

# WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

28 APRIL 2022

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**Title:**

### HRA GARAGE PORTFOLIO BRIEFING NOTE

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**Portfolio Holder:** Co-Portfolio Holders for Housing Paul Rivers and Nick Palmer

**Head of Service:** Hugh Wagstaff, Head of Housing Operations

**Key decision:** No

**Access:** **Public**

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#### **1. Purpose and summary**

1.1 The report provides the Board with information regarding the housing garage portfolio as requested to detail the current and future position. The report includes:

- number of units, location, demand and current income
- asset management strategy for garages
- former garage sites successfully developed into affordable homes

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Landlord Service Advisory Board:

- seek clarifications and/or asks any questions about the garage portfolio,
- supports the proposal to request a service plan action and budget for garage appraisals in 2023/24, and
- makes any comments to the Heads of Housing and Portfolio Holders for Housing.

#### **3. Reason for the recommendation**

To gain an understanding of the garage portfolio, scrutinise the service and support ongoing development and improvements.

#### **4. Garage details**

##### **Garage portfolio**

4.1 As at March 2022, the Housing Service has 59 garage sites, with 676 individual garages. 72% of garages are let, providing an income of c£300,000 per

annum. Of the 180 empty garages 60% are ready to let and are advertised to rent on the Council website. An advert will also be placed in the next edition of the tenants' newsletter. 40% of the empty garages are awaiting repair or in a very poor condition.

4.2 Annexe One provides a map of garages across the borough. Please note this is indicative only as dated 2018, there have been some small updates.

### **Asset Management**

4.3 The Housing Asset Management Strategy recognises the number of garages within the housing stock and the Modern Homes Commitment Nine states that Waverley will

*“Create longer term Garage Strategy, which will address challenges for areas of the council as well as identifying opportunities for new homes by December 2022”.*

4.4 The current Garage Strategy was developed in 2013/14 and identifies all garage sites and reviewed sites according to occupancy, condition of garages and development potential. Work has progressed on garage improvement works and development in identified areas.

4.5 The Strategic Review of the Housing Revenue Account to commence Spring 2022, will consider the remit of garages between the HRA and the General Fund. Future work to assess the long term future of garages - the liabilities, type of use and opportunities for sale or development of garages will need to be scheduled.

### **Development**

4.6 Waverley have a successful track record of redeveloping garage sites to deliver new affordable homes.

4.7 Twenty one new homes have been provided on former garage sites between 2015 and 2021. Further new homes are due to start of former garage sites in May 2022. A total of 26 homes are due to be developed at the Chiddingfold regeneration scheme which includes a garage site at Pathfields and four homes on and Aarons Hill site.

4.8 Please refer to Annexe Two for photos and further details of homes.

### **Conclusion**

4.9 Garages are rented to tenants and private occupiers. The garage rental income supports the HRA and in some areas eases parking challenges. Work has progressed to redevelop low demand and poor condition sites with the development of new homes. There are future liabilities to maintain the conditions of garages and considerations regarding the use garages and the remit of HRA.

5.0 The provision of garages is not a core housing landlord function and as such has a lower profile than other projects and initiatives. The team recognise the future challenges regarding garages. However the focus in 2022/23 is on responsive repairs delivery and asset management strategy implementation, to

ensure homes are safe, whilst improving the tenant and landlord relationship, as stated in the Housing Operations Service Plan. Therefore officers suggest recommending a garage appraisal action for the 2023/24 Housing Operations Service Plan.

**5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan**

The report supports the Council's Corporate commitment to promote "*Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups*" and aim to "*be the best council landlord in the South East and to be acknowledged so by our tenants.*"

**6. Governance journey**

information only for Board

**Annexes:**

Annexe 1 – 2018 Map of Garage locations

Annexe 2 – Details and photos of homes developed on former garage sites

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