

Agenda item:

Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Housing

Subject: MAXSTOKE CLOSE, REDNAL HOUSE, COTTERIDGE HOUSE CLADDING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS 2011

Date of decision: 20th September 2011

Report by: OWEN BUCKWELL – HEAD OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Wards affected: Charles Dickens

Key decision: Yes – Over £250,000
Budget & policy framework decision: No

1. Summary & Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval to undertake planned maintenance works to 1-47 Maxstoke Close, 1-30 Rednal House and 1-15 Cotteridge House.
- 1.2 If approved, it is anticipated that the works could commence in November 2011.

2. Background

- 2.1 Blocks 1-47 Maxstoke Close, 1-30 Rednal House and 1-15 Cotteridge House are located near to Wilmcote House in the Somerstown Area. These 3 blocks of the same design and construction method are suffering from poor external decoration to the communal walkway and private balconies and there are also areas of spalling/cracking concrete at various locations across the blocks.
- 2.2 The proposed works to Maxstoke Close, Rednal House and Cotteridge House consist of over cladding the existing communal walkways and private balcony walls, undertaking concrete repair work and external and communal decoration of the blocks.
- 2.3 The works to the 3 blocks have been combined due to similar elements of work and their proximity to one another. This should lead to cost savings in the tender process and the works themselves.
- 2.4 Planning permission has been granted for the works to each block.

3. Recommendations

- i That approval be given to proceed with the works based on a budget estimate of £600,000 including a £120,000 allowance for contingencies/unforeseen works.

- ii That following a full tender evaluation authority to enter into contract with the preferred bidder is delegated to the Head of Housing Management.
- iii The financial appraisal is approved.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The works will ensure the structural integrity of the blocks, thus maintaining lettable assets for PCC.
- 4.2 The works will improve the living environment for residents whilst also reducing ongoing repair costs.
- 4.3 The project will improve the visual appearance of the blocks, in turn improving the external environment for residents
- 4.3 The works will help to contribute to PCC Corporate Priority 6 – “Increase availability, affordability, and quality of housing”.

5. Options considered and rejected

- 5.1 Maxstoke, Rednal & Cotteridge - Redecoration of balcony walls
An option considered and rejected was to redecorate the communal walkway and private balcony walls. Whilst this would be a cheaper option initially there would be a requirement for regular ongoing decoration to the elements in order to maintain their appearance and integrity.
- 5.2 Due to the high cost of scaffold access to the areas to be decorated, it is considered that long term the initial saving would be offset by the ongoing decoration.
- 5.3 The damaged areas of concrete to the ring beams of the blocks are at a stage where full concrete repair is the only viable option to maintain the ongoing integrity of the buildings.
- 5.4 An option considered and rejected was to replace the existing concrete fins with substitute material. This would lead to a high capital outlay and is likely to have a detrimental effect on the structural integrity of the blocks.

6. Duty to involve

- 6.1 Prior to the works starting a full consultation will be undertaken with the residents of all blocks. This will involve face to face consultation through door to door visits explaining the works to them and dealing with any concerns. Letters will also be sent to all residents informing them of the works, start date, likely disruption etc.
- 6.2 A notice of intent was sent to all leaseholders in the concerned blocks in January 2011 – the notice describes in general terms the proposed works, and states the reasons for

the works and invites written observations and where they should be sent (30 days notice must be given)– no comments were received.

- 6.3 A notice will be issued when the costs from the winning tender are known. The section 20 notice is required under The Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. The law requires that the leaseholder must be consulted before the landlord carries out works above a certain value. We must state why the works are required and the reasons for selection of contractors. Consultation notices must be sent to the Leaseholder advising of this and giving them 30 days in which to make observations or comments concerning the works.

7. Implications

- 7.1 It is considered that the works will have positive implications by helping to maintain the properties whilst improving the visual appearance of both the blocks and the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The works should have positive implications by ensuring that PCC maintains good quality housing that is easily lettable.
- 7.3 There is potential for negative implications due to potential disruption to residents during the works such as restricted access together with noise and dust etc. Measures will be undertaken to reduce these occurrences to a minimum.
- 7.4 There is also potential for a negative reaction from leaseholders due to the charges that they may receive however there are mechanisms in place to prevent financial hardship to leaseholders and to allow them to spread the cost of any works. 1-47 Maxstoke Close has 3 leaseholders present. 1-30 Rednal House has 8 leaseholders present. 1-15 Cotteridge House has 4 leaseholders present.

8. Corporate priorities

This report and the project it refers to contribute to the following Corporate Priorities:

- Increase availability and quality of housing
- Regenerate the city

9. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

An EIA is not needed for this project. The project will not affect any equality group unequally and there is no adverse impact on people who belong to any of the equality groups. Residents who live in the blocks affected by the project will be consulted on the work, and specific needs will be addressed so that tenants with protected characteristics can be fully involved in the consultation. The project is expected to have positive outcomes for all current and future tenants and will benefit all PCC tenants by saving money in the long term.

10. Legal implications

3A of the constitution. Legal Services should be involved in agreeing the form of contract prior to contract award.



- 10.1 The Council is designated as a local housing authority by the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) ("the Act"), and by virtue of section 9 of the Act is empowered to provide housing accommodation by erecting, altering or improving houses. Section 21 and section 27 of the Act permit the Council to carry out the general management, regulation and control of such local authority housing
- 10.2 Under Part 2, Section 3, of the City Council's constitution the Portfolio holder for Housing has the authority to approve the recommendations

11. Head of Financial Services comments

- 11.1 On 8th February 2011, Council approved a scheme of £500,000 to undertake planned maintenance works to repair and clad 1-47 Maxstoke Close, 1-30 Rednal House. The costs of these works are to be funded from Housing Revenue Account Revenue Contributions.
- 11.2 The full financial appraisal, taking into account of the subsequent addition of 1-15 Cotteridge House, has been approved and is attached to this report.

Signed by:
Owen Buckwell – Head of Housing Management

Appendices:

Financial Appraisal

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

NIL

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by [Cabinet Member for Housing on [20th September 2011].

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Signed by: [Councillor Steven Wylie]