



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Officer Delegated Decision

26 February 2025

Deputy Chief Executive & s151 Officer

### Use of the HRA Priorities Reserve

To approve the use of the HRA Priorities Reserve to fund an assistant surveyor for the Damp and Mould team for a period of 12 months.

#### Contact

Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects

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<b>Decision made by:</b>	Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Decision:</b>	To approve the use of the HRA Priorities Reserve to fund an assistant surveyor for the Damp and Mould team for a period of 12 months commencing 1 April 2025 and the cost of the TPAS accreditation.
<b>Public or Exempt:</b>	Public
<b>Reasons for exemption:</b>	N/A
<b>Conflicts of interest:</b>	No
<b>Policy compliant:</b>	Yes
<b>Details of delegation:</b>	<i>The Financial Regulations give the Chief Finance Officer approval to use discretionary reserves in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance when the request is under £100k</i>

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance***

- 1.1 The HRA Priorities Reserve is to be utilised in order to fund the temporary staffing resource and TPAS accreditation as detailed in this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 There are no legal implications associated with this decision, which is fully compliant with thresholds set out in the Council's Financial Regulations.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

## **2. The Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 To seek approval to use £50k of the HRA Priorities Reserve to fund an assistant surveyor for the Damp and Mould team for a period of 12 months to support the completion of surveys and 6 week post work inspections and £6,800 to fund the cost of the TPAS accreditation.

### **Damp and Mould**

- 2.2 The Council created a Damp and Mould team in 2024 to complete surveys and the associated works on properties when reports of suspected damp and/or mould are received by the Council.
- 2.3 The Damp and Mould surveyor currently completes between 15 and 20 surveys each week and produces a report detailing all required works.
- 2.4 Due to the current demand on the service there is no capacity in the team to undertake a post work inspections 6 weeks after the completion of the works to ensure that a lasting resolution has been achieved. This additional temporary post would create the required capacity.

### **TPAS Accreditation**

- 2.5 The Council need to improve tenant engagement across the Housing Service to ensure that it is meeting the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standard requirements. TPAS are tenant engagement experts who are able to support the Council with developing a Tenant Engagement Improvement Plan.
- 2.6 As part of this service the Council can apply for TPAS Accreditation which is based on the TPAS National Engagement Standards which are in line with the key principles from the Social Housing Regulation Act and wider national standards and regulations.
- 2.7 It will take 12 months to achieve the accreditation as it is an evidence-based process which will demonstrate that the Council is committed to resident involvement and will drive improvements across the organisation. The cost of the accreditation is £6,800.

### **3. Available Options Considered**

- 3.1 The Council could choose not to recruit additional temporary resource, but this would not support the completion of the 6-week post work inspections.
- 3.2 The Council could choose to not apply for TPAS Accreditation, but this would not support improving tenant engagement.

### **4. Preferred Option**

- 4.1 To use £56.8k of the HRA Priorities Reserve to fund an assistant surveyor for the Damp and Mould team for a period of 12 months and to fund the cost of the TPAS accreditation.

### **5. Reasons for the Decision(s)**

- 5.1 To ensure the Council has sufficient resource to complete the 6-week post work inspection and that tenant engagement is improved across the service area.

Signed by: Richard Wyles

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