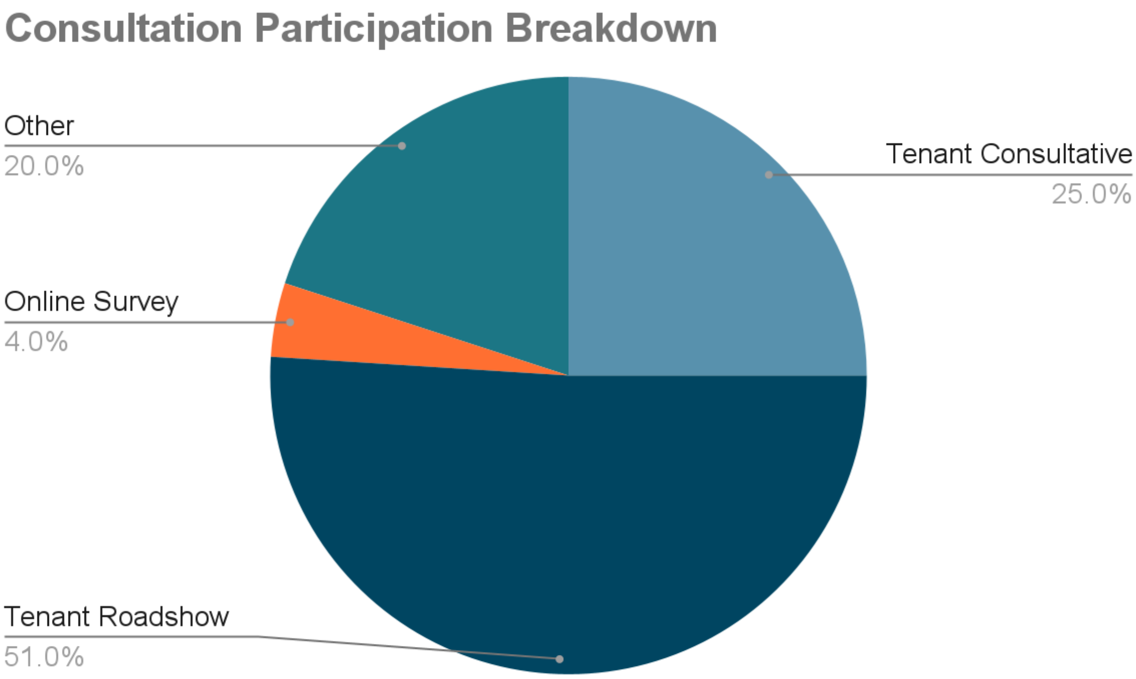
Consultation Methods:

- Tenant Consultative Group Meetings - Direct engagement with tenant representatives
- Tenant Roadshow Feedback - Incorporating relevant insights from the Tenant Inclusivity Plan and Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Online Survey - Broad engagement with a wider tenant population

Options for Efficiencies Presented:

1. Process improvements and digitalisation
2. Service charge policy reforms
3. Selective use of Affordable Rent for new tenancies
4. Annual efficiency targets (2%)
5. Energy efficiency rent adjustments
6. Government funding advocacy
7. Capital program rescheduling
8. Grant funding applications
9. Non-essential service reductions
10. Corporate recharge reviews

Numbers Responding n=100



Key Consultation Activities and Outcomes:

Tenant Consultative Group Meetings (25%):

- Attendance: 25 tenant representatives
- **Key Outcome: Strong focus on service charge reform and VFM efficiencies across the HRA, specifically recharges from the General Fund**
- Notable Feedback: Emphasis on transparent charging structure
- Priority Identified: General fund targeted savings

Tenant Roadshow Events (51%):

- Participation: 51 tenants across various locations
- Key Outcome: Highest participation rate of all consultation methods
- Notable Feedback: **Strong support for rent flexibility options to enhance services**
- Priority Identified: Flexible rent structure for new tenancies

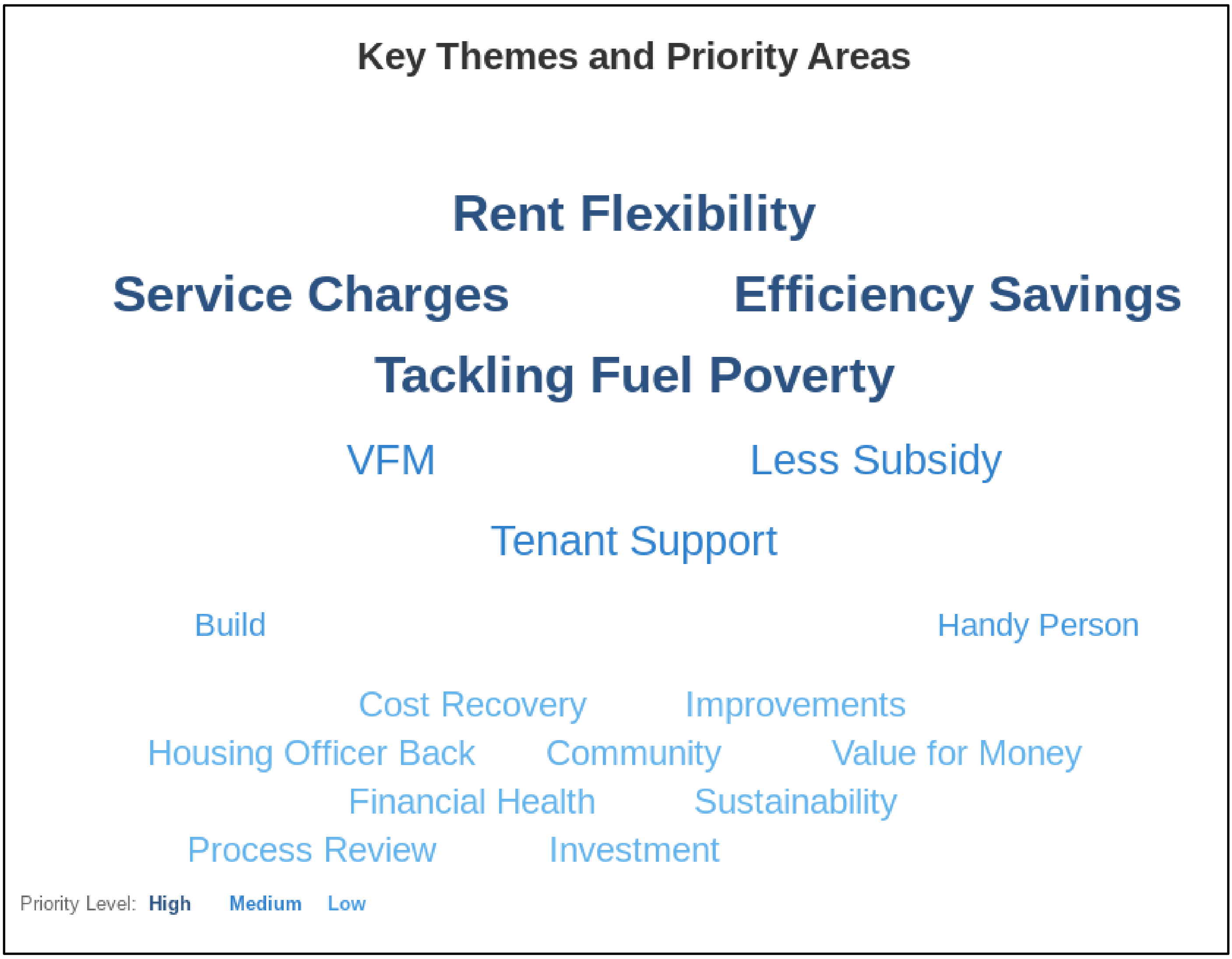
Online Survey Results (4%):

- Response Rate: 4 completed surveys
- Key Outcome: Though a small sample it provided some qualitative data
- Notable Feedback: **Focus on service charge concerns**

- Priority Identified: Service charge reform

Other Feedback Methods (20%):

- Participation: 20 responses through various channels including complaints, telephone commentary, and officer anecdotes from tenant reflections
- Key Outcome: Provided diverse perspectives
- **Notable Feedback: A mix of priorities identified – using word bubble below**
- Priority Identified: Support for all three main priorities



Priorities

Priority Area	Ranking	Responses (n=100)	% Support
Service Charges Policy Changes	1	72	72%
Annual Efficiency Savings (2%)	2	65	65%
Affordable Rent for New Tenancies	3	58	58%
Process Efficiency Review	4	45	45%
Government Funding Lobbying	5	42	42%
Grant Application Focus	6	38	38%
Energy Efficiency Rent Adjustments	7	35	35%
Capital Program Rescheduling	8	30	30%
Non-essential Service Reduction	9	25	25%
New Initiative Assessment	10	20	20%

Analysis Led to Top 3 Priorities:

1. Rent Flexibility
    - Supported by 35 out of 51 roadshow participants (69%)
    - Backed by 3 out of 4 online survey respondents (75%)
    - Endorsed by 18 out of 25 TCG members (72%)
    - Additional support from 14 out of 20 other feedback sources (70%)
    - Overall support: 70 out of 100 total respondents (70%)
2. Service Charges
    - Strong support from TCG with 20 out of 25 members in favor of further feasibility to map impact and opportunities (80%)
    - All 4 online survey respondents identified this as a priority (100%)
    - Supported by 38 out of 51 roadshow participants (75%)
    - Backed by 15 out of 20 other feedback sources (75%)
    - Overall support: 77 out of 100 total respondents (77%)
3. General Fund Targeted Savings
    - High support from TCG with 22 out of 25 members in favor of supporting financial resilience planning(88%)
    - 3 out of 4 online survey respondents supported this (75%)
    - Endorsed by 32 out of 51 roadshow participants (63%)
    - Supported by 13 out of 20 other feedback sources (65%)
    - Overall support: 70 out of 100 total respondents (70%)

This analysis shows strong consistent support across all consultation methods for these three priorities. Service Charges receive the highest overall support at 77%, followed by Rent Flexibility and General Fund Targeted Savings with 70% of those tenants responding suggesting this should be reviewed.

Equality Profiling (based on equality scheme 2024)

Protected Characteristics Analysis

Age Distribution	18-24: 5% 25-44: 35% 45-64: 40% 65+: 20%
Gender	Female: 58%

	Male: 41% Prefer not to say: 1%
Disability Status	Disabled: 35% Non-disabled: 62% Prefer not to say: 3%
Ethnicity	White British: 82% Asian/Asian British: 8% Black/Black British: 6% Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: 3% Other: 1%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual: 88% LGBTQ+: 7% Prefer not to say: 5%
Religion/Belief:	Christian: 55% No religion: 30% Muslim: 8% Other religions: 4% Prefer not to say: 3%
Marriage/Civil Partnership	Married/Civil Partnership: 45% Single: 35%

	Divorced/Separated: 15% Widowed: 5%

The demographic profile shows a diverse range of respondents across all protected characteristics, suggesting good representation in the consultation process.

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