

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 1st December, 2011
at 2.00 pm (Committee Room 4)

Group Meetings at 1.15 pm

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. To note any items which the Chairman considers to be of an urgent nature.
2. Admission of Public and Press

To consider whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

3. Disclosure of Interests

A Member with a personal interest in a matter to be considered at this meeting must either before the matter is discussed or when the interest becomes apparent disclose

1. ***The existence of that interest to the meeting.***
2. ***The nature of the interest.***
3. ***Decide whether they have a prejudicial interest.***

A note on declaring interests at meetings, which incorporates certain other aspects of the Code of Conduct and a pro-forma for completion where interests are disclosed will be available at the meeting.

4. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 25th August, 2011.
5. Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership.

FOR DECISION

STRATEGIC PLANNING

OPERATIONAL

- (D) 6 Recharge Proposal.
- (D) 7. 2012 Disabled Adaptations Contract.
- (D) 8. Sound Insulation Works
- (D) 9. Homelink Services

- (D) 10. Changes to Reception Opening Hours
- (D) 11. Cumbria Choice: Choice Based Letting Scheme (CBL)
- (R) 12. Homelink Charging Arrangements

FOR INFORMATION

- 13. Performance Information Report.
- 14. Planned Maintenance Programme.

NOTE: (D) – Delegated to the Executive Committee
(R) – Referred to the Council

Housing Management Forum Members:

Councillors: K Hamilton
D Barlow
A Burns
M Irwin
F G Murray
R J Pointer
J Richardson
K M Williams

Tenant Representatives: Mrs P Charnley (Chairman)
Mr M Burton
Mr N Hird
Mr W McEwan
Ms C McFadyen
Mr A McIntosh
Mr W Ward
Mrs K Warne
Mrs B Whitby (reserve)

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Published: 23rd November, 2011

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: 25th August, 2011
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Burns, Hamilton, Murray, Pointer, Sweeney and Williams.

Tenant Representatives:- Mrs P. Charnley (Chairman), Mr W. McEwan, Mrs C. McFadyen, Mr A. McIntosh and Mr W. Ward.

12 – The Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 and Access to Information (Variation) Order 2006

Discussion arising hereon it was

RESOLVED:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 (Minute No. 23) of Part One of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

13 – Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Burns declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 – Tendering of Supporting People Services (Minute No. 19) as she was a Member of Cumbria County Council.

Councillor Hamilton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 – Tendering of Supporting People Services (Minute No. 19) as he was a Member of Cumbria County Council.

14 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June, 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

15 – Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barlow, Irwin and Richardson and from Tenant Representatives, Mr M. Burton, Mr N. Hird and Ms K. Warne.

Councillor Sweeney had attended as a substitute for Councillor Barlow.

16 – Implementing Self-Financing for Council Housing

The Housing Manager submitted a report updating Members on the introduction of self-financing for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

He reported that the Localism Bill contained clauses which allowed the abolition of the HRA subsidy system and introduced a self-financing system. Each Council

would be given a predetermined 'settlement figure' which they must raise through borrowing. A Council could not opt out of the proposals, so it was important to develop a balanced 30-year business plan that funded the debt repayments, whilst continuing to achieve the Decent Homes Standard out of the resources (rents and other income) available.

Under the proposals the HRA would still be ring fenced but the Major Repairs allowance and a proportion of the Right to Buy receipts would be lost but no Subsidy payments would be made.

The timetable for introduction was as follows:-

- November 2011 onwards – Consultation on self-financing determinations;
- January 2012 – Final self-financing determinations published;
- February 2012 – Local Authorities set budgets and agree borrowing;
- 28th March 2012 – Payments between the Department, the Public Works Loan Board and Local Authorities to enable the start of self-financing; and
- 1st April 2012 – Self-financing goes live.

It was noted that Officers were currently updating the previous 30-year business plan based on the information available which would direct future delivery plans. The next stages would include completing a 'sensitivity' analysis to ensure the assumptions made were realistic and deliverable. A consultant would be used to health check the business plan to ensure completeness and robustness.

Further reports would be provided as more details of debt levels and available resources become available.

RECOMMENDED:- (i) To note the content of the report; and

(ii) To agree in the first instance that the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party considered:-

- A check on the robustness and undertaking a sensitivity analysis on the content of the 30 year business plan; and
- Reviewing the current service standards and delivery in preparation for self-financing.

17 – Equality Impact Assessments

The Housing Manager submitted a report providing Members with completed Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on key service areas of the Housing Service in line with the Housing Service Delivery Plan 2011/12 and also the corporate single Equality Scheme Action Plan.

He reported that an EIA was a way to make sure that individual teams within the Housing Service thought about the impact of policies, procedures, strategies,

functions and services to identify any unmet needs and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate.

Government legislation placed statutory duties on all public Authorities to assess the impact of their work on gender equality, race equality and equality for disabled people. The Housing Service considered the impact and potential impact of its work on the promotion of equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief. The EIAs included appropriate consideration of the impact on gender equality, race equality and equality for disabled people, thereby meeting statutory duties for impact assessment.

Within the Council's Single Equality Scheme Action Plan, the Housing Service had been categorised at Priority 2, with a schedule date for EIAs to be completed by September 2011. EIAs completed included:-

- Anti-social behaviour and Estate Management;
- Income and debt recovery;
- Homelessness; and
- Review of existing EIA on Repairs and Maintenance Service.

All EIAs had been drafted in consultation with Housing Officers, members of the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party, Equality Consultant, Chris Root and the Council's Corporate Equalities Group. The final draft of each of the above-mentioned EIAs had been appended to the report for Members' approval.

It was noted that Equality legislation required all completed EIAs to be published. The Council would publish all approved EIAs on the Council's website under the Equality Impact Assessment Section.

RECOMMENDED:- (i) To note the information in respect of Equality Impact Assessments; and

(ii) To approve the EIAs appended to the Housing Manager's report for publication in line with the Council's Single Equality Scheme Action Plan.

18 – 2012 Disabled Adaptation Framework

The Housing Manager submitted a report updating Members regarding the framework to deliver disabled adaptations to Council owned properties and sought Members' approval for Officers to re-tender the works using the existing framework agreement.

The aim of the adaptation framework was to deliver prompt and effective services for Tenants with disabilities and improve their quality of life within the home.

Prior to 2008, disabled adaptation works had been tendered on an individual property by property basis, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. However, this had led to significant delays due to the time it had taken Officers to send out and receive estimates from Contractors.

To avoid such delays, Officers prepared a new adaptation framework in 2008 which allowed adaptation work to be delivered around a series of pre-defined cost models and specifications to speed up the delivery process and included:-

- Access ramps and walkways;
- Handrails, banisters and mobility aids;
- Over bath showers and bathing aids; and
- Laid to floor showers and toilet adaptations.

The 2008 framework also required Contractors to complete the work within the following priority timescales:-

Priority A - Complete within 5 working days (typically included)

- Over bath showers;
- Shower trays and cubicles; and
- Small concrete ramps and steps.

Priority B - Complete within 10 working days (typically included)

- Non standard laid to floor shower areas; and
- Large concrete ramps or steps.

Having reviewed the present arrangements with regard to service delivery and customer satisfaction, Officers reported that delivery of the works via this framework had resulted in the following service improvements:-

- Improved service delivery for Tenants;
- Pre-agreed delivery deadlines for work;
- Closer working with Occupational Therapists;
- Improved access and care arrangements;
- Cost certainty;
- Reduced administration costs and lead in times; and
- Increased Customer satisfaction (currently 100% based on 58 surveys).

The appointed Contractor would be required to provide services that offered additional levels of sensitivity and empathy with Tenants and to have equality at the heart of service delivery. Officers therefore advised that the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party be appointed to review the contract and procurement process in line with the Cumbria Housing Partners model to ensure it met all of the necessary criterion.

RECOMMENDED:- (i) To agree to re-tender the 2012 Disabled Adaptation Framework on the basis of the existing framework;

(ii) To agree to award the framework for a period of two years, with the option to extend by a further two years, subject to acceptable performance and service delivery by the Contractor; and

(iii) To agree that the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party would review the Contract documentation and procurement process.

19 – Tendering of Supporting People Services

The Housing Manager submitted a report providing Members with an update on the Tendering of Supporting People Services and to agree how the Housing Service should respond.

At the last meeting on 16th June, 2011, information had been provided on the Tendering of the Supporting People Contract (Minute No. 8 refers).

Today, the Housing Manager informed Members that potential Contracts had now been advertised and Tender submissions had been requested by 19th September, 2011. The Contracts were contained in three Frameworks, the criteria for successful providers, varying from Contract to Contract.

The Housing Service currently received Supporting People funding to provide a generic Floating Tenancy Support Service and services to Tenants on the Homelink Service.

Services for Tenants on Homelink were long-term sheltered 'accommodation' based on Framework 1, Generic Floating Tenancy Support by Framework 2. Details of the client base for Homelink had been appended to the report. The client basis for Floating Tenancy Support was for up to 25 units, with numbers varying based on demand.

In considering how to respond, the Housing Manager suggested it was appropriate for Members to be guided by the question: 'What is the role of the Housing Service in providing Support Services to its Tenants?'

He added that the following may be helpful in considering this principle:-

- (1) The introduction of the Supporting People Framework was intended to separate out Welfare/Support Services from the functions of Housing Management;
- (2) There was a clear distinction between the role of Support Services and Housing Management Services. Whilst the Service have successfully integrated these in the past, the requirement to maintain skills to provide Support Services and meet the requirements of the Quality Assessment Framework had become increasingly difficult;
- (3) In the case of (2), this had been further exacerbated by the substantial reduction in Tenants requesting the service, particularly within Homelink;
- (4) The Housing Service already fund and work in partnership with other organisations who provide support to Tenants with specific needs; and
- (5) The Housing Service neither have the scale nor the economy to operate within a 'competitive environment'. To do so would pose a risk to the Housing Service and divert attention away from other areas of its work.

In considering the above-mentioned principle, the Housing Manager commented that it was important for Tenants to be able to access Support Services. Whilst it may be desirable to combine Support with Housing Management, he suggested the Tendering process and clarification of Support Service provision made this less practical.

The Housing Manager suggested the role of the Housing Service should be developed into an 'enabling role' to ensure that vulnerable Tenants were recognised and signposted to the right provider, but not as a direct provider of Support Services.

To summarise, the Tendering of Supporting People Contracts by necessity required the Housing Service to consider its approach to providing Support Services. Whilst there was an option to Tender for such work, the Housing Manager suggested to Members that the scale of operations was such that it would make it difficult for the Housing Service to successfully do so and to sustain such services in the longer term.

Whilst Support Services were essential for some Tenants to sustain their tenancies, it was perhaps less important that the Housing Service provided them directly. The Service had, for some years, worked with other providers to provide such Support Services to Tenants.

The Housing Manager's report also provided in detail comments on the Floating Tenancy Support Service and the Homelink Service, including details of service implications.

It was moved by Councillor Hamilton and seconded by Councillor Sweeney that if anything changed during the Tendering process then the Housing Manager should report back to the Forum with proposals for re-tendering. This was duly voted upon and declared carried.

RECOMMENDED:- (i) To agree the Housing Service does not submit Tenders to provide Support Services to Homelink Clients or to maintain the Tenancy Support Scheme in its current format;

(ii) To note that the Housing Service, in recognising the importance of Support Services, would adopt the approach of being the enabler, making Tenants aware of Support Services, where appropriate, and providing assistance to access them;

(iii) To agree that the Housing Manager, in consultation with the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party would:-

- Agree a process of consultation to advise current Tenants of the pending changes to Homelink services under the new Contract arrangements; and
- Consider how the Service would respond to the management of equipment, communal services and liaison with any new service provider and report to the next meeting; and

(iv) To note that notice would be given to the Private Sector Clients at the appropriate time and not seek to recover any loaned equipment and provide assistance where it was practical to do so to enable them to access an alternative service provider.

(v) To agree that if anything changed during the Tendering process then the Housing Manager should report back to the Forum with proposals for the re-tendering.

20 – Performance Information Report

The Housing Manager submitted information relating to a selection of local and national performance indicators and Best Value performance indicators. The information was as follows:-

Performance Indicator	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr -June 2011	Target (Median)
£ Rents Collection				
£ Rent collected	£ 8,546,587	£8,738,448	£2,120,260	£ 8,321,841
Rent collected as % of rent due	98.46%	100.97%	95.76%	99%
£ Current Arrears	£165,452	£158,236	£179,618	£175,679
£ Former Arrears	£123,432	£103,064	£96,684	£128,081
Write Offs	£129,709	£114,706	£25,768	£34,616
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	18	13	0	13
Current tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.91%	1.86%	8.18%	2.10%
Former tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.42%	1.18%	4.40%	1.90%
£ Rent arrears Garages	£4,094	£3,289	£2,536	£ 3,750
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£28,131	£27,524	£18,704	£ 25,000
Void management				
No. of Voids	281	268	80	225
Average relet time for dwellings (days)	31	28	49	31
£ rent loss through vacant dwellings	£ 101,530	£85,909	£ 29,608	£ 129,811
£ rent loss due to vacant garages	£4,873	£4,907	£1,177	£ 4,500
£ rent loss due to vacant shops	£4,253	£4,844	£3,125	£ 4,000
% properties accepted on first offer	NA	73.9%	NA	70%
Cost per Void (Rents, Repairs, Mgt & Arrears)	NA	£ 2,556	£ 1,141	
Maintenance				
No. Repair Orders issued (Tenant Demand)	13,068	10890	2543	8946
% all reactive repairs completed on time	81%	92.5%	96.4%	94.8
% emergency repairs completed on time	97%	98.9%	98.3%	96.7
% urgent repairs completed on time	88%	89.6%	91.9%	94.6
% routine repairs completed on time	93%	90.6%	96.3%	94.1
Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs (days)	12.6	12.6	9	9
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	NA	NA	NA	94.7
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	97%	97.13	NA	96.8
Appointments made as a percentage of repair orders (exc gas & voids)	100%	100%	NA	94.1
Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.5%	99.2%	NA	99.5

Average time taken to answer inbound telephone calls (in seconds)	NA	NA	NA	
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.70%
*Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on SAP 2005)	76.20%	68.3	68.3	69.10%
Equality & Diversity				
ASB cases reported	213	85	28	119
Percentage of closed ASB cases that were successfully resolved	13.1%	72%	81%	NA
% Vulnerable people achieving independent living	87%	97%	90%	77.2
% Diversity Information : Age	99.90%	99.88%	99.90%	100%
Gender	100%	100%	100%	98%
Ethnicity	66.90%	94.70%	71.19%	75%
Disability	42.40%	44.59%	47.79%	75%
Sexuality	43%	41.70%	45.15%	55%
Religion or belief	43%	43.05%	46.34%	55%
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints upheld	NA	25%	25%	NA
Performance Indicator	Actual 2009/10	Apr - Mar 2011		
Satisfaction				
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall	87%	87%		NA
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	88%	88%		NA
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account	76%	76%		NA
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process	NA	NA		NA
Percentage of residents satisfied with estate services	81%	81%		NA
Value for Money - Cost per property - direct costs				
Major & Cyclical works (service)	£1,406	*		£1,450
Responsive Repairs	£400	*		£385
Void Repairs	£132	*		£202
Rent Arrears & Collection	£68	*		£67
Community Involvement	£31	*		£25
Anti Social Behaviour	£37	*		£24
Neighbourhood Mgt (Estates/Tenancy mgt.)	£95	*		£138
Housing Options	£45	*		£28
Leasehold	£31	*		£136
Total staff turnover	8%	10.3%		8%
Ave. working days lost / sickness absence	14.0	22.3		10.5

Housing Property	Dwellings
HSE	1292
FLATS	1251
BUNGALOWS	157

TL DWELLINGS	2710
LEASEHOLDS	201
GARAGES	484
SHOPS	21

SOLD PROPERTIES	2010-11	No	2011-12
HSE	231,000	1	46,500
FLAT	29,200	0	0
LAND	19,400	6	0
TL	279,600	7	46,500

HOMELESSNESS	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr -June 2011
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	47	46	34
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	22	31	19
Homeless presentations	NA	225	55
Homeless preventions	NA	146	28
Eligible Homeless	NA	27	14

HOUSING REGISTER	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr -June 2011
Applicants on housing register		1700	
Cumbria Choice Register		895	1217

RESOLVED:- To note the performance information report.

21 – Planned Maintenance Programme 2011/12

The Housing Manager reported information relating to the Planned Maintenance Programme for 2011/12. The information is attached at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

RESOLVED:- To note the information.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTER WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

22 – Housing Maintenance Contract 2011/15

The Housing Manager submitted a report recommending the appointment of a Contractor following the re-tendering of the Housing Maintenance Contract.

It was noted that the current Responsive Repairs Contract was due to end on 4th November, 2011. A report had been presented to the Housing Management Forum on 26th August, 2010 outlining the basis on which the Tendering would be completed and new Contract arrangements introduced.

In short this included:-

- Planned Investment works removed from the Contract and delivered through Cumbria Housing Partners;
- The works to be included in the Contract would be: responsive repairs, voids, gas servicing and breakdown repairs, out-of-hours emergency repairs;
- The Form of Contract would be as now: NEC 3, Target Cost;
- The term to be as now, four years with the option for further a two years; and
- The new Contract to be awarded on the basis of a 20% quality/80% price matrix.

It had also been agreed that the process of going out to Tender would be progressed in consultation with the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party (TPCWP).

In accordance with OJEU rules the Contract had been advertised in the prescribed manner. Following the first advert, four Contractors had expressed interest in the Contract, but only two had been interested in submitting a Tender for all of the work areas included in the Contract. As one of the two was the existing Contractor, to continue with the process would not have resulted in a sufficiently robust competitive process to ensure value for money. The Contract had therefore been re-advertised, following which, four Contractors had expressed an interest in carrying out the full scope of works.

The Tendering process had resulted in a range of scores from the four different Contractors who had expressed interest. Based on the cost/quality procurement model one Contractor had clearly scored significantly higher than the three competitors. Whilst the Council was not required to select the highest score, there had been a significant difference between the highest and next highest which would make it inappropriate not to appoint the Contractor with highest score. The successful Contractor, Vinci Facilities Ltd had been notified and all of the other Contractors had been advised of the scores and that the Vinci Tender would be progressed as a preferred Contractor. Unsuccessful Contractors had also been made aware of the ten day procurement standstill period for challenge which had ended on 8th August, 2011 and no challenges had been received.

It was noted that action already taken, prior to formal appointment by the Council, was to ensure that the timescales for achieving a close down of the existing Contract and mobilisation of the new Contract would be achieved by 5th November 2011.

A Member had expressed concern over potential gaps in the service provided to Tenants during the close down of the previous Contract and the mobilisation of the new. Concerns had also been raised regarding TUPE arrangements for staff. The Housing Manager responded by saying that TUPE would apply but it would be up to the new Contractor to make their own assessment of that process. He also advised Members that during the close down of the current Contract and the mobilisation of

the new, there may be some delays of routine repairs of being completed but Tenants would be advised of such delays when reporting such repairs.

RECOMMENDED:- To recommend to appoint Vinci Facilities Ltd to deliver the Housing Maintenance Contract from 5th November, 2011 for a period of four years.

23 – Housing Establishment

The Housing Manager submitted a detailed report regarding staffing implications within the Housing Establishment.

RECOMMENDED:- (i) To agree that Post No. OHS 097 be continued on a revised job description, as outlined in the report and that Post No. OHS 330 be deleted;

(ii) To consider further the implications of TUPE as information becomes available and the staff to which it may apply; and

(iii) To agree to issue all staff indicated on Appendix C of the Housing Manager's report, notice that their posts had been identified as 'at risk' and that the Council's redundancy policy would apply.

The meeting closed at 2.47 p.m.

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2011-12

SCHEME	CONTRACTOR OR SUPPLIER	AVAILABLE BUDGET	NO OF PROPERTIES	INVOICES PAID TO DATE	START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE	CONTRACTOR	TARGET COST	OUT TURN ESTIMATE	COMMENTS
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£253,000	138	£76,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	K WILSON	£273,929	£273,929	35% Complete
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£300,000	181	£39,729	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL	£253,000	£300,000	20% Complete
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£750,000	290	£270,344	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL	£717,000	£750,000	35% Complete
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£850,000	219	£255,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL INTEGRAL	£642,233	£642,233	45% Complete
RE-POINTING	TBC	£150,000	50	£0	1.7.2011	31.3.2012	TBC	£150,000	£150,000	Tender documnts being prepared
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£200,000	494	£20,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	GH JONES	£168,270	£168,270	25% Complete

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2011-12

	Funding Available 2011-12	Gross COMMITMENT	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£900,000.00	£122,041.00	£17,307.69	14%
Voids	£200,000.00	£66,168.00	£3,846.15	33%
Gas Servicing	£425,000.00	£56,370.00	£8,173.08	13%
Decoration Vouchers	£35,000.00	£9,644.00	£673.08	28%
Disrepair Claims	£25,000.00	£0.00	£480.77	0%
Environmental Impmts	£50,000.00	£7,843.00	£961.54	16%
Disabled Adaptations	£300,000.00	£83,069.00	£5,769.23	28%
Electrical Testing	£175,000.00	£4,164.00	£3,365.38	2%
Door Entry Maintenance	£20,000.00	£17,242.00	£384.62	86%
Total	£2,205,000.00	£366,541.00	£40,961.54	

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 6
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
Title: Recharge Proposal	
Summary and Conclusion:	
The purpose of this report is to agree a Recharge Policy	
There is an accompanying Recharge Repair Procedure which sets out the detailed operational and accounting processes and the actions necessary to deal with vulnerable groups, refusals to accept a rechargeable repair and resolve disputes.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree to stricter management of Responsible Repairs which fall outside the responsibility of the Tenancy Agreement to reduce the overall volume and cost of repairs.2. Agree the principles outlined in the Rechargeable Repair Policy proposal and recovery procedures from current and former tenants and Leaseholders.3. Agree the transfer of the responsibility for Rechargeable Repairs from the Borough Treasurer's Department to Housing.4. Agree the adoption of a 'standard repair charge pricelist'.	

1. Introduction

The Housing Service currently meets the cost of rechargeable repair work because the cost of recovery previously exceeded revenue. However, the Housing Department cannot pursue a legal remedy for neglect or wilful damage amounting to anti social behaviour because Section 4.8 of our Tenancy Agreement states that we will carry out remedial work, charge and recover the cost of the action. Therefore the Housing Service does have to look again at this issue and find a way of recovering costs that represents value for money. We are also committed under the terms of the agreement with Cumbria Choice to refuse registration if there are any outstanding recharges and to give the applicant an opportunity to repay.

Tenants are informed of their repair responsibilities when they sign the Tenancy Agreement and those responsibilities are outlined in the Tenant's Handbook.

This proposal sets out the reasons for change and a brief description of the recovery process.

2. Aims / Objectives

- Current tenants take a responsible attitude towards the maintenance of their home through the payment of necessary repairs which are deemed as negligent or who have caused deliberate damage.
- Former tenants who have left our tenancies owing money for repairs other than those repairs completed under the standard void process.

3. Key Changes

- (i) Implement stricter management guidelines covering Responsive Repairs which fall outside the responsibility of the Tenancy Agreement to reduce the overall volume and cost of repairs.
- (ii) Adopt a robust procedure which includes obtaining written agreement to recharges and photographic evidence to improve the recovery of rechargeable repairs from current and former tenants.
- (iii) Transfer the responsibility for rechargeable repairs from the Borough Treasurer's Department so that the charges can be raised and recovered via the housing management system alongside arrears, service charges, garages and shops reducing the cost of recovery and maximising value for money.
- (iv) Adopt a 'standard repair charge pricelist' which may not recover the full cost of the repair but which will promote a firm, consistent and fair approach by ensuring that tenants who incur charges are held responsible and repay any outstanding monies in a timely manner.
- (v) The Recharge Procedure sets out the actions necessary to deal with vulnerable groups, refusals to accept a rechargeable repair and dispute resolution.

4. Performance Measures

The following performance indicators will help us monitor this policy:

- ✓ A percentage of debt recovery on all rechargeable repairs.
- ✓ Total costs of all Rechargeable Repairs raised.
- ✓ Regular reporting detailing costs versus amount recovered.

5. Scope

Definition of a Rechargeable Repair: repairs that are caused by damage to fixtures and fittings internally or externally by a tenant, a member of the tenant's household or any visitor to the tenant's property that cannot be attributed to normal wear and tear through the duration of their tenancy. Categories are:

- **Tenants Obligations** - under the terms and conditions of the Tenancy Agreement points 3.13, 5.3, & P.14 the tenant is responsible for certain items of repair. If the customer fails to carry out one of these repairs, a recharge will apply although the customer will first be given the opportunity to rectify the situation.

- **Unauthorised Alterations** - under Section 97 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended), tenants must seek the Landlord's Consent before undertaking any alterations to the property. Barrow Borough Council may attach reasonable conditions before granting permission. Where customers have carried out unauthorised repairs and unless there is an immediate Health and Safety Risk, they should be given 28 days to rectify the faults or reinstate to its original condition.
- **Deliberate damage or damage due to neglect** – where damage has occurred as a result of deliberate abuse or wilful negligence by the tenant, their family or visitors, the necessary repair work will be rechargeable. If the customer wishes to undertake the remedial work themselves, they will be given 28 days to do so. Examples are: replace smashed door, DIY which has damaged the fabric / structure of the property.

Barrow Borough Council will inspect any work carried out by the customer to ensure it complies with our current standards. Where it fails to meet our current guidelines then Barrow Borough Council reserves the right to recharge for any remedial work required.

- **External Damage by others** –where the damage is alleged to have been caused by other the tenant will be advised to obtain a crime number from the police. Where the repairs value exceeds the insurance excess (currently £1,000) an inspection will be raised to assess the damage.
- **Void Properties, Transfers & Mutual Exchanges** - where unauthorised alterations or damage is identified during the inspection process, the tenant will be advised of the cost of reinstatement.

In the case of former tenants, Business Support will pursue the former tenant in line with the Rechargeable Repairs procedure for Income Collection. Failure to repay any outstanding monies will result in the recharge costs remaining on file and should they subsequently apply for a further tenancy with Cumbria Choice an invoice will be raised, this must be repaid prior to being accepted on the Cumbria Choice Register.

In the case of Transfers and Mutual Exchanges, the customer should be given the opportunity to rectify the faults or pay the costs of the remedial works. The Transfer or Mutual Exchange should not be granted until the costs have been paid.

- **Accidental Damage** - where accidental damage has occurred to fixtures and fittings, we will take into account the damage caused versus the lifespan of the product before reaching a decision on whether to recharge. Examples are: lost keys clear blocked sink, drain, bath and toilet of nappies, removal of fire doors, frozen / burst pipes etc.
- **Damage caused by the Police following a lawful raid at the property** – where an arrest is made the cost of making good any damage (eg. repair or replacement of external doors) will be recharged to the tenant.

Where no arrest is made, the repairs team will liaise with the local police for reimbursement of costs.

- **Misuse of the Repairs Service** – where customers misuse the Out of Hours Service, or fail to keep an agreed appointment the customer will be recharged the call out fee.

6. Process

The proposal is that where a rechargeable repair is identified the responsible service area will advise the tenant of the reasonable cost of the repair, obtain agreement and submit a written and authorised request for Rechargeable Invoice to the Business Support Team. Provided that the amount is undisputed and evidenced a debit will be raised on the rent account clearly identified as a Recharge cost. The tenant/former tenant will receive a letter detailing the costs. Payments made by tenants to their rent accounts will follow the previously agreed (Income Management Policy) priorities.

The Recharge Repair Procedure sets out the actions necessary to deal with vulnerable groups, refusals to accept a rechargeable repair and dispute resolution.

(i) Legal Implications

Proposals in the report support The Tenancy Agreement, Cumbria Choice Partnership agreement and legal advice relating to Anti Social Behaviour case management

(ii) Financial Implications

Management procedures are in place to regularly review the effectiveness and value for money of the policy and procedures

(iii) Health and Safety Implications

Not Applicable.

(iv) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

Corporate

(v) Risk Assessment

Not Applicable.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

Not Applicable.

Background Papers

A copy of The Rechargeable Repair / Work Procedure (2011) has been placed in the Members' room for their perusal.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
Title: 2012 Disabled Adaptations Contract	
Summary and Conclusion:	
The purpose of this report is to consider and agree the options for appointing a contractor to deliver adaptations for the next two years.	
Recommendation:	
Members are asked to agree:	
Officers proceed with tendering the 2012 Disabled Adaptation Contract via the Cumbria Housing Partners framework.	

Report

At your meeting on 25 August 2011 Members considered a report concerning Disabled Adaptations. The recommendations of the Forum were:

1. To agree to re-tender the 2012 Disabled Adaptation Framework on the basis of the existing framework
2. To agree to award the framework for a period of two years, with the option to extend by a further two years, subject to acceptable performance and service delivery by the Contractor; and
3. To agree that the Tenant Participation Compact Working Party reviewed the Contract documentation and procurement process

The Tenant Participation Compact Working Party has now met to consider point 3 above.

The purpose of this report is to consider and agree the options for appointing a contractor to deliver adaptations for the next two years.

The Housing Department presently spends around £300,000 on adaptations to Council housing for tenants and family members with disabilities.

The adaptations work predominantly provides modifications to baths, showers and support handrails, with a small number of external access ramps for wheel chair users.

The existing contractor has been carrying out this work since 2008 and has consistently delivered very high levels of customer satisfaction.

Procurement Options

There exist a number of procurement options available to appoint a contractor to a new four year contract.

1. Traditional Tendering (minimum of four written submissions)

Option 1 – to procure the work in line with the Council’s contract standing orders. This requires a minimum of four competent contractors to provide written tenders. Officers would need to prepare the contract documentation and information in the press for advertisement.

2. Cumbria Housing Partners Framework (CHP)

Option 2 – to procure the work via the CHP framework. This requires a minimum of four competent contractors to provide on line tenders. Officers would not need to prepare advertisements or contract documentation.

Options Appraisal

Members should be aware that traditional tendering typically has in built costs associated with the procurement process as contract documentation, advertising and printing takes officers significant time and resources to produce. In addition, this method of procurement requires contractors to establish material costs with local or national suppliers that often fail to achieve significant cost savings due to restrictions linked to economies of scale. As such officers would not recommend this procurement option.

In contrast, the CHP framework has long established contract documentation and has demonstrated significant savings on both labour and materials based on increased purchasing power linked to wider economies of scale.

Tenders will be expected to submit an application online in the form of a mini-competition. This form of tendering does not have any associated costs for the Council or the contractor. Members should also be aware that the CHP contractors eligible for the work have been through a rigorous OJEU compliant selection process that includes evaluation of equality and diversity and customer care provisions.

Recent CHP mini-competitions for other work streams such as bathroom, kitchens and rewire improvements have been awarded to a number of local contractors. Officers expect these locally based CHP contractors to be adequately placed to tender for this work.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree:

1. Officers proceed with tendering the 2012 Disabled Adaptation contract via the Cumbria Housing Partners framework.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has little impact on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 8
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
Title: Sound Insulation Works	
Summary and Conclusion:	
The purpose of this report is to agree the re-allocation of HRA funding to allow additional sound insulation work to be undertaken to properties in the Hartington Street and Blake Street area.	
Recommendation:	
Members are asked to agree:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Officers proceed to suspend the normal Council Standing Orders for procurement and authorise the appointment of the specialist contractor John C Wilkins to undertake the sound insulation works as outlined in this report.2. A sum of £30,000 be allocated from Electrical Testing for the purpose of carrying out the sound insulation.	

Report

Members will be aware that we have previously identified problems with sound insulation at Hartington Street and Blake Street flats that were built in the mid 1980s.

Whilst sound insulation was incorporated in a number of flats, we have identified that this is defective or has not provided the necessary sound insulation required.

It was previously agreed that we would investigate alternatives for improving the level of insulation and carry out such work on an ad hoc basis when properties became vacant.

In reality it is the case that when most flats become vacant, pressure to relet them within relevant timescales makes it difficult to manage any form of treatment satisfactorily.

We do, however, continue to receive regular complaints about noise from every day activity within the flats.

We have more recently looked at alternative methods of upgrading the insulation to a standard that is appropriate for the properties. Following this we have appointed a contractor, John C Wilkins, a specialist sound insulation company, to upgrade the sound insulation without the necessity of residents having to move out, whilst it is still very intrusive during the few days that the work is carried out.

One of the properties has been recently upgraded at a cost of £3700.

It would appear that this is a more practical alternative for the Housing Service to deliver as it would be completed around tenants and the contractor appointed has done so to a satisfactory standard both for the tenant and the Housing Service.

I would therefore propose that a figure of £30,000 which is currently underspent in our Electrical Testing programme be redesignated to Sound Insulation and we will commence a small programme to complete the sound insulation upgrade to properties on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to agree:

1. Officers proceed to suspend the normal Council Standing Orders for procurement and authorise the appointment of the specialist contractor John C Wilkins to undertake the sound insulation works as outlined in this report.
2. A sum of £30,000 be allocated from Electrical Testing for the purpose of carrying out the sound insulation.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 9
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
<p>Title: Homelink Services</p> <p>Summary and Conclusion:</p> <p>The purpose of this Report is to agree a date for closure of the Homelink Community Alarm Service.</p> <p>This Report seeks to agree the process of transition from services offered through Homelink to the new Community Alarm Services being developed by the County Council and Supporting People funded contract arrangements.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Members are requested to agree:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Properties designated as Warden Services continue to be advertised and allocated as previously. (see Report No 11) 2. The Community Alarm and Mobile Warden Services to withdraw visiting a response service from 20th January 2012, the service ending on 31st January 2012. 3. Maintenance of equipment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to continue to fund maintenance costs at Eamont Close/Dalton in the short term with further consideration as necessary. (ii) to stop providing maintenance of dispersed alarms from an appropriate date and rely on 'spare' units to deal with breakdowns. 4. The appropriate revenue costs of operating the Community Centres (Eamont Close, Grange and Cartmel Crescent, Cotswold Crescent, Ocean Road) be met by the HRA but undergo a review to assess their long term sustainability. 	

Report

The purpose of this Report is to agree a date for closure of the Homelink Community Alarm Service.

This Report seeks to agree the process of transition from services previously offered through Homelink to the new Community Alarm Services being developed by the County Council and Supporting People funded contract arrangements.

Key changes**1. 1st October 2011**

Since this date no 'new' tenants moving into such accommodation will receive any assistance from the Supporting People funding arrangement. From that date any new tenants requesting a Community Alarm Service would be subject to individual assessment, or make their own arrangements.

Comment:

- (i) The Housing Service will adapt our processes to ensure new tenants are made aware of the options available.
- (ii) Whilst the Housing Service cannot in future advertise these properties with a Community Alarm Service, I would recommend we continue to deal with, and advertise, such properties as suitable for 'over 55s' or people with a disability, as appropriate.

2. 2nd January 2012

From this date any tenants on the Community Alarm Service, who receive Supporting People financial assistance, will see the assistance reduced to £1 per week.

At present such tenants are charged a service charge of £4.69 per week. If this is not adjusted, it is likely tenants will go into arrears.

The review of tenants on the Community Alarm Service will also commence. In short, following the review tenants will either no longer be eligible or will be progressed through one of the new service arrangements.

Comment:

- (i) Service charges need to reduce to £1 per week from 2nd January 2012. This is dealt with in Report (R) 12.
- (ii) I would suggest the Review will result in the transition occurring on a piecemeal manner over the three months of the Review. As such it will be necessary to withdraw service charges as it progresses.

3. 2nd March 2012

From this date a new service provider will be in place for residents of Eamont Close and Dalton. I understand notice of who the new provider is will not be made until the end of January.

Homelink Community Alarm Service

These services include the Mobile Warden Visiting Service and the Mobile Warden Emergency Response Service.

All tenants have now been advised of the proposal to withdraw these services during the transition of services.

As will be clear from the above the number of service users is also continuing to reduce and will accelerate through the Review process. However, funding for operating the service will be reducing from 2nd January 2012.

In consideration of the practical measures that are required to withdraw this service I would propose stopping the Mobile Warden Visiting Service from 20th January 2012, with the service ending on 31st January 2012.

Further Issues for Consideration

During and after the transition there are a number of matters on which decisions are required.

- Maintenance of equipment:
Under the new contract arrangements, the provision and maintenance of equipment remains with the landlord.
 - Eamont Close/Dalton: the equipment in these properties are 'hard wired' but now some years old.

I would propose the Housing Service continue to fund the maintenance costs from the Maintenance budget in the short term with consideration of longer term arrangements at a future date following the transition period.

- Community Alarm Service:
Private subscribers: I will be giving notice to private clients to end the service on 20th January 2012 to coincide with the withdrawal of the Mobile Warden Service. Discussion is ongoing with Riverside Housing Authority and South Lakes Community alarms to offer an alternative service. Prospects look promising and it is hoped to coordinate serving notice and offering the alternate service. Once finalised, the new arrangements will be available to all residents, but Supporting People funding will not be available.
- New Services Available:
Changes to the Supporting People arrangements have required the Housing Service to cover its services. However, the changes being introduced will also result in a number of options being available to residents. Attached at **Appendix A** is a newsletter from Supporting People which provides information on the services.

Summary

The proposals given in this Report seek to provide a clear direction for the Housing Service to work through the transition of services.

It highlights areas where action is required and matters that can be progressed as time progresses and potential implications can be properly assessed.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to agree:

1. Properties designated as Warden Services continue to be advertised and allocated as previously.
2. The Community Alarm and Mobile Warden Services to withdraw visiting a response service from 20th January 2012, the service ending on 31st January 2012.
3. Maintenance of equipment:
 - (i) to continue to fund maintenance costs at Eamont Close/Dalton in the short term with further consideration as necessary.
 - (ii) to stop providing maintenance of dispersed alarms from an appropriate date and rely on 'spare' units to deal with breakdowns.

4. The appropriate revenue costs of operating the Community Centres (Eamont Close, Grange and Cartmel Crescent, Cotswold Crescent, Ocean Road) be met by the HRA but undergo a review to assess their long term sustainability.

(i) Legal Implications

The Housing Service will serve Notices to tenants and private subscribers of the changes to service provision.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The Community Alarm Service has provided reassurance to residents by enabling them to receive support and in the knowledge they can call for help if required.

Community alarm Services will still be available following the transition of the changes being proposed by the Housing Service, by other providers.

All tenants in receipt of the service will be assessed during the Review by Supporting People and where a need is identified will be able to access various alternative services.

(iii) Financial Implications

The cost of providing such services is largely met by service charges to tenants. Changes to Supporting People arrangements reduces the level of resources available to the service which makes to continue as previously unviable.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has little impact on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 10
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
Title: Changes to Reception Opening Hours	
Summary and Conclusion:	
The purpose of this Report is to agree a change to the opening hours of the Housing reception desk at Cavendish House to reflect the new hours of the Town Hall Reception.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to agree the following new hours:	
Reception to open to the Public between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm (Monday to Friday), with a 10.00am opening on Wednesdays to allow for training.	

Report

The purpose of this Report is to agree a change to the opening hours of the Housing Reception Desk at Cavendish House to reflect the new hours of the Town Hall Reception.

The Town Hall has recently changed its hours to 9.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday.

I would suggest that the Housing Service follows the same format. I would ask you to note, however, that in order to facilitate training and support to Reception staff we have traditionally not opened until 10.00am on Wednesdays. Subject to the 10.00am start on Wednesdays I would ask Members to agree amending the opening hours to reflect the Town Hall.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to agree the following new hours:

Reception to open to the Public between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm (Monday to Friday) with a 10.00am opening on Wednesdays to allow for training..

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 11
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
<p>Title: Cumbria Choice: Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL)</p> <p>Summary and Conclusion:</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on Cumbria Choice – Choice Based Lettings Scheme and also note the revised Local Lettings Policies in line with the CBL policy. Members are also requested to agree recommendations for future advertising of designated bungalow schemes throughout the borough.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note information on Cumbria Choice CBL Scheme. 2. Agree amendments to local lettings policies for Grange and Cartmel Crescent estate and Askam Whinfield Place Bungalows in line with Cumbria Choice Allocation Policy. 3. Agree recommendations for properties designated as Warden Services to continue to be advertised and allocated as previously. A future report will introduce individual local letting policies for these areas. 	

Background

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on Cumbria Choice – Choice Based Lettings Scheme and also note the revised Local Lettings Policies in line with the CBL policy. Members are also requested to agree recommendations for future advertising of designated bungalow schemes throughout the Borough.

Report

As you will be aware the Countywide CBL Scheme has been in operation since April 2011. In line with Cumbria Choice Partnership Action Plan a review of the CBL allocation policy is due to be carried out six months into implementation of the scheme. As part of the review process Cumbria Choice are keen to ensure the scheme is fully accessible to all service users.

The Partnership has agreed the approach to commission an independent accessibility survey to be carried out by HQN Associates. The proposal has been developed in six stages:

1. The review of the existing CBL Equality Impact Assessment.
2. The development of a small survey for stakeholder groups.
3. The development of a small survey for a sample group of users of CBL.
4. A telephone survey of a small group of users who have never made a bid but remain on the CBL waiting list.

5. Analysis of all surveys with outcomes reported formally to form part of evidence for stage 6.
6. A full day with Project Board undertaking a new Equality Impact Assessment of the CBL process which in turn will feed into the review of the CBL Policy.

Attached to the Cumbria Choice Allocation Policy are individual 'Local Letting Policies'. The Housing Service has two local letting policies:

- Grange Crescent and Cartmel Crescent
- Askam Whinfield Place Bungalows

The aim of the policies is to promote the properties as accommodation designated for mature older people, any applicant who is over 55 years or has a physical disability. The Askam Whinfield Place policy also has local connection to the Askam and Ireleth Parish Council built into the policy due to the low turnover of this type of property in Askam and the lack of alternatives.

The policies are attached at **Appendix B and C**, amendments have been made to bring them in line with the Cumbria Choice Allocation Policy.

Whilst the Housing Service cannot in the future advertise properties with a Community Alarm Service due to the current changes and the closure of the Homelink Community Alarm Service, it would seem appropriate to advertise properties designated as Warden Service to applicants over 55 years or with a physical disability in line with the best use of housing stock. A list of designated bungalow schemes can be found at **Appendix D**. I am aware there are many areas of the Borough with properties previously designated for Warden Services suitable for older people. I would suggest we take the approach to advertise and allocate as previously. A future report will introduce individual local letting policies for these areas.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

1. Note information on Cumbria Choice CBL Scheme
2. Agree amendments to local lettings policies for Grange and Cartmel Crescent estate and Askam Whinfield Place Bungalows in line with Cumbria Choice Allocation Policy.
3. Agree recommendations for future advertising of designated bungalow schemes throughout the borough.

(i) Legal Implications

A Partnering Agreement is in place outlining the roles and responsibilities of the respective partners.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

Provision has been made for this within the new year 2011/12 to support maintenance costs for Abitras.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

(v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

(vi) Equality and Diversity

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on service users showing any of the protected characteristics under current Equalities legislation.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(R) Agenda Item 12
Date of Meeting: 1st December, 2011	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett	
Title: Homelink Charging Arrangements	
Summary and Conclusion:	
The purpose of this Report is to agree changes to the charging arrangements for the Homelink Service following the Review of the Service.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to agree:	
(i) Service charges for tenants receiving a Community Alarm Service be changed to £1 per week from 2 nd January 2012 and for the Housing Manager to have delegated authority to remove the service charges as necessary as changes in services are reviewed as outlined in Report No 10.	
(ii) The service charges for residents in Dalton and Eamont Close be reduced to £1 per week at the appropriate time to reflect the change in contract arrangements.	

Report

The purpose of this Report is to agree changes to the charging arrangements for the Homelink Service following the Review of the Service.

At present tenants are charged a service charge to meet the cost of providing Homelink services. In the case of tenants who receive the Community Alarm Service the current charge is £4.69 a week.

From 2nd January 2012 Supporting People funding arrangements will only cover a service charge of £1 per week.

As the majority of our tenants in receipt of these services also receive Supporting People funding to cover the full cost, the reduction to £1 will mean they will quickly get into rent arrears.

I would, therefore, recommend that the Housing Service serves notice of a reduced service charge to £1 a week to coincide with the 2nd January 2012 changes.

Under normal circumstances this would require a Council decision but to obtain this within the timeframe available is not practical. I have, therefore, discussed this with the Leader of the Council and the Chair of Housing Management Forum and agreed the changes be implemented prior to the Council meeting on 24th January 2012.

I would also point out to Members that as the Review progresses tenants may well be eligible for other Community Alarm Services so I would also recommend you agree to your Housing Manager having delegated authority to remove services charges as required during this transition period.

Services to schemes with resident wardens, namely Dalton and Eamont Close, will also change from 2nd March 2012 when new service providers are in place. At such time the funding from Supporting People will reduce to £1 a week and I would recommend that Officers be authorised to serve notice to amend these services charges at the appropriate time.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to agree:

- (i) Service charges for tenants receiving a Community Alarm Service be revised to £1 per week from 2nd January 2012 and for the Housing Manager to have delegated authority to remove service charges as necessary as changes in services are reviewed as outlined in Report No 10.
- (ii) The service charges for residents in Dalton and Eamont Close be reduced to £1 per week at the appropriate time to reflect the change in contract arrangements.

- (i) Legal Implications

The Housing Service will serve Notices to tenants and private subscribers of the changes to service provision.

- (ii) Risk Assessment

The Community Alarm Service has provided reassurance to residents by enabling them to receive support and in the knowledge they can call for help if required.

Community alarm Services will still be available following the transition of the changes being proposed by the Housing Service, by other providers.

All tenants in receipt of the service will be assessed during the Review by Supporting People and where a need is identified will be able to access various alternative services.

- (iii) Financial Implications

The cost of providing such services is largely met by service charges to tenants. Changes to Supporting People arrangements reduces the level of resources available to the service which makes to continue as previously unviable. Mobile Warden services will continue for approximately four weeks after the service charge is removed.

- (iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no, minor or significant implications.

- (v) Key Priorities or Corporate Aims

The recommendation has no detrimental impact on providing good quality efficient and cost effective services.

- (vi) Equality and Diversity

These proposals will introduce changes to the way services are delivered. However, all tenants will be individually assessed and based on their needs will be directed to appropriate services.

(vii) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has no adverse effect on the Health and Wellbeing of users of this service.

Background Papers

Nil

Performance Indicator	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr -June 2011	Apr -Sept 2011	Target (Median)
£ Rents Collection					
£ Rent collected	£ 8,546,587	£8,738,448	£2,120,260	£4,531,664	£ 8,321,841
Rent collected as % of rent due	98.46%	103.47%	101.06%	99.18%	99%
£ Current Arrears (dwellings)	£165,452	£155,726	£179,618	£212,644	£175,679
£ Former Arrears (dwellings)	£123,432	£103,418	£96,684	£92,124	£128,081
Write Offs	£129,709	£114,706	£25,768	£49,267	£34,616
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	18	13	0	3	13
Current tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.91%	1.79%	8.28%	4.58%	2.15%
Former tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.42%	1.18%	4.46%	1.98%	1.90%
£ Rent arrears Garages	£4,094	£3,289	£2,536	£4,520	£ 3,750
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£28,131	£27,524	£18,704	£13,497	£ 25,000
Void management					
No. of Voids	281	264	80	103	225
Average relet time for dwellings (days)	31	28	49	45	33
£ rent loss through vacant dwellings	£ 101,530	£85,909	£ 29,608	£ 53,854	£ 129,811
£ rent loss due to vacant garages	£4,873	£4,907	£1,177	£2,583	£ 4,500
£ rent loss due to vacant shops	£4,253	£4,844	£3,125	£8,546	£ 4,000
% properties accepted on first offer	NA	73.9%	NA	NA	70%
Cost per Void (Rents, Repairs, Mgt & Arrears)	NA	£ 2,556	£ 1,141	£ 3,543	
Maintenance					
No. Repair Orders issued (Tenant Demand)	13,068	10890	3350	6609	8946
% all reactive repairs completed on time	81%	92.5%	98.7%	94.0%	94.8
% emergency repairs completed on time	97%	98.9%	98.1%	98.2%	96.7
% urgent repairs completed on time	88%	89.6%	87.8%	90.1%	94.6
% routine repairs completed on time	93%	90.6%	91.3%	92.5%	94.1
Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs (days)	12.6	12.6	9	9	9
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	NA	NA	NA	NA	94.7
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	97%	97.13	NA	NA	96.8
Appointments made as a percentage of repair orders (exc gas & voids)	100%	100%	NA	NA	94.1
Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.5%	99.2%	98.56	99.71	99.5
Average time taken to answer inbound telephone calls (in seconds)	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.70%
*Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on SAP 2005)	76.20%	68.3	68.3	68.3	69.10%
Equality & Diversity					
ASB cases reported	213	85	28	45	119
Percentage of closed ASB cases that were successfully resolved	13.1%	72%	81%	83%	NA
% Vulnerable people achieving independent	87%	97%	90%	100%	77.2
% Diversity Information : Age	99.90%	99.88%	99.90%	99.81%	100%
Gender	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%
Ethnicity	66.90%	94.70%	71.19%	71.91%	75%
Disability	42.40%	44.59%	47.79%	42.00%	75%
Sexuality	43%	41.70%	45.15%	46.28%	55%
Religion or belief	43%	43.05%	46.34%	47.55%	55%
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints upheld	NA	25%	0%	20%	NA

Performance Indicator	Actual 2009/10	Apr - Mar 2011			
Satisfaction					
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall	87%	87%			NA
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	88%	88%			NA
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account	76%	76%			NA
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process	NA	NA			NA
Percentage of residents satisfied with estate services	81%	81%			NA
Value for Money - Direct Costs per property					
Major & Cyclical works (service)	£1,406	£1,294			£1,446
Responsive Repairs	£400	£455			£449
Void Repairs	£132	£144			£177
Rent Arrears & Collection	£68	£53			£67
Community Involvement	£31	£27			£43
Anti Social Behaviour	£37	£29			£37
Neighbourhood Mgt (Estates/Tenancy mgt.)	£95	£34			£58
Housing Options	£45	£43			£34
Leasehold	£31	£50			£136
Total staff turnover	8%	10.3%			8%
Ave. working days lost / sickness absence	14.0	22.3	1.8	4.3	10.5

Housing Property	Dwellings
HSE	1290
FLATS	1259
BUNGALOWS	157
TL DWELLINGS	2706
LEASEHOLDS	201
GARAGES	484
SHOPS	20

SOLD PROPERTIES	No	2010-11	2011-12
HSE	3	231,000	148,500
FLAT	0	29,200	0
LAND	0	19,400	0
TL	3	279,600	148,500

HOMELESSNESS	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr - June 2011	Apr-Sept 2011
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	47	46	34	50
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	22	31	19	17
Homeless Total Cases Closed			229	416
Homeless Advice			140	225
Homeless Prevention	NA	225	33	79
Homeless Applications			56	112
Homeless Successful Preventions	NA	146	28	68
Eligible Homeless (Owed a full duty)	NA	27	6	13

HOUSING REGISTER	Actual 2009/10	Actual 2010/11	Apr - June 2011
Applicants on housing register		1700	
Cumbria Choice Register		1407	

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2011-12

SCHEME	CONTRACTOR OR SUPPLIER	AVAILABLE BUDGET	NO OF PROPERTIES	INVOICES PAID TO DATE	START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE	CONTRACTOR	TARGET COST	OUT TURN ESTIMATE	COMMENTS	Leasholders affected?
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£253,000	138	£76,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	K WILSON	£273,929	£273,929	67% Complete	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£300,000	181	£39,729	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL	£253,000	£300,000	40% Complete	No
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£750,000	290	£270,344	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL	£717,000	£750,000	65% Complete	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£850,000	219	£255,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	AB MITCHELL INTEGRAL	£642,233	£642,233	60% Complete	No
RE-POINTING	TBC	£150,000	50	£0	1.7.2011	31.3.2012	TBC	£150,000	£150,000	Tender docuemnts being prepared	Yes
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£200,000	494	£20,000	1.4.2011	Feb-12	GH JONES	£168,270	£168,270	50% Complete	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2011-12

	Funding Available 2011-12	Gross COMMITMENT	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£900,000.00	£307,077.00	£17,307.69	34%
Voids	£200,000.00	£147,692.00	£3,846.15	74%
Gas Servicing	£425,000.00	£146,051.00	£8,173.08	34%
Decoration Vouchers	£35,000.00	£16,307.00	£673.08	47%
Disrepair Claims	£25,000.00	£0.00	£480.77	0%
Environmental Impmts	£50,000.00	£23,593.00	£961.54	47%
Disabled Adaptations	£300,000.00	£122,043.00	£5,769.23	41%
Electrical Testing	£175,000.00	£12,238.00	£3,365.38	7%
Door Entry Maintenance	£20,000.00	£29,579.00	£384.62	148%
Total	£2,205,000.00	£804,580.00	£40,961.54	

Supporting People

Issue 1

October 2011

Community Alarms Services



Hi, I'm Andrea and as Strategy Officer it is my responsibility to review and develop services that will help support people to live at home independently and for as long as possible.

Over the next 18 months I will build upon the work carried out to transform community alarms and telecare services, and will be working closely with your Housing Providers, and yourselves to look at the how we can support older people in the future who currently receive a community alarm service.

The work of this project starts soon and I look forward to meeting and working with you all.

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Community Alarm Service newsletter, produced jointly by Adult Social Care and your Housing Provider, to let you know of important changes to the Community Alarm service you currently receive. For some of you, your community alarm may be subsidised this may be funded through the Supporting People Programme.

Why is Community Alarms subsidy changing?

Since 2003 Cumbria Supporting People has funded community alarm services across Cumbria to those people who live in social housing and who are on low incomes (i.e. housing benefit or income support).

Supporting People and your Housing Provider worked together to complete a review of these services and found that there were wide differences in the way services are delivered across all of the services that we fund. In addition some people are unable to access funding because of where they live.

The County Council is responsible for managing the Supporting People program, and works with the District Councils to decide how the service is funded. It also has to be able to demonstrate that money is being used fairly, and consistently. Services should provide value for money, be of good quality and meet the needs of those people in greatest need.

We have decided that the way community alarm services are funded at present will change.

What are the changes?

From the 1 October 2011, you may be eligible to receive a service through Adult Social Care, for telecare if you have a need for this service. We will put people in contact with preventative services to help you remain as independent as possible in the future.

If we find you need telecare as a prevention service, we can arrange a basic telecare system for you through VNC Lifeline. This includes a telecare unit, a call button and a smoke alarm for your home, linked to a control centre. The equipment will be provided on a free loan basis and we would not pay for installation. You would be expected to pay the weekly monitoring and maintenance charge direct to Lifeline. In 2011/12 this charge is £1.81 per week.

If your needs are found to be greater, then you may be eligible for an enhanced telecare service from Adult Social Care, your needs would be assessed to decide if you need this. You, your family and any other representative may enquire about telecare through Adult Social Care.

What if I live in Sheltered, Extra Care Housing or an Abbeyfield Scheme?

If you have moved into Sheltered, Extra Care Housing or Abbeyfield Scheme, after 1 October 2011 you may still be able to receive a subsidy for your community alarm service funded through Supporting People. Please talk to your housing provider about the new arrangements for this.

If you currently receive a subsidy for your community alarm service through Supporting People, this will continue at the same level as is now, but it will change on 2 January 2012. However, if you live in the Eden District some service user needs will have been reviewed by this time, and changes in the way your service is funded and/or delivered will have been identified and arrangements will be put in place, with your consent before, 2nd January 2012.

How will you decide what support I need?

Between 1 November 2011 and 31 March 2013, Adult Social Care and your Housing Provider will be working closely together with you to review your needs to decide with you what community alarm/telecare support you may need to help you to continue to live independently in your own home.

A timetable has been agreed with your Housing Provider which provides an indication of when we will be working with you in your district. It is anticipated that we will be working in each district for up to 3 months. The proposed timetable is as follows:

<i>Eden</i>	<i>1 November to 22 January 2012</i>
<i>Barrow</i>	<i>23 January 2012 to 15 April 2012</i>
<i>South Lakeland</i>	<i>16 April 2012 to 8 July 2012</i>
<i>Carlisle</i>	<i>9 July 2012 to 30 September 2012</i>
<i>Allerdale</i>	<i>1 October 2012 to 23 December 2012</i>
<i>Copeland</i>	<i>2 January 2013 to 31 March 2013</i>

What if I don't receive a review before then?

For those existing service users who have not yet received a review, from 2nd January 2012 we will continue to subsidise your community alarm service at £1.00 per week until we have had the opportunity to review your support needs.

When will the changes happen?

As we have said, some changes commenced on 1 October and all other changes will be complete by **31 March 2013**.

What options will be available?

If you live in a Sheltered, Extra Care Housing or an Abbeyfield Scheme and your housing provider has a contract with Adult Social Care, for community alarms, you may still be able to receive a subsidy (£1.00) for this service. Your Housing Provider should be able to let you know if you are able to receive this subsidy.

Alternatively, if you feel you would benefit from telecare you can refer to Adult Social Care, who will determine whether you will be eligible for this service.

Who will be involved in taking forward the changes?

Andrea Smith, Adult Social Care, will lead on the implementation of the changes to community alarms and will work in partnership with your Housing Provider to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. This will help minimise reduce any risks or confusion about the changes.

We hope this newsletter has been useful in updating you but if you have any further queries please let your Housing Provider know and we will work to help to give you the reassurance that you may need.

Thank you, on behalf of Cumbria County Council and Housing Providers of Community Alarm Services.

Andrea Smith
Adult Social Care



GRANGE CRESCENT & CARTMEL CRESCENT

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

Aims:

- To achieve a cohesive and sustainable community.
- To promote the properties as accommodation designated for mature and older people and seek to let new tenancies to this client group wherever possible.
- To encourage greater tenant participation in the process of marketing and letting tenancies.
- To achieve a higher demand for all properties, particularly flats above ground floor.

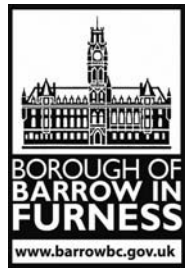
Guidelines

1. The estate as a whole will be advertised widely as accommodation designated for mature and older people (Age Concern could help in this respect).
2. A local information pack will be made available at the Housing Department, the Community Centre and other places.
3. The Residents' Association will be encouraged to hold open days at the community centre in order to meet prospective tenants informally to 'sell' the estate. Applicants requiring further details will be encouraged to visit the Housing Department.
4. A member of the Allocations Team will undertake accompanied viewings with prospective tenants to all 'difficult to let' properties.
5. Where no applicant over 55 can be found properties will be let using the following descending scale:
 - 50 – 54 years
 - 45 – 49 years
 - 40 – 44 years
 - 35 – 39 years
 - 30 – 34 years
 - No applicants under 30 years will be considered unless special circumstances exist, eg. disabled person (to be agreed with the Residents Association).
6. The Residents' Association will be informed when any new tenancy is allocated, ie. basic details will be provided using a standard form (confidential information will not be given), eg. no. x Grange Crescent let 1/7/01 to couple aged over 55 years.
7. One block will be designated for over 55s only, with a view to putting in a lift for that block (the block chosen will be the one which has the present highest proportion of older people). *This rule will only be implemented once it is known that a lift can and will be put in.*
8. Any housing applicant who is over 55 years and is currently an owner occupier will be considered for any flat above the ground floor (regardless of equity), and for ground floor flats where no applicants over 55 years can be found after advertising.
9. Housing applicants over 55 years living outside the Borough will be considered for any flat above the ground floor (HOMES to be advised), using the following priority:
 - Living in the wider Furness area (includes Ulverston, etc.)
 - Living in Cumbria
 - Living outside Cumbria
10. Where a ground floor flat is available it will be let on the basis of need (as per the Cumbria Choice - Choice-Based Lettings Policy), however preference will be given to an existing G&C tenant (living on an upper floor) if they have an equal need to that of an applicant from another area.

Aside from the above, all other rules stated in the Cumbria Choice - Choice-Based Lettings Policy will apply.

Policy Agreed: 26 July 2001

Updated: April 2011



HOUSING SERVICE

ASKAM (Whinfield Place) ACCOMMODATION BUNGALOWS

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

The Council currently owns 10 sheltered accommodation bungalows in Askam.

Over recent years very few vacancies have arisen in these properties and potential tenants are selected in accordance with the Cumbria Choice, Choice-Based Lettings Scheme.

Due to the small amount of this type of property being available in Askam and the lack of alternatives, this Local Lettings Policy seeks to provide priority to existing residents of Askam and Ireleth Parish Council.

Guidelines

Any housing applicant who is over 55 years **or** has a physical disability **and** is resident within Askam and Ireleth Parish Council or has a local connection*, will be considered for this type of accommodation using the following priority:

1. Highest medical need – assessments will be determined by the Allocations Team in line with the current allocation policy.
2. In the event that applicants are in the same Band, the individual who has the earliest registration date and has been resident longest in Askam will be awarded priority.

Where no applicant aged 55 years or above can be found resident within Askam and Ireleth Parish Council or with a local connection the following priority should be used:

1. Resident in Dalton
2. Resident in the Borough
3. Resident outside the Borough

* Local connection is defined as anybody who has immediate family eg: son or daughter who are resident in Askam and Ireleth Parish Council, or somebody who previously resided in Askam and Ireleth Parish Council, **and** requires the support of their family.

Introduced : 19th January 2004

Approved at Executive Committee: 7th January 2004

Updated: April 2011

APPENDIX D

BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING SERVICE DESIGNATED BUNGALOW SCHEMES

- Basterfield Gardens
- Broadstairs Lane
- Calder Green
- Cotswold Crescent
- Court Guards
- Eamont Close
- Hazel Gill
- High Cliff
- Kendal Croft
- Ocean Road
- Park Road
- Quantock Green
- Rising Side
- Roding Green
- Stackwood Avenue
- Weaver Green
- West Shore Road
- Windrush Crescent
- Witham Walk
- Wyre Green
- Yew Tree Gardens
- Lord Street
- Meadow Grove
- Napier Street
- Newton Road
- Whinfield Place