

Title of meeting: Housing Cabinet

Date of meeting: 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

Subject: MARSHFIELD HOUSE - CLADDING & EXTERNAL REPAIR

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

Wards affected: Drayton & Farlington

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 planned maintenance works to 1-24 Marshfield House.
- 1.2 The works are required to ensure the integrity of the building and reduce the on-going maintenance required.
- 1.3 If approved, it is anticipated that the works could commence by March 2014.

2. Recommendations

i That approval be given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £340,000 including a £25,000 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 block 1-24 Marshfield House is located in the Drayton & Farlington Ward and is of crosswall construction, built in 1965. Within the boundary of the site are 2No garage blocks that are included within the scheme.
- 3.2 There is 24No properties contained in the block with 8No of these being leasehold properties.

- 3.3 A number of elements of the building fabric have either reached the end of their serviceable life and now require replacement in addition to other elements that now require routine remedial work.
- 3.4 The main areas of work will include insulated cladding to replace the existing tile hanging, external and communal decoration, installation of emergency lighting, replacement fencing, new windows to the communal stairwells, structural repairs, re-roofing of garage blocks and other associated repairs.
- 3.5 It is anticipated that the contract will commence by March 2014 with a contract period of 16 weeks.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The works will ensure the integrity of the building fabric to the block and help protect against future deterioration, thus maintaining a lettable asset for PCC.
- 4.2 The project will improve the visual appearance of the block, helping to improve the external environment for both residents of the block and neighbouring properties.
- 4.3 It is considered that once the proposed works are undertaken the blocks will continue to provide a good living environment for the residents.

5. Options considered and rejected

- 5.1 An option considered and rejected was to repair the areas of defective tile hanging rather than replacing them with insulated cladding. This option was rejected as surveys indicated that the battens that hold the tile hanging have rotted in many places meaning complete replacement would be required
- 5.2 Repairing the tile hung areas would be cheaper in the short term however there would be an on-going demand for repairs to these areas that when combined with the high cost of scaffold access in the long term would offset the initial saving.
- 5.3 Standard products are being used for general repair works to maintain the block and therefore it is not considered that there are alternative options for these items.

6. Duty to involve

- 6.1 A planning application has been submitted and approved during which all residents and leaseholders were notified.
- 6.2 Face to face consultation has taken place with all leaseholders of the block with a Notice of Intent being issued to them in April 2013. The feedback from leaseholders is that they are generally satisfied with the repayment options available to them and the proposed work.

- 6.3 When tenders are returned section 20 notices will be sent to all leaseholders outlining their required contributions when the work is completed. The earliest that any leaseholder is likely to receive a bill for the completed 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 the block. 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 likely disruption.
- 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 positive implication by helping to maintain the properties whilst improving the visual appearance of both the block 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 Through the installation of insulated cladding there is potential for reducing the energy demand for the building.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 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. If there is a shortfall in the reserve fund, the Leasehold Service Officer will endeavour to assist the leaseholder in finding an affordable solution.

7.6 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 7.6 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

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