

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Housing

Date of meeting: 11th March 2014

Subject: SEYMOUR CLOSE AREA WINDOW REPLACEMENT

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

Wards affected: Charles Dickens and Nelson Ward

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 window and door replacement works to 21no blocks of flats and 25no of houses in the Seymour Close Area.
- 1.2 The works are required to ensure the integrity of the buildings, reduce their on-going maintenance and improve the living environment for residents.
- 1.3 If approved, it is anticipated that the works could commence by September 2014.

2. Recommendations

- i That approval be given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £1.4million, inclusive 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.**

3. Background

- 3.1 All the properties are located within the Charles Dickens and Nelson Ward and were constructed between 1970 and 1973. A full property list is contained at the rear of this document.
- 3.2 The site contains a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bed flats, maisonettes and houses.

- 3.3 Within the 21no blocks of flats there are 123no PCC owned properties and 41no leasehold properties.
- 3.4 All the properties currently have timber frame double glazed windows. These windows have reached the end of their serviceable life and now require replacement.
- 3.5 It is proposed to install new PVCu double glazed windows to each property and where existing timber front doors are present install new composite doors.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The works will maintain the integrity of the building fabric, help protect against future deterioration, ensuring a lettable asset for PCC.
- 4.2 The new windows will help improve the thermal efficiency of the properties and reduce heat loss which may contribute to a reduced heating demand. The energy efficiency rating will improve from Band D to Band C, potentially saving residents up to £25 per year depending on their current energy use.
- 4.3 The new property doors will improve the security to the properties.
- 4.4 The works should reduce current levels of PCC repair expenditure to maintain the existing windows. It will also improve the longer term life cycle costs of the properties as PVCu windows will have a lower initial expenditure compared to timber windows and the cyclical costs of maintaining them are substantially lower.
- 4.5 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 replace the existing windows with new timber double glazed units. This was rejected as the initial expenditure and the on-going maintenance cost would be higher when compared to that of PVCu units.
- 5.2 The option to not replace the windows was considered; however this was rejected as the on-going maintenance costs to maintain the windows or replace individual units as necessary would become higher.

6. Duty to involve

- 6.1 Thorough consultation will be undertaken with both residents and leaseholders of the properties.

- 6.2 All leaseholders will receive a Notice of Intent letter that will notify them of our intention to undertake works to their property and offer them the opportunity to nominate a suitable contractor to the tender list if they wish. Once leaseholders have received the Notice of Intent all leaseholders will be telephoned by PCC Leasehold and Commercial staff to further discuss the works, notify them of approximate costs and talk through payment options available to them.
- 6.4 All leaseholders will be offered the opportunity of meeting in person with the Leasehold and Commercial Officer and the Project Surveyor to discuss any issues further.
- 6.5 After the issuing of the Notice of Intent a Planning Application will be submitted at which point all residents will be notified and have the opportunity to comment on the proposals.
- 6.6 Once tenders have been returned and a preferred bidder identified, all leaseholders will be issued a Section 20 Notice that will outline the preferred bidder, inform them of the overall block cost and their required contribution towards the completed work. Leaseholders are not likely to receive a bill for any aspect of the work until September 2015.
- 6.7 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).
- 6.8 All residents and leaseholders will be informed of the works prior to their commencement via letter and in-person visits and will have the opportunity to discuss any issues with PCC staff.
- 6.9 All residents and leaseholders will also be offered colour and style choices for any new property entrance doors due to be installed.
- 6.10 PCC staff will remain in contact with residents during the works onsite to address any issues that may arise and following completion customer satisfaction surveys will be undertaken by a PCC Resident Liaison Officer in order to gain feedback as to how the service could be improved.

7. Implications

- 7.1 It is considered that the works will have a positive impact by helping to maintain the properties whilst improving the visual appearance of both the blocks and the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The positive implications of the work are that it will ensure that PCC maintains good quality housing that is secure and safe.
- 7.3 There is a potential disruption to residents whilst living in occupation during the installation of the windows and doors; however the physical installation of the windows should be limited to 1-2 days per property and the contractors will be assessed during the tender process to ensure that they have robust management systems to minimise disruption to residents to a minimum. PCC will also liaise with Housing management team to ensure that any additional individual resident requirements are addressed.
- 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 and ensure that a satisfactory repayment plan is agreed.
- 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 comments

- 10.1 Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) together with associated regulations prescribes the Council's statutory duties, as landlord, in respect of consultation with leaseholders who are required under the terms of their leases to contribute (by payment of service charges) to costs incurred in the carrying out of works to a building, where the contribution of any one tenant will exceed a prescribed amount (currently £250).
- 10.2 The legal risks referred to in 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.
- 10.3 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 will deliver a number of benefits to the blocks and houses on Seymour Close, Arnaud Close, Buckland Path and Washington Road. The proposed works will help protect against future deterioration, reducing the need for on-going repairs and maintenance, as well as help improve the thermal efficiency of the properties. The replacement property doors will also improve property security and improve the visual appearance, ensuring the blocks remain lettable in the future.
- 11.2 This scheme forms part of the Housing Investment Programme (HRA) Item 11 Total Major Repairs - Dwellings, which was approved by Council on 12th November 2013, and is wholly funded from HRA and Leaseholder contributions

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Signed by:

Owen Buckwell – Head of Housing and Property Services

Appendices:

Appendix A - 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 11th March 2014.

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Signed by:

Councillor Darren Sanders

APPENDIX A

Block List

ARNAUD CLOSE (10-16 & 22-24 EVENS)
ARNAUD CLOSE (26-32 & 42-44 EVENS)
ARNAUD CLOSE (27-43 ODDS)
ARNAUD CLOSE (2-8 & 18-20 EVENS)
ARNAUD CLOSE (34-40 & 46-48 EVENS)
ARNAUD CLOSE (5-21 ODDS)
BUCKLAND PATH (1-24)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (16-22 & 28-34 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (1-7 & 23-25 ODDS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (62-68 & 78-80 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (63-69 & 79-81 ODDS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (70-76 & 82-84 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (71-77 & 83-85 ODDS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (8-14 & 24-26 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (86-92 & 102-108 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (87-93 & 103-109 ODDS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (9-15 & 27-29 ODDS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (94-100 & 110-116 EVENS)
SEYMOUR CLOSE (95-101 & 111-117 ODDS)
WASHINGTON ROAD (101-111 ODDS)
WASHINGTON ROAD (113-121 & 123-131 ODDS)

PCC Houses on the following roads

ARNAUD CLOSE
SEYMOUR CLOSE