

Title of meeting: Housing Cabinet

Date of meeting: 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

Subject: KINGS ROAD AREA - FIRE DOOR REPLACEMENT

Report by: OWEN BUCKWELL – HEAD OF HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES

Wards affected: St Thomas

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 installation of composite fire doors to 41No blocks of flats in the Kings Road area.
- 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 April 2014.

2. Recommendations

- i That approval be given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £575,000 including a £60,000 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 and Property Services.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The blocks are all located in the St Thomas Ward of Portsmouth and are of traditional construction, built between 1952 and 1960.
- 3.2 The 41No blocks contain 322No properties of which 213No are leaseholders.

- 3.3 Each block is 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 After undertaking of Fire Risk Assessments to these blocks it has been identified that all property entrance 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 means of escape route 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 cyclical decoration, offer better thermal performance and will be more secure than traditional timber doors.
- 3.7 It is anticipated that the contract to install fire doors will commence during April 2014 with a contract period of 16 weeks. Once the fire doors have been installed, a contract for external decorations and associated repairs will commence by September 2014 to all the blocks and it is anticipated that this work will be completed by March 2015.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The works are requirement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 following the undertaking of a Fire Risk Assessment. The Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service, who is the enforcing authority, have reviewed the Fire Risk Assessments undertaken and concluded that they are a comprehensive assessment of the risks and planned actions.
- 4.2 The works will ensure the safety of residents and in the event of a fire contain it by preventing fire spread which will reduce the potential harm to residents and any potential damage to the building structure.
- 4.3 The installation of the composite doors will assist the longer term maintenance of the blocks with reduced life cycle costs.
- 4.4 The doors will afford residents improved security to their flats.

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 as a result of a fire risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 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. This has been validated independently by Fire Door Services, who are a specialist external consultant and a member of the Fire Protection Association, who undertook a door survey of the existing doors.

- 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, a life cycle costing indicates in the longer term it is more expensive due to the on-going maintenance costs. The option would also cause more disturbance and inconvenience to the residents during installation due to the additional number of visits required, compared to the installation of composite doors.

6. Duty to involve

- 6.1 An initial first phase of consultation has been undertaken to the area north of Kings Road with 97No leaseholders and they have all been issued with a Notice of Intent. This has involved two separate consultation events held at Southsea Community Centre in April and May 2013, as well as home visits. All leaseholders in the first phase of consultation have been informed of the works by letter, phone call, voice mail or E-mail. The feedback from leaseholders is that they are generally satisfied with the repayment options available to them and the proposed work.
- 6.2 A similar second phase of consultation is required for the area south of Kings Road. It is planned to commence this consultation in October 2013 and these leaseholders will be issued a Notice of Intent.
- 6.3 When tenders are returned, section 20 notices will be sent to all leaseholders informing them of the successful contractor and outlining their required contributions when the work is completed. The earliest that any leaseholder is likely to receive a bill for any aspect of the work is September 2015.
- 6.4 Flexible repayment plans with appropriate timescales will be discussed and agreed individually with each leaseholder. These include options to encourage leaseholders to increase their reserve fund contributions where appropriate to meet anticipated estimated costs of the work and ensure that they have sufficient reserve fund balances when bills are issued in September 2015. Access to Council loans is also available. If any leaseholder is identified who may not have sufficient reserve funds to pay the costs, they will be specifically and closely supported throughout by the Leasehold & Commercial team, to ensure appropriate repayment plans are agreed that are proportionate, lawful, accountable and necessary (PLAN).
- 6.5 Prior to the commencement of works full consultation will be undertaken with the residents of all the 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 installed.

6.6 Following completion of the works residents will be consulted in order to gain their feedback on the overall service they have received so that learning can be gained to improve the planned maintenance service.

7. Implications

7.1 It is considered that the works will have a positive implication 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 secure and safe.

7.3 The potential disruption to residents during the works such as restricted access together with noise and dust could have a negative impact. However a quality assessment of the tender and management of the successful contractor will reduce these occurrences to a minimum.

7.4 There is a potential for a 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. Currently PCC is not aware of any leaseholders within the scheme who have already been consulted where a satisfactory repayment plan will not be achieved.

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 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 address 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. Legal Implications

- 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 Procedures 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 These works are part of a long term planned programme of works and are essential to ensure that the dwellings affected remain of a required standard for habitation. Funding has been allocated already for these schemes in the capital programme that was approved by Council in the February 2013, under line 17 of the Housing Revenue Account capital programme 'Major Repairs - Dwellings'. All funding is from HRA sources, specifically from revenue and leaseholder contributions.

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Signed by:
Owen Buckwell – Head of Housing and Property Services

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 24 September 2013

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Signed by:
Councillor Darren Sanders

Appendix B - Block List

Full list of properties;

Astley Street (78-100)
Copper Street (1-6)
Copper Street (7-18)
Eldon Street (25-35)
Elm Grove (1-17)
Flint Street (4-20)
Hambrook Street (22-44)
Hambrook Street (46-56)
Kings Road (100-110)
Kings Road (10-26)
Kings Road (112-122)
Kings Road (124-134)
Kings Road (15-25)
Kings Road (27-37)
Kings Road (28-38)
Kings Road (40-62)
Kings Road (64-74)
Kings Road (76-86)
Kings Road (88-98)
Little Southsea Street (13-16)
Little Southsea Street (1-4)
Little Southsea Street (5-8)
Little Southsea Street (9-12)
Norfolk Street (27-43)
Norfolk Street (28-38)
Norfolk Street (4-26)
Norfolk Street (45-61)
Silver Street (14-24)
Silver Street (2-12)
Silver Street (26-36)
South Street (1-23)
South Street (2-24)
South Street (25-35)
South Street (26-36)
South Street (37-48)
St Pauls Road (14-30)
St Pauls Road (2-12)
Stone Street (1-12)
Stone Street (13-24)
Stone Street (25-36)
Sussex Place (6-11)