

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 9th June, 2016
at 2.00 p.m. (Committee Room No. 4)

Group Meetings at 1.15 p.m.

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. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations by Members and/or co-optees of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests.

4. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th January, 2016 (copy attached).
5. Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership.

OPERATIONAL

- (D) 6. Appointment of Representatives to Working Groups etc.
- (D) 7. Change of Use: Grange & Cartmel Crescent Community Room & Guest Bedroom.
- (D) 8. Housing-related Support: County Council Grant.
- (D) 9. Housing Management Performance Report 2014/15.
- (D) 10. Void Property Investments: Cumbria Housing Partners Contractor Selection Procedure.

- (D) 11. Management of Void Property 2015/16.
- (R) 12. Policy & Procedures with regards Vehicle Crossings to Properties on Council Estates.
- (D) 13. Request to Purchase ad-hoc Land Adjacent to 16 Duddon Drive, Barrow.
- (D) 14. STAR Survey Key Findings.
- (D) 15. Adelphi Court.

FOR INFORMATION

- 16. Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance 2015/16 Year-End Expenditure

PART TWO
FOR DECISION

- (D) 17. Retrospective Request for Vehicle Crossing.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

- (D) 18. Request for Adaptations to a Council Property.
- (D) 19. Request for Adaptations to a Council Property.
- (D) 20. Request for Adaptations to a Council Property.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPHS 2 & 7 OF PART ONE OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

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

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM MEMBERS:

Councillors: K Hamilton (Chairman)
D Barlow
S. Blezard
F. Cassidy
J. Heath
A. Johnston
W. McEwan
A. Thurlow

TENANT REPS TO BE APPOINTED AT TENANTS' FORUM AGM ON 6 JUNE 2016

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

Keely Fisher
Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01229 876313
Email: ksfisher@barrowbc.gov.uk

Published: 1st June, 2016.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM		Part One (D) Agenda Item 6
Date of Meeting:	9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer:	Executive Director	
<p>Title: Appointments of Representatives to Working Groups etc.</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The Council on 10th May, 2016 gave delegated authority to Committees to make appointments to Outside Bodies, Working Groups etc. in accordance with the number and allocation of seats to political groups agreed at the meeting. In the case of the Housing Management Forum this involves appointments to the Tenant Scrutiny Working Party and the Tenants Complaints Panel.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>You are requested to make recommendations regarding appointments to the following Working Groups:</p> <p>Tenant Scrutiny Working Party:- three Members (2:1) and three Tenant Representatives; and</p> <p>Tenants Complaints Panel:- one Member (1:0) and two Tenant Representatives.</p> <p>Note:- (Labour: Conservative).</p>		

Report

At the Annual Council meeting on 10th May, 2016 the allocation of seats in respect of Forums, Panels, Working Groups etc. were agreed.

You are requested therefore to nominate Members and Tenant Representatives to the Tenant Scrutiny Working Party and the Tenants Complaints Panel for 2016/2017 in accordance with the notional seat allocations outlined above.

Note:- Membership for 2015/16 was as follows:-

Tenant Scrutiny Working Party

Council Representatives (2:1) Councillors Barlow, Heath and McEwan.
 Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Tenants Complaints Panel

Council Representatives (1:0) Councillor Hamilton.
 Tenant Representatives – To be decided by the Tenants Forum.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 14th January, 2016
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Hamilton (Chairman), Barlow and McEwan.

Tenant Representatives:- Mrs T. Metcalfe and Mrs K. Warne.

Officers Present:- Jane Coles (Business Support Manager) and Keely Fisher (Democratic Services Officer).

31 – Councillor Bleasdale

Members of the Housing Management Forum stood and observed a minutes silence as a mark of respect following the death of Councillor Bleasdale who was a valued Member on the Forum.

32 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November, 2015 were taken as read and confirmed.

33 – Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brook, Heath and Thurlow and Tenant Representatives, Lisa Webb and Mandy Anderson.

Theresa Metcalfe had replaced Lisa Webb for this meeting only.

34 – Housing Maintenance Investment Programme 2016/17

The Assistant Director – Housing reported that the proposed profile and priorities for the expenditure profile for 2016/17 were based on the agreed Five-year Asset Management Strategy 2015 and made reference to the findings of the 2014 stock condition survey.

The purpose of the report was to agree the expenditure profile for 2016/17.

The principles adopted in the 2016/17 proposed programme continued with the previously agreed targets set out in the 2015 Asset Management Plan (AMP) agreed by Members at the Housing Management Forum meeting held on 27th August, 2015 and sought to ensure:

- That the Council maintains the Decent Homes Standards;
- The aspirations of tenants were considered and incorporated within the Programme;
- To work collaboratively with other housing providers and contractors to improve delivery of planned and responsive repair services;
- Ensure properties were safe, energy efficient and weatherproof; and
- Investments were prioritised on a just in time and worst-first basis.

1. Progress during the Current Year 2015/16

Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

The 2014 Stock Condition Survey suggested 76 properties did not achieve the DHS.

Inspections had now been carried out of these properties to validate the findings and where appropriate the necessary works had been carried out, or were scheduled to ensure the DHS was maintained.

Planned Maintenance

Delivery of planned investments and major works via Cumbria Housing Partners continued to be an effective delivery method in terms of value for money, compared with historical costs. Additional efficiencies had been made through streamlined management, administration and monitoring of the contracts.

- Devonshire re-roofing and rendering works are 95% complete.
- Roosegate re-roofing and rendering works are 70% complete.
- Ormsgill rendering works are 30% complete.
- Replacement window programme is 65% complete.
- Bathroom improvements are 60% complete.
- Heating improvements are 65% complete.
- Kitchens improvements are 55% complete.
- Rewire improvements are 65% complete.

All work streams shown above were expected to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Progress on the delivery of major improvements would continue to be reported to the Housing Management Forum on a regular basis through the Planned Maintenance Information Report.

2. Suggested Investment Profiles for 2016/17

The proposed investment profile for 2016/17 was attached as an appendix to the Assistant Director's report.

The profile followed the "sustainable" investment model shown in the 2015 AMP and built on existing priorities to upgrade external components such as roofs and external wall finishes. Bathrooms, heating and electrical circuits continued to receive significant investment whilst the trend to spend less on kitchen improvements would continue for the foreseeable future.

The HRA baseline model allocation for 2016/17 was based on an asset portfolio containing 2660 properties:

Maintenance Allowance (per property £1244.21)	£3,309,619
Major Repairs (per property £849.51)	£2,259,700
Total	£5,569,319

3. Progressing the Planned Investment Works

Over the next three years, major investment works would continue to be delivered through the existing arrangement with Cumbria Housing Partners (CHP).

Whilst this years planned investment works were progressing satisfactorily Officers were concerned that focus of future investments on external works such as roofing and rendering provided a significant risk from disruption by adverse weather conditions.

In order to ensure all proposed investments for next year (2016/17) were delivered within the financial year Members were asked to agree that Officers seek to consolidate and where necessary accelerate Phase 3 of the re-roofing and rendering program on Roosegate.

The proposal to concentrate on the Roosegate roofing program aimed to reduce the number of external schemes on site during 2016/17 and hence ensure consultation with tenants and owner occupiers was completed as early in the financial year as possible. Officers would also seek to appoint contractors and prepare detailed cost forecasts and contract documentation during 2016 in readiness for commencement of the work at the start of April 2017. Officers would be working towards a position where external investments were in future delivered during the spring, summer and autumn months wherever possible.

There were resources to complete external works such as fencing and the Assistant Director asked Members to agree as part of the spend profile these resources in the first instance be targeted at the Roosegate area to complement and enhance the ongoing external fabric repairs.

It was moved by the Chairman and duly seconded that a letter be sent to all members of staff involved in advancing the Planned Investment Works ahead of schedule on behalf of the Housing Management Forum. This was voted upon and agreed.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note progress on achieving and maintaining the Decent Homes Standard;
2. To agree the annual investment profile shown at Appendix C of the report;
3. To agree continued delivery through Cumbria Housing Partners;
4. To agree to accelerate the Roosegate re-roofing and rendering scheme;
5. To note the intention to deliver external works during the Spring, Summer and Autumn months whenever possible; and
6. To agree that a letter, on behalf of the Housing Management Forum, be sent, thanking all Members of staff involved, for their hard work in advancing the planned investment works ahead of schedule.

35 – ‘New Lives Project’ – Supported Housing for Female Victims of Domestic Abuse in Barrow

The Assistant Director – Housing reported that Barrow Borough Council was one of 46 local authorities across the country getting a share of the fund to make sure that victims of domestic abuse got access to the support they needed. This would mean that there would now be 710 new bed spaces in a range of safe accommodation providing shelter to victims of domestic abuse across the country.

This new funding would assist Barrow Borough Council and Women’s Community Matters (WCM) provide a strong safety net for anyone facing the threat of abuse in their own home. Domestic abuse was an appalling crime that shattered lives the Government was determined to ensure that no victim was turned away from the support they needed.

The aim of the ‘New Lives’ project was to provide early availability of a holistic package based around the certainty and security of the provision of a safe and stable residence for those women with an immediate need to leave situations of abuse for their own safety and that of their children. No specific accommodation for domestic abuse was currently available in Barrow. This new project would address this gap in provision. The service was for women only due to the partnership with WCM which was a women-only service.

The Project would provide a one-stop shop point of contact and transition for victims of abuse requiring emergency accommodation and reducing the range of agencies the client was required to contact. The staff member would immediately begin working with the client on transition to a more permanent solution to the immediate crisis, assisting with finances and housing.

The Housing Service would provide two units of accommodation for sole use as emergency accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their families. WCM would employ a dedicated member of staff to offer a holistic package of support from referral point through to exit from the ‘New Lives’ project. The WCM staff member would be responsible for all day to day managements of the property and all the work with the client.

Barrow Borough Council Housing Service staff were fully committed to this initiative. A dedicated Officer would be identified to ensure effective co-ordination between the two services with particular reference to provision of accommodation. This would ensure the Housing Service remained fully involved in the development and delivery of this project. The Housing Service and WCM already worked together in support of women experiencing domestic abuse. This new arrangement would further formalise that arrangement and improve upon the offer available to women experiencing domestic abuse.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note the report; and

2. To agree that the Housing Service identify two units of accommodation to be used for supported housing which may over a period of time rotate in line with the needs of the service.

36 – Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance

The Assistant Director – Housing reported information relating to the Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance Programme for 2015/16. The information is attached at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

RESOLVED:- To note the Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance Report.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

37 – Housing Revenue Account 2016/2017

The Assistant Director – Housing had submitted a proposed budget which had been drafted at a time of considerable change. A similar layout as in previous budgets had been used in order for Members to compare the year-on-year process. There were a few key points, some of which could be incorporated within the budget and others which the Assistant Director was raising for Members' information but would need developing into medium and long term strategies as and when information became available:

1. Impact of 1% rent reduction;
2. Impact of limiting housing benefit to residents under 35 years of age;
3. Continuing ongoing challenges of Universal Credit;
4. The enforced sale of 'expensive' Council housing;
5. The Pay to Stay Scheme for Council tenants earning above a defined income;
and
6. The abolition of lifetime tenancies.

A number of the issues highlighted above were still being progressed through Parliament so not all details were available but were likely to have an impact on the Council's income or increase the level of administration in providing the Housing Service in future years.

In accordance with this budget, a budget with no growth had been drafted in anticipation that a plan for the above changes would have to be considered during the next year as guidance became available.

The purpose of the Assistant Director's report was to agree a Housing Revenue Account Budget for the coming financial year 2016/17. Information about the Expected Outturn Budget and balances for the current year was also included.

The current year Outturn and proposed 2016/17 HRA budget was attached as an appendix to the Assistant Director's report.

The Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015, brought into force rent reductions of 1% for the next 4 years. Section 19 stated: "Registered providers of social housing must secure that the amount of rent payable in a relevant year by a tenant of their social housing in England is 1% less than the amount that was payable by the tenant in the preceding 12 months".

"Target (formula) rent is determined as the rate of formula rent of 7th July, 2015 and a 1% reduction to the rate each year thereafter".

In effect that meant a relative drop to rent income of £197,302 for 2016/17 based on a CPI (Consumer Price Index) of 0.01%. If inflation pushed CPI up to 1.5% the loss would be between £1.9 million and £2.6 million by March 2020.

Examples of the effect of applying the 1% decrease to a range of property types were attached as an appendix to the Assistant Director's report.

In previous years it had been agreed that Garage rents would increase at the same % rate as dwellings however, it was now recommended that garages rise by 2% to keep their rents in line with local rates.

Any surpluses would be applied across the following as the Council were expected to manage expenditure incurred in maintaining tenancies and stock from the rents collected:-

- (1) debt repayments; and
- (2) investment projects where the need or the return was clearly identifiable.

1. Expected Outturn Budget 2015/16

The outturn for the year forecasted a net surplus of £21,050. Key factors were:-

- (1) £60,000 profit distribution rebate and contribution towards Cotswold Crescent Community Centre works received from CHP;
- (2) Additional £11,500 income from Tenants Rechargeable Repairs; and
- (3) Additional staff costs of Voluntary Redundancy Payments made year to date and maternity cover for Homelessness Officer.

2. Balances on the Expected Outturn for 2015/16

The above was likely to result in the following movement in balances.

2.1 Major Repair Reserve balance as at 31st March 2015	:	<u>£761,179</u>
Forecast underspend 2015/16		£0
Revised Reserve balance as at 31st March 2016		<u>£761,179</u>

2.2 Housing Revenue Account balance 31st March 2015 : £2,412,764

Members had approved the procurement of a replacement housing management system (Civica CX). The costs would be funded from the HRA balance. The first payment of £124,000 was due in January 2016 on signing the Call Off agreement.

2.3 Breakdown of Balance on Account

Housing Revenue Account as at 31st March 2015	:	£2,412,764
Less contribution from reserve for capital expenditure	:	£ 124,000
Plus Forecast Surplus 2015/16	:	<u>£ 21,050</u>
Estimated Balance at year end	:	<u>£2,309,814</u>

2.4 Voluntary Repayment Provision

Provision as at 31st March 2015	:	£4,375,704
Forecast Provision 2015/16	:	£1,222,410
Provision at year end	:	<u>£5,598,114</u>

3 Proposed HRA Budget 2016/17

In proposing the budget for 2016/17 which was attached as and appendix to the report, the following factors had been taken into account:

3.1 The Settlements Payments Determination provided a budgetary and business planning framework for rental income, the management of tenancies and major repair and maintenance expenditure. However, the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015, brought into force rent reductions of 1% for the next 4 years.

3.2 Under the previous guideline - determined on the basis of CPI + 1% for the next 10 years net rental income for 2016-17 would have been £10,502,289. Under the new legislation it was £10,304,988; £197,000 less.

By March 2020 the Assistant Director would estimate a fall, in real terms, of between £1.9 million and £2.6 million if CPI rose to 1.5% within that period. At the same time costs were expected to increase with inflation regardless.

3.3 The changes to rent income placed certain constraints on the budget and forced the Council to concentrate on the core activities of collecting rents, managing tenancies and keeping its properties in a good state of repair. It was necessary to consider dropping certain periphery activities, although there were some which may continue like the sense of place, training and apprentice schemes because they were funded through existing repair/maintenance contractual arrangements.

3.4 The Assistant Director suggested that £50,000 be allocated to a contingency budget to fund initiatives that helped tenants into work and training by improving

employment opportunities and their employability and maintain the £15,000 area improvement initiative scheme and £10,000 funding for Tenants Forum.

- 3.5 Redundancies from 2015-16 would save £61,000 in staff costs.
- 3.6 Commission income from water charge collection would be £192,748. There were now 510 tenants on reduced tariffs and a further 22 tenants had received £6,837 from the United Utility Trust fund charity.
- 3.7 The rollout of Universal Credit continued and had, as anticipated, increased arrears. There were 83 claimants and their arrears amounted to £59,287.
- 3.8 Collection rates currently ran at 98.25%.
- 3.9 Members approved the procurement of a replacement housing management system (Civica CX). The costs would be funded from the HRA balance. This investment should be recovered within 5 years from reduced annual support costs. The system itself was more easily managed, had a superior capability in predicting arrears and recovery actions and was a better aid to managers in improving performance.
- 3.10 The STAR survey had been carried out in 2015 and there may be some initiatives arising from the results.
- 3.11 The Voluntary Repayment Provision for 2016-17 would increase by £1,165,980.

4 Dwelling Rents

- 4.1 The determination for 2016/17 was a 1% decrease to Barrow Borough Council rents as they were on 8th July 2015:

	52 Weeks	48 Weeks	Average Rent decrease over 48 weeks
2015/16	£76.99	£83.37	
2016/17	£76.19	£82.54	<u>83p</u>
Decrease	1%	1%	

- 4.2 Further details of the resultant rents for different property types were attached as an appendix to the report. Rents on an individual property basis would differ.
- 4.3 The Housing Major Repairs and Maintenance budget would allow a total £2,093 per dwelling based on a stock level of 2,660 *(includes Adelphi Court).

5 Garage Charges

The proposed budget included a 2% increase on garage charges. The effect on individual garage charges would be as follows:

	No.	2015/16	2%	Increased revenue 16/17
Garage rate 1	27	£6.82	£6.96	£4,294
Garage rate 2	451	£9.41	£9.60	
TOTALS	489	£212,546	£216,840	

There was a 100+ strong waiting list for garages with no vacancies and the proposed new rents appeared on par with the private sector.

6 Service & Facility Charges

The service and facility charges for supported, furnished and dispersed properties was still about right. It was suggested that these be left as they were, provided that their costs continued to be recovered.

7 Adelphi Court

The property was leased to Croftlands Trust as a supported housing scheme and under the terms of that lease the Assistant Director recommended that the annual rent of £40,000 remained the same for 2016/17.

8 Business Improvement Initiatives

The main initiative for 2016/17 was the replacement of the current housing management system. As it was configured Officers would look at redesigning existing processes:

- (1) stripping out any unnecessary activities which did not create any value or benefit to the service and in this way reduced the cost of management;
- (2) maximise the online technology to improve customer service through better access and better information; and
- (3) improve reporting and information to help managers improve performance.

The 30 year business plan would be updated and re-forecasted from the results of the stock condition survey and the revised rent and arrears projections.

RECOMMENDED:- That the Executive Committee agree the following:-

1. To note information at point (1) of the report;
2. To note the information on balances and Voluntary Repayment Provision at (2) of the report;
3. To note the information in point (3) of the report and agree 2016/17 budgets as shown in Appendix A of the report;
4. To agree the Dwelling Rent decrease of 1% at point (4) of the report and note the information shown in Appendix B of the report;

5. To agree the Garage increase of 2% at point (5) of the report;
6. To agree the no rent change to Adelphi Court at point (6) of the report; and
7. To note the information at point (7) of the report.

The meeting closed at 2.20 p.m.

APPENDIX A

SCHEME	PROCUREMENT TYPE	AVAILABLE BUDGET	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS	Leasholders affected?
RE-ROOFING AND POINTING WORKS ROOSEGATE ESTATE PHASE 2 (2-3 YEARS DELIVERY PLAN)	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£975,000	£ 369,889	26.5.2015	31.3.2016	DLP Roofing	70% COMPLETE	No
FLAT ROOF IMPROVEMENTS HINDPOOL AND EWAN CLOSE	ESTIMATES	£66,000	£ 33,388	01/07/2015	31.3.2016	CUMBRIA ROOFING	40% COMPLETE	Yes
RE-POINTING/RENDERING ORMSGILL ESTATE	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£538,000	£ 1,778	01/08/2015	31.3.2016	DLP Roofing	30% COMPLETE	No
EXTERNAL DOOR REPLACEMENTS DALTON	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£30,000	£ 9,251	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	TOP NOTCH	65% COMPLETE	No
WINDOW REPLACEMENTS VARIOUS HOUSING AREAS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£304,000	£ 207,740	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	TOP NOTCH	65% COMPLETE	No
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE PAINTING - CENTRAL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£37,000	£ 37,885	01/11/2015	31.3.2016	GEORGE JONES	75% COMPLETE	Yes
GARAGE IMPROVEMENTS	CUMBRIA ROOFING	£88,000	£ 6,400	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	CUMBRIA ROOFING	45% COMPLETE	No
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£255,000	£ 235,557	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	K WILSON	80% COMPLETE	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£180,000	£ 160,567	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	60% COMPLETE	No
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£125,000	£ 53,382	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	15% COMPLETE	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£455,000	£ 318,976	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	50% COMPLETE	No
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£250,000	£ 108,166	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	G JONES	60% COMPLETE	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2015-16

	Funding Available 2015-16	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£ 1,070,200	£ 503,254	£ 20,581	47%
Voids	£ 503,044	£ 524,488	£ 9,674	104%
Gas Servicing	£ 195,392	£ 113,802	£ 3,758	58%
Decoration Vouchers	£ 30,000	£ 23,153	£ 577	77%
Environmental Impmts	£ 25,000	£ 13,406	£ 481	54%
Disabled Adaptations	£ 100,000	£ 84,097	£ 1,923	84%
Electrical Testing	£ 81,000	£ 57,039	£ 1,558	70%
Door Entry Maintenance	£ 20,000	£ 11,132	£ 385	56%

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Change of Use: Grange & Cartmel Crescent Community Room and Guest Bedroom	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this Report is to consider the future use of the Grange and Cartmel Community Room and Guest Bedroom.	
Recommendations:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree the traditional use of the guest bedroom be suspended until a decision is made on the future of the building.2. To consider whether there are any local groups who may consider taking on the responsibility of managing the facility subject to the use being reflective of the area in which it is situated including a dialogue with local residents.3. To investigate the option and costs to convert the building into two separate units of living accommodation.	

Report

The purpose of this Report is to consider the future use of the Grange and Cartmel Community Room and “Guest Bedroom”. They are both situated in a two-storey building, in the middle of Grange and Cartmel Crescent.

This provision stems back to when the flats in the area were classed as “sheltered accommodation” for older people and had a resident warden, part of whose duties was to manage the communal room and guest bedroom. It is now many years since the Council moved away from employing resident wardens.

Since then, and particularly over 15 years or so, the community centre and guest bedroom has been “managed” by the residents association, with the chair taking the lead role.

This included receiving requests for use of the guest bedroom, keeping a diary and ensuring the facility was fit for use on a day-to-day basis. The same arrangement extended to the community room.

Unfortunately the lead tenant representative from the area is now unable to continue the role she has carried out over many years. It would appear her standing down also means the last remaining regular weekly event has also stopped. The arrangements for the guest bedroom have also come to an end.

The centre had become the “preferred” meeting place for many forums and meetings that are tenant orientated over the years. I am sure you will no doubt agree the arrangements that operated have been excellent and I would suggest the Council should write and thank the association, and in particular the lead individual for all her work over the years.

However, I would suggest consideration should be given to the future use of the centre and guest bedroom and would make the following comments.

- **Guest Bedroom**

It was quite common practice to provide a guest bedroom for relatives to stay when visiting tenants in sheltered accommodation. The current charge is £7.50 per night but our records show very little use over the recent past. On a practical level, such a facility needs input on a regular basis from managing its use and collection of charges, through to ensuring it is safe for use, cleaning and making ready when there is a booking. I would suggest the charges do not reflect the cost of managing the facility. On infrequent occasions the flat has been used to provide temporary accommodation for a homeless person.

Having regard to its future use, it is not practical for the Housing Service to manage it on a daily basis and, therefore, I would ask you agree we suspend use as a guest bedroom, certainly until the future of the building as a whole is resolved.

- **Community Room**

The facility again stems back to when the area was designated as sheltered accommodation. Over the years the residents association had been very active in opening the facility on a daily basis although the openings and its use has slowly declined over some years. The last regular activity has now come to an end and the centre is not in use. It does not appear there are any other members of the group who were using it (not all residents of the area) who have come forward to run it.

I would suspect such a scenario is not unusual and the success and usage of a communal facility such as this is often dependent on a “few” volunteers to make it work. This is certainly the case with the other community centres for which the Housing Service is responsible at the Griffin, Ocean Road and Eamont Close.

In view of the current position with the facility I would suggest consideration be given to its future use. In seeking a solution it should be for the building as a whole and should be sympathetic to the adjoining properties.

I would suggest future options could include the following:

1. Leave it as it is? Wait until new Tenant Representatives volunteer to take over the running of the centre.

In view of the history I think it unlikely any new tenant representatives will come forward who are prepared to take on such responsibility. However, in progressing consideration of its future this should include consultation with residents to “test” my thoughts on the matter. This could include an open day when residents are invited to the centre to discuss their views of its future use.

2. Consider developing the property for residential use?

The guest facility has a bedroom, bathroom and combined living room and kitchen. It would not be inconceivable to consider letting the property as residential accommodation.

The community centre is basically a meeting room with separate kitchen and bathroom. Perhaps there would be an option to convert the area in a similar style to the upstairs.

3. Consider alternative Users

It maybe possible another group or user would be interested in taking on the responsibility of the facility. Whilst I would suggest this option may not be realistic we will make some enquiries as part of the considerations into its future.

4. Providing direct management by the Housing service?

We do not have a member of staff with responsibility for the day to day management of such facilities in the Housing Service establishment. At the other community centres mentioned above, whilst we do maintain an overview of their operations and ensure appropriate Health and Safety arrangements are in place, we take no active part in their day to day activities. Whilst community centres can contribute to the well being of an area, in view of the nature of the Housing Services we now provide the management of community centres is best left to others.

In summary, now the longstanding management arrangements for the centre appear to have come to a natural end, it is appropriate the Council consider its future use.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

There is a small cost to the running of the centre and guest bedroom. Should the recommendation be agreed there will be cost in completing the option to convert to residential accommodation.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) 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 8
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	

Title: Housing related Support: County Council Grant

Summary and Conclusions:

Following changes to the Supporting People arrangements the County Council has offered the Borough Council the opportunity of funding to assist in the provision of Housing related support.

The purpose of this Report is to note the Assistant Director – Housing’s actions so far and agree the approach to delivering services by use of the Grant.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

1. agree the actions of the Assistant Director - Housing in acceptance of this grant following discussion with the Chair of the Housing Management Forum;
2. agree the principle to deliver the support targeted at Domestic Violence through Women’s Community Matters subject to satisfactory terms and making a figure of up to £11,648.00 available to deliver that aspect of the Grant; and
3. agree the principles of using the Grant to increase the support available to residents in the Councils temporary accommodation and work with the Housing Options team to assist potentially homeless residents avoid homelessness.

Background

Following changes to the Supporting People arrangements, the County offered the Borough Council the opportunity of funding to assist in the provision of Housing related support.

As you will be aware the Borough has a duty to provide a Homeless Service and we have a dedicated team who carry out this task.

Whilst the principal objective of the team is focused on “prevention” work we are required to provide temporary or interim accommodation in some situations.

The Council already has arrangements in place to deliver the type of work to which the Grant applies and so following discussion with the Chair of the Housing Management Forum I have accepted the offer of Grant.

However, it also provides the opportunity to re-consider the way in which such services are delivered.

Report

The purpose of the grant is to assist the Borough provide housing related support linked to temporary accommodation.

In particular the objectives and the outcomes on what we will have to Report are:

- 1) Support those who are homeless or at serious risk of homeless to have access to appropriate housing related support, to improve independence, personal resilience, health and well being and prevent representation.
- 2) Deliver the housing support linked to temporary accommodation service within the Borough.
- 3) Provide support to people linked to the following number of units of temporary accommodation at any given time; Generic four units, Domestic Violence two Units.

Other key details attached to the grant are as follows:

- The grant is £34,944 but may vary in following years.
- The period of the arrangement will be four years with options available for either party to terminate giving one month’s notice that will then end the arrangement on the following anniversary.
- We will be required to report every six months on outcomes.
- There are a number of other requirements such as providing our policies on Equality and Diversity for example which I would suggest are matters of routine.

In considering the use of the Grant I would make the following comments.

- Additional support is often essential to enable a person to avoid becoming homeless through to assisting them to look for their own solutions or providing the guidance for managing their home.
- Whilst this funding would be new monies, we already deliver to some degree the services to which it refers. One option would therefore be to accept the

grant and use it to fund our existing arrangements. However, operational experience indicates demand for such services will increase. I would therefore suggest this additional funding provides an opportunity to increase our ability in terms of preventative work and support to people in temporary housing.

- In considering the matter I would draw your attention to the fact that the level of funding is not “guaranteed” for four years. However, by the nature of the services in question, short term funding is often a feature of such grants or it maybe the County Council do not want to commit for longer in the current financial climate.
- With regards funding for Domestic Violence, you will be aware the Council working in collaboration with the Women’s Community Matters has recently been successful in obtaining £48k of funding to assist Women’s Community Matters to develop the services available for residents of the Borough. The Council has also recently agreed to identify two properties for providing temporary accommodation for victims of Domestic Violence, the residents of which will receive support from Women’s Community Matters. I would suggest whist the Borough Council will be the recipient of the Grant to which this Report refers, I would also suggest we deliver this element of the Grant in the same way.
- The Council maintains a number of properties, currently 10, for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation. The management of these properties whilst only a small number is challenging and time consuming. We also place individuals in bed and breakfast. Arrangements for managing temporary accommodation is the responsibility of the Homeless Team but realistically there is always a challenge between giving time to managing temporary accommodation and dealing with the demand from new cases. I would suggest the Grant would provide the opportunity to strengthen the management of temporary accommodation and support afforded to residents in the accommodation.

The Housing Forum does not have involvement in staffing matters but should you agree the principle of developing the service in the way described in this last point I will progress the matter through the appropriate channels.

Should the Council agree the acceptance of this grant I would propose the monies be divided pro rata to the number of units to be supported.

(i) Legal Implications

The acceptance of the Grant will be for four years. However either party can serve one months notice to end the arrangement on the next anniversary

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no significant implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The funding is for a period of four years with no certainty of the amount other than for the first year. Should the recommendations be agreed regard will be given in the delivery arrangements to ensure the financial risk to the Council is minimised.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) 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: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
<p>Title: Housing Management Performance Report 2015/16</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The end of year performance information is attached at Appendix A and this Report provides a brief commentary to assist Members in their understanding of the key trends and the actions which follow.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the information contained in the report and at Appendix A. 2. Agree Actions 1-3 for 2016/17. 	

Report

The end of year performance information is attached at **Appendix A**.

The performance indicator report shows Housing Management's overall level of achievement against a set of benchmark targets. The benchmark is the Housemark 'median' cross sector performance scores from 2015/16.

The purpose of this narrative is to demonstrate our progress against the actions we undertook last year and to refresh the background context which has impacted upon the results for 2015/16. The report also then outlines the Actions for the forthcoming year.

Actions for 2015/16

Action 1:	<i>Continue to concentrate efforts in identifying and supporting vulnerable tenants through the transition to Universal Credit</i>
Action 2:	<i>Reduce risk to HRA income by continuing to improve rent collection</i>
Action 3:	<i>Bed in the new responsive repairs contract to improve the % of repairs completed first time and on time and improve the turnaround of voids</i>

Action 4: *Prepare for the replacement of the Housing Management system which will improve functionality, help officers work more effectively whilst mobile and enable a self-serve facility for those tenants wishing to access the service outside of normal office hours*

Action 1

Supporting vulnerable tenants whilst promoting a payment culture

Effects

- We continue to grow expertise in collecting rent directly from tenants in preparation for the full roll out of Universal credit.
- We now have 83 Universal Credit claimants. Their combined debt is over £36k (average £434 per claimant). This average per claimant has reduced over the last year as Operations team are more effective at reinstating direct payments from DWP
- 10% of the rent we collect is now by Direct Debit.
- The Money Management advisor has helped 570 tenants successfully apply for reduced water tariffs and has helped vulnerable tenants set up bank accounts and payment methods.

Action 2

Reduce risk to HRA income by continuing to improve rent collection

Effects

- Despite the challenges the year end arrears total for current tenants is £23k better than last year end.
- Since 2012 Housing Benefit receipts have dropped by 7.5% to 68.3% of Rent & Service charges. Although more tenants are claimants they are receiving less*. In 2012/13 we needed to collect £2.2m and in 2015/16 it rose to £3.2m.
- Evictions for arrears have increased to 17 otherwise terminations (voids) are back to 2012/13 numbers

* This could imply that we have fewer tenants dependent on Housing Benefit (for example in employment) or that it is as a result of sanctions.

Action 3

Bed in the new responsive repairs contract to improve the % of repairs completed first time and on time and improve the turnaround of voids

- Sure Gas have maintained a 100% valid Gas Certificate
- Responsive repair 'on time' targets have improved by 8% on last year (* some figures are missing Gas responsive repair data)
- We are now able to report on 'Right First Time' (96.4%)
- The days taken to turn around voids (including the time spent undergoing major repairs) has risen slightly from 46 to 47 days. This reflects the fact that 101 of all relets underwent major repairs.
- Repairs are taking, on average, 15 days to complete which is an improvement of 1 day

Action 4

Prepare for the replacement of the Housing Management system which will improve functionality, help officers work more effectively whilst mobile and enable a self-serve facility for those tenants wishing to access the service outside of normal office hours

The Housing Management system -CX has been purchased and installed. Both the scoping and design phases are complete. The next phase is configuration and the migration of our data across to CX. Then the very lengthy process will start and take us through to 2017 with an intended 'go live' of 30th June 2017.

Influences for 2016/17

Rent Collection

With a loss of 1% to rent income and more movement from HB to Universal Credit we will look at better ways of working and preparing CX to help support changes.

CX will also enable easier and better long term asset management planning.

Voids & Empty Properties

For the period 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016 rent loss for void properties was almost £150k. See report (Agenda Item 11) re void costs.

- Two bedroom upper floor flats and certain areas continue to have the highest turnover and are harder to let.

The number of properties which are accepted on first offer has dropped by 10% since last year.

- Deceased and moves to the private sector continue to be the largest % of all tenancy ends -32%

- 82 voids were on Ormsgill
- 138 were 1 bed flats
- The shortest tenancies were in Abbotsmead and Lower Hindpool flats
- 1 bed flats in Newbarns North took the longest on average to let

Action 1:	<i>Reduce risk to HRA income by continuing to improve rent collection taking account of the 1% reduction in rent income and the uncertainty around the sale of high value properties and the impact that might have on revenue</i>
Action 2:	<i>Reduce Void, Repair and Planned maintenance expenditure whilst maintaining Decent Home standards to within revenue</i>
Action 3:	<i>Recognise and make the most of the opportunity to improve the way we work through the deployment of new CX software. Develop t new processes and working practices which will help us work more effectively and at a lower cost.</i>

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The actions support an improved financial position.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no detrimental impact the built environment or public realm.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) 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 10
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Void Property Investments: Cumbria Housing Partners Contractor Selection Procedure	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to note the appointment of suitably qualified and experienced contractors from the 2014 Cumbria Housing Partner's (CHP) framework to undertake void property improvements to the Council's social housing stock.	
Recommendations:	
Members are requested to note the selection criteria adopted by Procure Plus (PP) and the subsequent appointment of AB Mitchell Developments Ltd as the Council's preferred contractor to undertake void property improvements via the 2014 CHP framework.	

Background

The purpose of this report is to update members regarding the continuing utilisation of the CHP framework as our preferred investment delivery model and note the evaluation of contractors listed for void improvements on the new 2014 CHP framework.

At the meeting held on 28th August 2014, Members agreed to the Council's membership of CHP and its commitment to deliver investments in line with other member organisations.

Officers can advise Members that in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, the use of the CHP framework and contract award fall within officer delegation.

Report

Members are advised that the previous arrangements for void property improvements have been issued to AB Mitchell Developments Ltd (CHP contractor) and Vinci (now Hughes Brothers) on the basis that major void improvements are generally allocated to the CHP contractor to ensure value for money is maximised.

Officers advise that the existing CHP framework recently expired and has been replaced with new CHP framework that runs until 2018. As part of our membership of CHP the Council is required to re-evaluate and re-appoint suitably qualified and experienced contractors capable of delivering void investments from 1st April 2016.

The new OJEU compliant framework was prepared on behalf of CHP by PP and a partner company called "Realize". The new framework identifies a range of key work streams that are broken down between internal and external housing components and includes repairs/improvements to void properties. It also separates out the various services provided by contractors and suppliers.

Officers can advise members that there are several locally based contractors on the new CHP framework and are, along with other contractors, eligible for selection to undertake void property improvements using one of the following methods;

- a. Direct call off
- b. Mini competition

Direct call off procedure

This procedure allows landlords to directly select a contractor within a particular work stream based on the original OJEU evaluation procedure that takes account of the contractor's cost and quality submissions.

Mini competition

This procedure allows landlords to evaluate contractors using a range of pre determined assessment criterion that may vary from landlord to landlord.

Officers can advise members that a mini competition was completed in February 2016 using the following assessment criteria:

1. Written submission

Contractors were required to answer questions covering the following areas:

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Resident Care	30%
Vulnerable Residents	5%
Delivery	25%
Health and Safety	5%
Social Value	10%

This section of the assessment contributed **75%** to the total mark.

2. Pricing document

Contractors were required to submit rates to carry out the works. Please note these rates will be fixed for this particular scheme and will be open for acceptance for 48 months.

This section of the assessment contributed **25%** to the total mark.

3. Preferred contractor(s) status Pricing document

Fifteen contractors from the CHP framework were invited to participate in the mini competition for the void property repairs in Barrow.

The results of the void property mini competition are summarised in a report from Procure Plus which confirms the appointment of local contractor AB Mitchell Developments Limited who was the only contractor to return the tender documentation.

(i) Legal Implications

The appropriate contract arrangements are in place.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

Void costs are monitored on an ongoing basis.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no detrimental impact the built environment or public realm.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

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

Background Papers

Procure Plus report dated February 2015 ref 'MC100 Repairs to Void Properties' and is available from the Maintenance and Asset Manager.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 11
Date of Meeting: 9th June 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
<p>Title: Management of Void Properties 2016/17</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>The purpose of this Report is to inform the Forum on the costs incurred to bring void properties up to standard before re-letting during 2015/16. Final accounts are to be completed but it is clear the costs for voids exceed the budget identified for the purpose and the Report seeks to provide an explanation for the level of spending that was incurred and our ongoing approach to balancing expenditure whilst delivering an appropriate service.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Members are recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the information provided in the Report. 2. Note the action to be taken to ensure the HRA is balanced at year end. 3. Note and agree the on going development of our void management processes. 	

The purpose of this Report is to inform the Forum on the costs incurred to bring void properties up to standard before re-letting during 2015/16. The costs exceeded the budget identified for the purpose and the Report seeks to provide an explanation for the level of spending that was incurred and our ongoing approach to balancing expenditure whilst delivering an appropriate level of service.

Report

During 2015/16 the number of properties becoming vacant was 267. This level of vacant properties is not exceptional and is less than previous years.

However, the cost of repairs required to bring them up to a “standard” for re-letting has resulted in an over spend on the budget identified for void maintenance.

In proposing an annual HRA budget, a number of considerations are made to suggest a budget figure required, previous spend being one of those considerations. In the case of the void budget the monies identified were insufficient to deal with the level of the repairs required.

I have therefore looked at the factors which may have led to this level of spend and discussed it with Officers involved in the void process.

In summary I would suggest a number of reasons that have led to the position at the end of year:

1. Officers and this Forum had recognised the “void standard” to which we operated needed consideration and I would suggest we under-estimated the amount of additional expenditure that maybe required.
2. Whilst the number of voids is not excessive, the number of properties becoming void that were exceptionally poor and required major works was higher than would normally be the case.

As an example of costs incurred against individual properties, there are houses that required in the region of c.£15K per property and many in the c.£5K to £10K range.

In considering what action should be taken to control maintenance costs, I would suggest you have regard to the following.

We do monitor the reason for voids arising which range from tenants leaving to go to the private sector, the tenant is deceased or the property is abandoned. In short for many of the reasons our opportunity to control turnover is limited, with others we may have some control.

For instance some voids arise following the transfer of a tenant to an alternative address. In theory when transferring a tenant should leave their existing property in an appropriate standard. However, in practice, a pragmatic approach has to be taken to look at the well being of the tenant. For instance even if a property requires work, we look at the tenant’s circumstances and would not for instance stop a transfer, if they were moving because the property is not suitable because of medical circumstances, or to improve their financial position.

We do seek to recover the cost of any damage or DIY work when a tenant leaves as a “rechargeable repair”. Whilst we do this as a matter of course the recovery of money from a tenant when they have left is difficult.

It is also the case the housing stock is ageing. Despite our cyclical maintenance and investment plans, when voids arise it would appear work such as re-plastering is becoming a more common feature. Such work generally only becomes apparent when a void arises.

A new void standard has now been implemented. The new standard has been welcomed by colleagues involved in the void process. It was apparent at the start of the Scrutiny Process our previous void standard was a minimal standard and needed to be improved.

Whilst the new standard has increased the costs of preparing a void property for letting, I would suggest the new standard is appropriate and should not be changed to control future expenditure.

Moving forward Officers will be looking to refine how costs are generally accounted for within the Maintenance Budget. At present we do charge works completed such as upgrading a heating system, replacing a bathroom or kitchen, to the appropriate cyclical maintenance budget - not as a void cost.

We will be giving further consideration to the appropriateness to charge other costs currently accounted in the void budget to a cyclical maintenance budget, such as when large areas of plastering or redecoration is required.

We deliver void maintenance via two contractors: Hughes Bros and AB Mitchell. We will be discussing the process of controlling costs with the contractors and Procure Plus to ensure the contract arrangements are managed appropriately to achieve cost efficiencies.

Taking into consideration the ending of contractual arrangements with Vinci and out turns from other planned maintenance work, it will not be possible to cover the overspend from the annual HRA maintenance budget. HRA Reserves will be required to ensure the costs incurred in the Maintenance budget are met within the year.

Once the year end accounts are complete, therefore, the Director of Resources will present the accounts through the Executive Committee and recommend use of the required HRA Reserves.

In summing up, I would suggest having regard to the age of our stock and experience during the last financial year, whilst the number of voids maybe broadly similar void costs will be monitored and further consideration will be given to how costs are controlled and accounted for.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

On completion of final accounts, action may be required to balance accounts by use of HRA reserves.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) 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: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Policy and Procedures with regards Vehicle Crossings to Properties on Council Estates	
Summary and Conclusions:	
<p>The purpose of this Report is to direct the Housing Service on how it should respond when it receives requests from residents to create off street parking. It goes on to clarify the position regarding properties that have been sold through the Right to Buy and which have restrictive covenants regarding in curtilage parking.</p> <p>It seeks to confirm Councils previous approach to “protect green space” and the procedure to be adopted by Officers to deliver this Policy.</p>	
Recommendations:	
<p>The Forum is requested to recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The information within the Report is noted.2. Confirm that in considering requests for crossing of land the Council’s Policy is to “protect green space”.3. Agree the Procedure note attached at Appendix B on how this Policy should be implemented.	

The purpose of this Report is to direct the Housing Service on how it should respond when it receives requests from residents to create off street parking.

It goes on to clarify the position regarding properties that have been sold through the Right to Buy and which have restrictive covenants regarding in curtilage parking.

It seeks to confirm Council’s previous approach to “protect green space” and the procedure to be adopted by Officers to deliver this Policy.

Background

When many Council estates were constructed limited provision was made for off street parking, or “in curtilage” parking.

Later estates, which include houses and flats did sometimes have parking provision as a feature of the estate design, but such facilities are normally shared parking areas in close proximity of the property.

Members will be aware a feature of many estates also includes narrow estate roads and as the number of vehicles on Council estates have increased it has led to an increase in congestion and the matter is raised as an issue with Housing Officers from time to time.

The Council in recognising the problem some years ago instigated a number of schemes, most notably on parts of North Walney, Vulcan and Roosegate which incorporated the construction of in curtilage parking in the late 1980s early 1990s. These schemes were funded by specific grants being made available by central Government at the time.

Since then the Housing Service has only completed small scale parking improvements on a one off basis, such as extending existing parking spaces or creating new parking bays. These have generally been funded from the Area Improvement Budget which is directed by the Tenants’ Forum.

In response to the problem of parking, some residents have also created in curtilage parking and this has been going on for sometime so in many areas there are examples of off-street parking.

Cumbria County Council is the Highway Authority. Should a resident in the Borough want to create in curtilage parking in most circumstances it will require the Highway Authority’s approval to cross the public highway - a Highways Act 1980 Sections 171 and 184 Notice. It may also be necessary for the applicant to seek planning permission and in some instances the previous landlords consent should there be a restrictive covenant on in curtilage parking.

Following discussion with the County Council their correspondence to applicants does now make these requirements clear.

The County Council procedure does also now include checking with the Housing Service when they receive an application concerning a property on a Council estate. In many instances the land to be crossed, pavement and grass verge, has been adopted so the Borough Council has more limited powers to refuse such a request, unless the Borough Council is the landowner beneath the Highway.

In approving an application to construct a Domestic Vehicular Crossing (Highways Act 1980 Sections 171 and 184) the County Council will confirm their agreement for a pavement crossing to be created. In doing so they require specific conditions to be fulfilled by the applicant and they also accept future responsibility for the integrity of the crossing.

It is the case, however, that in some instances the green verges are in the ownership of the Borough Council and/or are not adopted highway. It is also the feature of some estates that green space was incorporated in the design of estate, no doubt as amenity space and which is a feature of the street scene.

As you will recall, recently when advised of a request to create in curtilage parking, the hardstanding would of involved construction over a wide grassed area which had clearly been incorporated in the estate design. I declined the request over the Council owned land and following a request to review the decision through the Councils democratic decision making process, the original decision was endorsed.

This provided a clear Policy statement on which to respond to future requests and is the basis of **Appendix B** which seeks to confirm the Policy decision and the basis on which the Procedure will be implemented in the future.

Report

In considering the attached procedure note I would make the following comments:

- The design of estates did not generally include provision for parking which has caused problems as the level of vehicle ownership has increased.
- Following consideration of the matter referred to above and following discussion with Members I was clear the decision was influenced by the motive to “protect green space”.
- In the majority of instances the allowing of off street parking does contribute to reducing the parking and congestion problems on estate roads and to potentially improve safety for pedestrians and other car users.
- Whilst I have not completed an estate by estate survey to identify the congestion on estate roads, I would state there is sufficient anecdotal evidence to suggest it is a feature of many estates and assuming a continued increase in vehicle ownership will be a growing problem.
- From discussion with colleagues, it would also appear the case congestion can be influenced by location, for example near schools or other facilities which can lead to short term peaks and troughs in congestion. In others the level of ownership generally amongst residents is the route cause.
- In some instances applications for crossings are made by residents with a disability and should there be a restriction on approving such crossings it may have a detrimental impact on their potential ability to make access easier to the property.
- There are now materials available that would provide a vehicle crossing without changing the fundamental appearance of the area and allow grass to grow through, hence retaining a green area.
- Many estates did include areas of green space which I would suggest where retained to enhance the appearance of areas.

- Where the Borough Council is the landowner, written permission **will** be required from Barrow Borough Council Housing Service.
- There are many locations in the Borough with pavement crossings. If adopted Highway the approval process to cross it is with the Highway Authority although more recently the Highway Authority are sharing such applications with the Housing Service. In such instances we have been declining such requests if the crossing also includes a green area in the housing Services ownership and is greater than one medium car length.

The problem is common across the majority of Council estates and realistically I would suggest the Housing Revenue Account is not sufficiently healthy for Members to consider highway improvements without it being to the detriment of maintaining and improving the fabric and structure of residential property.

In summary, I would suggest the opportunity for the Housing Service to successfully resolve congestion problems is limited. Whilst we are not the Highway Authority it has been recognised in the past the Housing Service can help to reduce the problem, but was only able to do so by use of specific grant funding. I would suggest our approach to carrying out further work to improve parking should continue to be delivered through the Area Improvement Budget.

The attached procedure note seeks to acknowledge the problem of congestion on estates and contribute to resolving it whilst also acknowledging the approach “to protect green space” and direct Officers when receiving future request involving Council owned land.

Restrictive covenants

It is also the case in some areas the sale of Council property included restrictive Covenants to prevent the construction of garden fences to the front of properties and for parking vehicles within the curtilage without prior approval from the Council.

In practice, there are now areas of the Borough where the level of owner occupation exceeds the number of properties still in Council ownership.

From observation it is clear that in many areas, which were previously open plan, owners have constructed garden boundaries and created off street parking. This is not something to which the Housing Service has paid particular attention to over the years and in discussion with Housing Officers is not something that is raised as a concern by residents.

In the past, the Housing Service has also changed the appearance of the street scene of estates by providing boundary fencing to the front of properties. An example would be on parts of North Walney, in the Darent Avenue area.

I would therefore suggest because of the time that has elapsed the approach to dealing with such requested should reflect what has happened over time.

Also if the vehicular crossing is on a classified road you will need planning permission before the Highway Authority is able to approve a crossing. If the crossing is within 10 metres of a junction then the application will also be refused (for reasons of safety).

I would suggest going forward we do not object to requests to create in curtilage parking street parking subject to any required crossing of land being progressed in accordance with the procedures agreed.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has minor legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has minor implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has significant financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no detrimental impact the built environment or public realm.

(v) Equality and Diversity

This Policy may have an impact on service users with a physical disability should they request a crossing over Council land. Should this arise, I would suggest such requests will be reviewed on an individual basis.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

The recommendation has little impact on users with disabilities and Furness Equality and Diversity Partnership have been consulted.

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 13
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Request to Purchase ad-hoc Land Adjacent to 16 Duddon Drive	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to consider a request to purchase Council-owned land adjoining the property owned by the applicants.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to decline this request because the whole portion should not be sold due to the impact on the rear garden of 1 Severn Road and to sell half would have no benefit to the Housing Service and would alter the street scene.	

Report

The purpose of this report is to consider a request to purchase Council-owned land adjoining the property owned by the applicants.

Appendix C provides images of the land in question.

The Assistant Director - Housing has delegated authority by virtue of Executive Committee 1st October 2003 to consider and agree where appropriate sales of ad-hoc land adjoining gardens of owner-occupiers living on Council estates. Should the potential purchaser wish to appeal my decision, they have the right to do so through this Forum.

It is our practice in the first instance to indicate to any potential purchaser whether I think it is appropriate to sell the land, prior to going through the full sale process which includes arranging a valuation and the applicant seeking planning permission.

In the case of this application, I would suggest to Members it is inappropriate to sell the land. The land in question is a portion of amenity green land that runs adjacent with the rear garden of 16 Duddon Drive (prospective purchaser) and 1 Severn Road (council owned property).

I would comment specifically regarding two factors considered with this application:

1. It would be detrimental to sell the whole portion to the applicant because half the land is adjacent to the rear garden of the neighbouring property.
- 2: To sell the section adjoining the applicant's property would leave Barrow Borough Council with the responsibility and maintenance costs for the remaining portion of land. I have also considered the street scene once a boundary was installed to separate the land. In the future, should both properties approach the council with a view to purchasing the respective half adjacent to each property this would be an appropriate opportunity to sell the whole portion.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no detrimental impact the built environment or public realm.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) 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 14
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: STAR Survey Key Findings	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to inform you of the key findings following a recent tenant satisfaction survey.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to note for information the key findings of the STAR Survey and accept the formal report.	

Background and Introduction

In early 2011, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) signalled the end of the regulatory requirement to carry out the STATUS satisfaction survey on a prescribed basis. Under STATUS, housing providers were required to compulsory survey their tenants at least every three years.

Housemark, a leading provider of performance improvement services, quickly identified that many housing providers wanted to continue to survey tenants and residents on a voluntary basis and sought to provide a flexible survey based upon the main features of STATUS.

A new survey called STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was developed. Despite it no longer being compulsory to survey tenants, we see it as good practice to do so and have chosen to adopt the STAR Survey as our main satisfaction survey.

We commissioned BMG to carry out our first STAR Survey in 2012 and the results were positive.

Action Taken

As three years had passed since our first STAR Survey, we took the decision to commission a further survey to obtain a more up to date view of tenant satisfaction with our services.

Following a tender process, BMG Research were selected to undertake our 2015 survey. We opted for a sample postal survey which took place between August and November 2015.

An initial mailing of 1,500 questionnaires and letters were mailed out to tenants across all council housing estates with two full reminder mailings going out to those customers who did not or could not respond to the initial mailing. Unfortunately the response rate was lower than expected and in order to ensure accuracy with the results, we decided to carry out a further mailing to 700 additional tenants. The survey closed in November. In total 483 surveys were completed in total from the two sets of sample, whether by post or online, representing a response rate of 22%.

In February 2016, BMG Research gave a presentation of their findings to Housing Service staff, councillors and tenant representatives.

The full report has now been uploaded onto the Barrow Borough Council website and the key findings were featured in the tenants' Spring 2016 edition of the *Housing Matters* newsletter.

Key Findings

Below are some of the key findings obtained through the survey which have been compared to findings recorded in 2012.

- 90% of tenants were satisfied with the overall services provided. Satisfaction has increased by 3%
- 91% of tenants were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service. Satisfaction has increased by 3%
- 91% of tenants were satisfied with the quality of their home. Satisfaction has increased by 1%
- 86% of tenants found staff helpful. Satisfaction has increased by 1%.
- 89% of tenants were satisfied with the general condition of their homes. Satisfaction has remained the same.
- 88% of tenants felt they obtained good value for money from their rent. Satisfaction has reduced by 1%
- 86% of tenants were satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live. Satisfaction has increased by 2%
- 83% of tenants felt that Barrow Borough Council Housing Service keeps them informed. Satisfaction has increased by 3%
- 80% of tenants thought that their landlord takes account of their views. Satisfaction has increased by 1%

Since our last survey in 2012, we have increased satisfaction with many of our services but we also recognise that there are areas where we need to improve.

- For example, we had quite high dissatisfaction levels with our complaints service. Approximately, 15% of tenants made a complaint last year and of those, 39% of tenants were dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled

and 40% were dissatisfied with the final outcome of the complaint. Although there has been some improvement in satisfaction in this area, dissatisfaction levels are higher than we would like.

- In addition to this, we had some higher than expected dissatisfaction scores on local services with 16% being dissatisfied with the appearance of the neighbourhood; 17% dissatisfied with grounds maintenance; 11% dissatisfied with internal cleaning and 17% dissatisfied with external cleaning. Results have improved slightly since 2012 but are still higher than we would like.
- Satisfaction with the final outcome of an anti-social behaviour complaint has reduced to 34%, down 18% since 2012.

We will therefore be working with tenant representatives and councillors to develop a plan of action, targeted at service improvement areas which have been identified through the STAR survey. This will be reported to Housing Management Forum in due course.

To read the full copy of the survey link to: www.barrowbc.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/about-us/surveys/

Considerations

The Tenants' Forum and Housing Services Management Group will examine the results of the survey with a view to planning service improvement and delivery where applicable.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no additional financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

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

Background Papers

Research report: Customer Satisfaction Survey 2015.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 15
Date of Meeting: 9th June, 2016	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Adelphi Court	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to agree the assignment of the lease for Adelphi Court from Croftlands Housing Trust to the Richmond Fellowship.	
Recommendations:	
Members are asked to agree the assignment from Croftlands Housing Trust to the Richmond Fellowship.	

Report

As you will be aware the Borough Council agreed a lease with Croftlands Housing Trust to take over the management of Adelphi Court with the prime purpose of providing supported housing for people with mental health problems.

The lease was granted on 4th March 2015 for a period of five years ending 3rd March 2020.

One of the conditions of the lease was that Croftlands Housing Trust were not to assign the lease to a third party.

For Members who have been involved, you will be aware that Croftlands Housing Trust has been working alongside Richmond Fellowship for part of the time that negotiations of the lease were taking place. In order to strengthen the work of Croftlands Housing Trust it has now merged with Richmond Fellowship.

For all intents and purposes, the arrangements in place for the management and provision of accommodation at Adelphi Court will continue.

As pointed out above, the original lease did not allow for assignment, but I would ask Members to agree on this occasion that the assignment from Croftlands Housing Trust to Richmond Fellowship be agreed to ensure the continuation of this facility for the remainder of the lease period.

(i) Legal Implications

The Council will require an assignment from Croftlands Housing Trust to the Richmond Fellowship at their expense.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has no financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

The recommendation has no implications.

(v) Equality and Diversity

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

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

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

Background Papers

A copy of the Lease is available from the Assistant Director – Housing on request.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION : 2014/2015

Performance Indicator	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Actual 2014/15	Apr-June 2015	Apr-Sept 2015	Apr-Dec 2015	Apr-Mar 2016	Median
£ Rents Collection								
£ Rent & Service Charges due (exc Void)	9,728,187	10,687,981	11,101,931	2,824,172	5,716,613	8,567,982	£11,408,078	£11,330,627
£ Rent collected (CT)	9,604,739	10,482,254	11,059,494	2,698,430	5,605,767	8,383,633	£11,267,074	£11,276,240
Rent collected as % of rent due (exc ft)	98.73%	98.08%	99.62%	95.55%	98.06%	97.85%	98.76%	99.52%
£ Current Arrears Adjusted (dwellings)	£203,623	£370,804	£395,657	£474,885	£411,847	£452,811	£372,513	£191,488
£ Former Arrears Adjusted (dwellings)	£135,745	£162,969	£192,359	£220,552	£233,206	£252,032	£228,685	£135,968
Write Offs (Gross)	£38,573	£137,688	£130,795	£7,739	£40,059	£48,549	£105,959	£46,456
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	5	15	11	3	9	13	17	8
Current tenants arrears % of rent owed	2.1%	3.5%	3.6%	4.2%	3.6%	4.0%	3.3%	1.7%
Former tenants arrears % of rent owed	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%	1.2%
£ Rent arrears Garages	£1,452	£1,763	£2,769	£4,383	£3,839	£10,548	£2,355	£2,769
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£22,146	£15,464	£15,464	£3,536	£2,119	£6,689	£5,028	£2,119
Void management	2686	2677	2648	2647	2643	2640	2637	2643
Tenancy Turnover %	10.1%	12.9%	10.8%	2.7%	5.1%	7.5%	10.1%	7.12%
Total number of re-lets	245	340	324	68	135	208	254	N/A
No. of Terminations	270	344	287	71	135	198	267	N/A
Average relet time for dwellings (inc days spent in MW)	32	35	46	41	43	45	60	30
£ rent loss through vacant dwellings	£111,607	£165,336	£209,014	£34,662	£69,550	£112,144	£149,667	1.21%
£ rent loss due to vacant garages	£2,290	£2,157	£2,501	£363	£642	£944	£1,274	N/A
£ rent loss due to vacant shops	£5,000	£1,022	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	N/A
£ rent loss due to vacant dispersed	NA	NA	£25,358	£9,258	£19,754	£29,214	£34,891	N/A
% properties accepted on first offer	78.4%	76.5%	72.8%	58.6%	62.1%	61.0%	62.2%	
Loss per Void (Rents, Repairs, Arrears)	£ 2,684	£ 1,341	£ 1,512	£ 2,378	£ 2,573	£ 3,240	£2,597	N/A
Maintenance								
No. Repair Orders issued (Tenant Demand)	10,109	10,822	10,282	2,554	5,035	6,390	10,290	
Responsive & Void repairs per property	3.7	4.0	3.9	1.0	1.9	2.4	3.0	3.3
P1 & P2 as a % of total repairs	63.8%	63.0%	58.2%	51.1%	53.1%	57.1%	56.44%*	N/A
% all responsive repairs completed on time	77.1%	71.2%	78.4%	94.0%	91.5%	87.6%	86.6%*	N/A
P1 % emergency repairs completed on time	94.6%	89.0%	96.1%	98.7%	95.5%	97.1%	96.2%*	N/A
P2 % urgent repairs completed on time	77.3%	73.0%	78.4%	97.4%	90.5%	88.4%	86.8%*	N/A
Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs (days)	19.78	17.46	16.48	7.55	9.24	12.72	15.81*	10.95
Percentage of repairs completed 'Right First Time'	79.79	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	96.4%	90.9%
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	88%	97.3%
Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.8%	100%	99.8%
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%	0%	0%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	0.5%	0.31%
*Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on RD SAP 9.83)	69.2	69.2	69.2	69.4	69.4	69.4	69.4	67.90%

Homeless	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Actual 2014/15	Apr-June 2015/16	Apr-Sept 2015/16	Apr-Dec 2015/16	Apr-Mar 2015/16
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	57	56	52	44	53	69	70
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	27	35	36	24	20	25	22
Homeless Total Cases Closed	903	1078	755	264	481	722	894
Homeless Advice	408	187	178	64	116	173	227
Homeless Prevention	170	492	321	124	225	337	385
Homeless Applications	147	103	66	11	24	40	60
Homeless Successful Preventions	148	277	174	61	109	161	205
Eligible Homeless (Owed a full duty)	30	19	16	4	7	11	17
Water Charge Collection							
Direct Debit payers	260	758	765	771	784	794	793
Successful applications for Support Tariffs	68	124	510	496	489	511	570
ASB Management							
ASB cases reported	72	58	38	24	48	64	84
Percentage of closed ASB cases that were successfully resolved	99%	96%	100%	50%	80%	46%	78%
Housing Register	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Actual 2014/15	Apr-June 2015/16	Apr-Sept 2015/16	Apr-Dec 2015/16	Apr-Mar 2015/16
Applicants on housing register							
Active Direct Applicants	1471	1162	1151	1242	1264	930	976
Active Transfer Applicants	346	286	270	273	281	211	223
Cumbria Choice Register	1817	1448	1421	1515	1545	1141	1199
Satisfaction	2012-13	2013/14 £	2014/15	Apr-June 2014/15	Apr-Sept 2014/15	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall	88%						90%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	87%						91%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account	78%						80%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of the home	90						91%
Percentage of residents satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live	84%						86%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their rent provides value for money	90%						88%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their service charges provide value for money	81%						83%
Housing Stock							
Houses	1284	1274	1263	1262	1258	1256	1252
Flats	1245	1247	1229	1229	1228	1228	1224
Bungalows	157	157	156	156	156	156	156
Total Dwellings	2687	2678	2648	2647	2643	2640	2632
Total Dispersed /Temporary Dwellings	10	8	10	10	11	11	15
Adelphi Court			12	12	12	12	12
Community Centres	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Leaseholds	204	205	208	208	208	208	208
Garages	486	486	489	489	489	489	489
Shops	20	19	19	19	19	19	19
TOTAL PROPERTIES	3412	3401	3391	3390	3387	3384	3380

Sold Property / Land	2012-13	2013/14	2014/15	Apr-June	Apr-Sept	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar
		£		2014/15	2014/15		2014/15
Houses	252,750	365,040	509,170	1	4	7	11
Flats	42,160	19,320	60,540	0	0	0	0
Bungalows	0	0	28,670	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	3,000	0	0	0	0
TL	294,910	384,360	601,380	49,350	164,780	296,510	£498,310

* excludes Gas repairs

Relet & Terminations run from 1/4/15 to 31/3/16

Barrow Borough Council - Housing Department

POLICY & PROCEDURES

Responding to the Construction of Vehicle Crossings across Council Land



Scope:

To provide guidance for responding to requests for constructing crossings on Council owned land.

Policy Objective:

To ensure an appropriate balance is maintained between enabling residents to construct off-street parking whilst ensuring the "value of green space is protected". (See HMF Report 9th June 2016).

Standards/Targets

- To ensure all requests are responded to in a timely manner.
- To ensure consideration of such requests are responded to in a consistent manner.

Responsible Officers:

Customer Services Team, Keith Mills (Senior Area Surveyor)

General Approach:

Should a resident want to create a parking space within the curtilage of their property it would probably require the construction of a crossing over public land situated between the road and their property.

Approval is required from the Highway Authority to cross any adopted highway.

The Housing Service is particularly interested in locations where part of the land to be crossed is in the ownership of the Borough Council. There maybe occasions where this will cause confusion to an applicant if the distinction between adopted highway and Borough Council land has not been explained to them.

Our general approach will be to direct the applicant to the Highway Authority to make an application and for advice.

Receipt of enquiry:

- Enquiries may be received from tenants or owners of the relevant property.
- The response will generally be the same but for a tenant they will additionally need to write asking for permission to carry out any alteration within the boundary of their property prior to any progress to create a crossing.
- In responding, you should advise the resident they should apply to the Highway Authority who will consider the application (link to application).
- You should also advise that Highways Act 1980 - Sections 171 and 184 are relevant to a crossing of adopted highway. Should there be a requirement to cross land that is not adopted or is in ownership of the Borough Council then permission of the owner of the said land will be required, in most cases this being the Housing Service.

- You should advise the applicant to write to the Housing Service to confirm whether permission is required to cross the land.
- You can also advise them that in some instances planning permission maybe required. With regards both the above the Highway Authority will advise the applicant when they submit an application.
- In responding to an enquiry, primarily in the first instance our role should be to direct the applicant to Highways and not provide advice on the likely success of such an application other than what is referred to above. Fundamentally the Highway Authority will make a decision on whether such a crossing meets their requirements from a Highway perspective.
- You should record the enquiry and pass information to the Senior Area Surveyor who will decide whether the crossing is over Borough Council land and respond to the applicant.

The progression of an application

- It has been agreed by the Highway Authority when they receive an application they will share details with the Housing Service for comment.
- The Senior Area Surveyor will consider the referral and whether the application involves crossing land in the ownership of the Borough.
- Even if the land is adopted, it may still be the case that the Borough Council owns the land below the highway and would have a right to refuse the request. Officers carrying out due diligence, on receipt of the request should check with other colleagues in the Council to clarify this matter on a case-by-case basis.
- Should the application involve crossing only land which is adopted, we will respond advising we have no comment.
- The only exception will be if the applicant is a tenant of the Council in which case the procedure for tenants applying to complete alterations should be considered.
- Should the land involve crossing land, in particular “green space” the Housing Service will not approve permission to cross the said land should it be greater than one medium-sized car length.
- Permission from the Housing Service will only be granted if there is adequate space to park the vehicle in the curtilage of the property and subject to planning permission if required.
- The Housing Service will reply to the Highway Authority with the outcome of its consideration.
- In no circumstances will permission be given to cross Council owned land which is regarded as “green amenity space”. I would suggest such areas are “obvious” but to aid understanding include green wedges left at the corner of estate roads, green areas which you would regard as common areas on estates, and wide verges that are greater than the length of a medium sized car.
- Should the Housing Service agree a crossing over its green space it does so on the basis the Highway Authority accept responsibility for its future maintenance and confirmation from the Highway Authority will be required.

Appeal

- Should a resident not agree with the decision of the Housing Service they should be advised to consider the Council’s Complaints procedure as the means to challenge the decision.

16 Duddon Drive – Land Sale enquiry



AGENDA ITEM 16

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2015-16

SCHEME	PROCUREMENT TYPE	AVAILABLE BUDGET	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPL. DATE	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS	Leasholders affected?
RE-ROOFING AND POINTING WORKS - ROOSEGATE ESTATE PHASE 2 (2-3 YEARS DELIVERY PLAN)	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£975,000	£551,162	26.5.2015	31.3.2016	DLP Roofing	70% COMPLETE	No
FLAT ROOF IMPROVEMENTS HINDPOOL AND EWAN CLOSE	ESTIMATES	£66,000	£67,385	01/07/2015	31.3.2016	CUMBRIA ROOFING	100% COMPLETE	Yes
RE-POINTING/RENDERING ORMSGILL ESTATE	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£538,000	£158,804	01/08/2015	31.3.2016	DLP Roofing	40% COMPLETE	No
EXTERNAL DOOR REPLACEMENTS - DALTON	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£30,000	£70,931	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	TOP NOTCH	100% COMPLETE	No
WINDOW REPLACEMENTS VARIOUS HOUSING AREAS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£504,000	£507,773	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	TOP NOTCH	100% COMPLETE	No
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE PAINTING - CENTRAL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£37,000	£55,451	01/11/2015	31.3.2016	GEORGE JONES	100% COMPLETE	Yes
GARAGE IMPROVEMENTS	CUMBRIA ROOFING	£88,000	£78,651	02/08/2015	31.3.2016	CUMBRIA ROOFING	100% COMPLETE	No
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£255,000	£317,909	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	K WILSON	100% COMPLETE	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£180,000	£192,556	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£125,000	£95,530	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£455,000	£432,380	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£250,000	£111,741	01/04/2015	31.3.2016	G JONES	100% COMPLETE	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2015-16

	Funding Available 2015-16	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£1,070,200	£1,528,554	£20,581	143%
Voids	£400,355	£721,789	£7,699	180%
Gas Servicing	£195,392	£169,471	£3,758	87%
Decoration Vouchers	£30,000	£29,837	£577	99%
Environmental Impmts	£25,000	£21,819	£481	87%
Disabled Adaptations	£100,000	£126,342	£1,923	126%
Electrical Testing	£81,000	£90,575	£1,558	112%
Door Entry Maintenance	£20,000	£22,260	£385	111%