

HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

19 June 2024

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY

A. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2024/25: ALLOCATION PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT, ENHANCEMENT AND ADAPTATION OF THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING STOCK (Report prepared by Steve Pearce)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek approval of the individual budget allocations and projects within the 2024/25 Housing Investment Programme (HIP) for the major repair, improvement, enhancement and adaptation of the Council's housing stock

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 13th February 2024, Full Council approved a Housing Investment Programme of £7,977,870 of which £3,447,870 was allocated for improvement of the housing stock plus a further £400,000 for disabled adaptations.

This report recommends the allocation of individual budgets for each element of the programme together with details of the schemes that are proposed to be carried out as well as seeking Portfolio Holder approval to undertake the work.

The report explains the rationale used to allocate the HIP budgets and to identify properties to be included in the current programme, the consultation that is carried out with tenants and leaseholders and the significant contribution that the HIP makes to the corporate plan and other local and national objectives by providing high quality housing.

The appendix to the report provides a summary of the allocation recommended for the stock improvement in the context of the total approved HIP budget together with a detailed schedule of each element of the programme, the recommended budget, scheme details and the contribution that each will make to corporate and national priorities.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that:

That the individual budget allocations and programme for the major repair, improvement, enhancement and adaptation of the Council's housing stock in the 2024/25 Housing Improvement Programme, as detailed in this report and the attached appendices, be approved

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

To maintain a programme of works that will sustain the Decent Homes standard and prevent

the housing stock from falling into future non decency.

To improve the energy efficiency of Council dwellings

To improve and maintain the value of the Council's assets

To comply with legal , technical or health and safety requirements

To contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan and other corporate strategies and objectives

To obtain best value by undertaking planned work and thereby reducing the need for expenditure on emergency or responsive repairs

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not agreeing allocations within the programme – not proposed – the allocation of budgets is an important part of planning improvements, compliance, meeting customer satisfaction measures and regulatory requirements

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Approval and implementation of the annual Housing Revenue Account Capital programme (HIP) will significantly contribute to the Corporate plan objective if Pride in our area and services to residents by providing high quality housing. It will also contribute to sustaining the decent homes standard as well as preventing future non decency in the housing stock.

Individual elements of the recommended programme will also contribute to the corporate plan objectives of raising aspirations and creating opportunities, and championing our local environment

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultation on the proposed budget allocation and programme has been carried out with the Council's Tenant Panel on the 6 February 2024. The Panel approved a recommendation that the proposed programme and budget allocation for 2024/25 be put forward for consideration by the Housing Portfolio Holder without amendment. The Tenants' Panel will be appointing three panellists to monitor progress and performance on achieving the programme together with a sub-group to agree and monitor target setting and performance management in furtherance of regulatory requirements for ensuring tenant involvement and participation.

Prior to any scheme commencing on site, individual tenants whose property will be affected by the works are fully consulted, and wherever feasible, tenants are given a choice in the scheme design.

Where projects are undertaken that affect leasehold properties, consultation is carried out that enables lessees to comment in accordance with the Common hold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 on scheme proposals for which service charges will subsequently be levied.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)	YES	If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant effect on two or more wards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Involves £100,000 expenditure/income <input type="checkbox"/> Is otherwise significant for the service budget
		And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)	14/12/2023

The power to incur capital expenditure on the housing stock is covered by Part IV Local Government and Housing Act 1989. All works will be undertaken through the application of the Council's procurement rules which could include the use of framework agreements.

The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:

No additional comments

FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no further comments over and above those set out elsewhere in this report. However, it is important to highlight that there may be timing impacts in terms of delivering the relevant elements of the overall programme of works within the 2024/25 financial year but this will be reviewed as part of the regular financial performance reports throughout the year.

The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:

Although there are no significant comments over and above those set out elsewhere in the report, it is worth highlighting the process / governance proposed by the Service that were set out within the recent S5 report relating to the Spendells House Scheme. It is expected that these will be applied by the Service in terms of managing the wider HRA Capital Programme along with any additional learning etc. emerging from the other associated actions set out in that report.

USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	This report and proposed allocations form a key plank of the management of resources within the overall allocation and within the 30 year business plan.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	The Council's constitution and scheme of delegation establish a clear framework of governance. These proposed allocations form a part of that governance process.

C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

These allocations are informed by the emergent data picture arising from the Council's stock condition surveys.

PROPOSAL

The following allocations within the programme are proposed. Additional details are set out in the Appendix:

Energy and Water Conservation (£250,000)

The allocation that enables a programme of works to improve energy efficiency and fuel economy to a specification equal to the thermal comfort criterion of the Decent Homes standard.

Re-roofing (£97,870)

This allocation continues the work from the previous years to allow refurbishment to a number of roofs and roof coverings. This will prevent future non decency in these properties.

Major Refurbishment of Heating (£900,000)

Substantial provision has again been made to continue the programme to refurbish existing electric storage heating in order to prevent future non decency and improve energy efficiency. Where appropriate this work will include sustainable energy installations.

Electric Rewiring (£300,000)

This allocation reflects the extent of upgrading identified by ongoing cyclical electrical testing but is sufficient to enable a significant programme of rewiring to communal areas to be carried out including provision of emergency lighting and upgrading the electrical installations to the latest regulations. Modern lighting and controls will contribute to energy efficiency and where appropriate will include installations that utilise sustainable energy technology.

Kitchen and Bathroom Replacement (£300,000)

A substantial allocation is proposed to continue the ongoing programme of kitchen and bathroom replacement, which will also make a major contribution to providing high quality facilities for tenants. It is proposed to concentrate on improving kitchens that did not previously fail the decency standard so as to reduce the lifespan of these installations within the stock and prevent future non decency.

Structural Repairs (£200,000)

A significant budget is proposed to meet the ongoing problem of newly arising structural related defects which is partly considered to be a consequence of climatic conditions and the prevailing soil conditions within the District.

Window and Door Replacement (£600,000)

Significant allocation is proposed to continue the long-term commitment to replacing defective

windows and doors to individual dwellings and communal entrance doors with high performance and secure installations. There is a continuation of the renewal of Flat Fire doors in blocks of flats following fire inspections, to comply with requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and British Standards Institution PAS 79:2012

The programme will make a significant contribution to improving tenant comfort, combating fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency in the housing stock. Replacing these components will also prevent future non decency.

Environmental Improvements (£50,000)

This allocation is proposed to continue the programme of providing environmental improvements to areas that are identified as suffering crime or other antisocial problems. This element of the programme also represents a “local offer” to those tenants whose property will benefit from the work which is in accordance with the new regulatory framework for social landlords.

Replace Door Entry Systems (£150,000)

An increased budget compared to previous years is included to accelerate the long-term phased programme to refurbish and replace communal door entry systems to flats and sheltered units which was not previously able to be fully funded due to commitment on work necessary to achieve the decent homes standard.

Selected Improvements (£50,000)

Provision has been made to continue the ongoing programme of improvements to the communal areas and entrances of sheltered units and general needs flats. This element of the programme also represents a “local offer” to those tenants whose property will benefit from the work which is in accordance with the new regulatory framework for social landlords.

Asbestos Management (£370,000)

This allocation is proposed to enable the Council to meet its obligations in respect of the housing stock under Asbestos Management Regulations. In addition an enhanced budget is recommended in the current programme to enable some planned replacement of asbestos bearing materials to commence.

Measures to Combat Condensation (£100,000)

An increased budget is proposed to continue the long-term phased programme to install measures in selected dwellings to combat and prevent condensation.

Refurbish Lifts (£80,000)

To continue a phased programme to replace a number of lifts that have become obsolete.

Garage Refurbishment (0)

Allocation for garages has been suspended for this financial year in order to focus

expenditure on dwellings.

Disabled Adaptations (400,000)

Ad-hoc adaptations to allow disabled tenants to make safe and convenient use of their homes. Expenditure occurs at sheltered schemes, blocks and individual homes based on Occupational therapist advice.

ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

All construction projects have inherent risks. The building and development team will work to manage these general risks on a project by project basis.

Overall programme risk is of need exceeding the Council's ability to fund required works. The service team has established a programme of financial meetings to monitor progress and manage expenditure.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

When preparing the programme special consideration has been given to ensuring adequate budgetary provision for adaptations that assist the disabled and chronically sick; and that where appropriate all projects are undertaken so as to contribute to assisting persons with special needs and in accordance with the principles of equality and diversity.

SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS

Contract awards within the programme will be made taking into account special value considerations. The existence of the programme and of the housing stock itself is of itself of social value.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030

Individual programme items are aimed directly at improving the energy efficiency of council dwellings. Others such as reroofing will include energy efficiency upgrading.

OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder

Individual projects within the programme will enhance the security and safety of Council dwellings or estates and contribute towards reducing crime, antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime. In appropriate instances, the Police crime reduction officer is consulted on the specification and design of schemes.

Health Inequalities

The provision of high quality well maintained and warm housing is recognised as a fundamental contributor to achieving good

	health. Elements of the proposed programme such as disability adaptations also make a direct contribution to reducing health inequality.
Area or Ward affected	Affects most wards

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

At the Full Council meeting held on 13th February 2024, an Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme - HIP - of £7,977,870 was approved for 2024/25 of which £3.447 million was allocated for major repair, improvement and enhancement of the Council's housing stock, a further £400,000 for disability adaptations including disability access works to sheltered housing units.

A programme of work has now been prepared, for which it is proposed that funding be allocated.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Full Council determined on 13th February 2024, to set an overall budget for the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme - HIP

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A of this report provides a summary of the proposed budget allocation and some details of the specific projects currently identified for completion in 2024/25. Comments are also included to explain how each scheme will contribute to the Corporate Plan or other national or Council strategies.

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