

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Housing

Date of meeting: 12 MARCH 2013

Subject: LAKES BLOCKS AREA FIRE DOORS & BELNEY HOUSE WINDOWS

Report by: OWEN BUCKWELL – HEAD OF HOUSING & PROPERTY

Wards affected: Paulsgrove

Key decision: Yes – Over £250,000

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek permission to go out to tender and appoint a contractor to undertake fire door replacements to 18 no. blocks of flats located along Allaway Avenue, Paulsgrove and window replacement to the Belney House block of flats.
- 1.2 The works are required to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 and to ensure the integrity of the buildings and reduce their on-going maintenance.
- 1.3 If approved, it is anticipated that the works could commence by August 2013.

2. Recommendations

i That approval be given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £391,000 including a £28,500 allowance for contingencies / unforeseen works and £31,000 of fees.

ii That following a full tender evaluation authority to enter into contract with the preferred bidder is delegated to the Head of Housing and Property Services.

iii The financial appraisal is approved.

3. Background

- 3.1 The 19 no. blocks are all located in the Paulsgrove Ward. All blocks are of traditional construction with 18 no. being built between 1951 and 1963, with 1 no. block built in 1988.
- 3.2 The 19 no. blocks contain 181 properties of which 25 are leaseholders.
- 3.3 The 18 no. blocks receiving new fire doors are all served by a single staircase that the property entrance door opens directly onto. There is also resident storage sheds located in the stairwell that open directly into the stairwell.
- 3.4 Following the undertaking of Fire Risk Assessments to these blocks it has been identified that all property doors, shed doors and electrical cupboard doors that open directly into the stairwell need to be replaced with FD30s rated fire doors.
- 3.5 Installing FD30s rated fire doors will maintain a fire break between the communal stairwell and individual properties helping to reduce spread of fire and assist the PCC stay-put policy in the event of a fire breaking out.
- 3.6 The type of door proposed is a composite fire door, this type of door should reduce future maintenance as they do not require periodic decoration, offer better thermal performance and are more secure than traditional timber doors.
- 3.7 1-8 Belney House currently has timber double glazed windows. These windows have reached the end of their serviceable life and now require replacement. It is proposed to replace these windows with modern PVCu double glazed units.
- 3.8 The fire door installation and window replacement work has been combined as one contract due to similar nature of the works and efficiency savings in the procurement and administering of the project.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The works are requirement of the RRF50 2005 following the undertaking of a Fire Risk Assessment.
- 4.2 The works will ensure the safety of residents and in the event of a fire contain it, thus preventing fire spread and potential increased.
- 4.3 The doors will afford residents better security.
- 4.4 The window installation will help insure the water tightness of the properties and improve their thermal performance.

5. Options considered and rejected

- 5.1 Due to the nature of the works there are few alternative options available. The fire safety measures are necessary due as a result of a fire risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005. The window replacement is necessary due to the existing ones having reached the end of their serviceable life.
- 5.2 An option considered and rejected was to upgrade the existing timber doors to make them FD30s. This was rejected as the original doors are of a style that is not capable of being upgraded.
- 5.3 An option considered and rejected was to replace the existing doors with new timber fire doors and frames. Whilst this offers an initial cost saving, life cycle costing shows in the longer term it is more expensive due to on-going maintenance costs (decorations etc.).
- 5.4 With regard to the window replacement, replacing the existing windows with new timber double glazed ones was rejected due to higher on-going maintenance costs than PVCu windows.

6. Duty to involve

- 6.1 Face to face consultation will take place with all leaseholders of the blocks prior to the issuing of the tender and they will be given a notice of intent at this stage. When tenders are returned section 20 notices will be sent to all leaseholders outlining their required contributions.
- 6.2 Prior to the commencement of works full consultation will be undertaken with the residents of all blocks. This will involve face to face consultation through door to door visits and resident meetings if deemed necessary. Letters will also be sent to all residents informing them of the works, start date and any likely disruption. Residents will also be consulted on the style and colour of door.
- 6.3 Following completion of the works residents will be consulted in order gain to their feedback so that learning can be taken on to future projects.

7. Implications

- 7.1 It is considered that the works will have positive implication by helping to ensure the safety of residents.
- 7.2 The works should have positive implications by ensuring that Portsmouth City Council maintains good quality housing that is easily lettable.
- 7.3 There is potential for negative implication due to the disruption to residents during the works, however the installation of the doors or windows to an

individual property should take no longer than 1 day so the risk is considered minimal. Measures will be undertaken to minimise the disruption and tailor the installation around the needs of the resident.

- 7.4 There is potential for negative reaction from leaseholders due to the costs they will be required to pay for the works however there are mechanisms in place to help spread the cost of any works.
- 7.5 The work is subject to the normal legal risk relating to building work, the financial and technical competence of the chosen contractor and the disruption that the work will cause to the occupiers generally. These should all be subject to existing risk control assessment and mechanisms for such work and as such minimised before work commences.

8. Corporate Priorities

- 8.1 The report and the planned maintenance works will contribute to the following Corporate Priorities:
- Increase availability, affordability and quality of housing
 - Improve efficiency and encourage involvement
 - Regenerate the city
 - Cleaner and greener city

9. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

- 9.1 An EIA is not needed for this project. The project will not affect any equality group unequally and this has 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.

10. City Solicitor's comments

- 10.1 The legal risks referred to at paragraph 7.5 above will be addressed through a detailed procurement process in compliance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules and managed under the terms of the resulting construction works contract.
- 10.2 Under Part 2, Section 3 of the City Council's Constitution (responsibilities of the Cabinet) and further in accordance with the Scheme of Delegations at Appendix A to the Executive Procedure Rules in Part 3 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Member for Housing has the authority to approve the recommendations set out in this report.

11. Head of Finance's comments

- 11.1 This scheme forms part of line 17, Major Repairs Dwellings, within the Housing Investment Programme which was formally approved by Full Council on 12 February 2013.
- 11.2 The scheme, which is funded by Housing Revenue Account Contributions and Leaseholder Contributions, will ensure that fire regulations are met, offering both improved safety and security whilst also helping protect against future deterioration, reducing ongoing cleaning and maintenance costs and maintaining their letability for the next 30 years.

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Signed by:
Owen Buckwell – Head of Housing and Property

Appendices:

Appendix A Financial Appraisal
Appendix B Block List

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 the Cabinet Member for Housing on 12th March 2013

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Signed by:
Councillor Steven Wylie

Appendix B - Block List

Full list of properties;

Fire Door Installation

Allaway Avenue (237-251 odds)
Allaway Avenue (253-267 odds)
Allaway Avenue (269-283 odds)
Allaway Avenue (285-295 odds)
Buttermere House (1-9)
Coniston House (1-9)
Downton House (1-12)
Eskdale House (1-9)
Grasmere House (1-12)
Hempstead Road (4-18 evens)
Loveswater House (1-9)
Patterdale House (1-12)
Rydal House (1-12)
Seathwaite House (1-12)
Thirlmere House (1-12)
Ullswater House (1-9)
Wastwater House (1-6)
Windermere House (1-12)

Window Replacement

Belney House (1-8)