

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 14th September, 2017
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 15th June, 2017 (copy attached).
5. Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership.

FOR DECISION

OPERATIONAL

- (D) 6. Recharge Proposal: Amendment to the 'Standard Repair Charge Pricelist'.
- (D) 7. Fire Safety.
- (D) 8. Management of Communal Entrances.

FOR INFORMATION

9. Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance 2017/18.
10. Performance Information Report.

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

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM MEMBERS:

Councillors: K. Hamilton (Chairman)
D. Barlow
S. Blezard
D. Brook
J. Heath
W. McEwan
A. Thurlow
L. Williams

Tenant Reps: Mandy Anderson
Allan McIntosh
Mervyn Gray
Eddie Lynch

Substitutes: Two vacant positions

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

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Published: 7th June, 2017.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM

Meeting: Thursday 15th June, 2017
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Hamilton (Chairman), Barlow, Blezard, Brook, Heath, McEwan and Williams.

Tenant Representatives:- Mr M. Gray, Mr E. Lynch and Mr A. McIntosh.

Officers Present:- Colin Garnett (Assistant Director - Housing), Janice Sharp (Operations Manager) and Paula Westwood (Democratic Services Officer – Member Support).

1 – Minute’s Silence

The Chairman requested Members to stand and observe a minute’s silence as a mark of respect for the former Borough Councillor David Marcus who had recently passed away.

2 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February, 2017 were taken as read and confirmed.

3 – Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Tenant Representative, Mrs M. Anderson.

4 – Appointments of Representatives to Working Groups etc.

The Executive Director reported that at the Annual Council meeting on 16th May, 2017 the allocation of seats in respect of Forums, Panels, Working Groups etc. had been agreed.

The Housing Management Forum had been requested to nominate Members and Tenant Representatives to the Housing Service Review Working Group, the Tenant Scrutiny Working Group and the Tenants’ Complaints Panel for 2017/2018 in accordance with the proportionality indicated in the report.

RECOMMENDED:- That the membership for 2017/2018 be agreed as follows:-

Housing Service Review Working Group

Council Representatives (3:1) – Councillors Brook, Hamilton, McEwan and Heath.
Tenant Representative – Mr A McIntosh.

Tenant Scrutiny Working Group

Council Representatives (2:1) – Councillors Barlow, McEwan and Heath.

Tenant Representatives – Mrs M. Anderson, Mrs P. Charnley and Mr A. McIntosh.

Tenants' Complaints Panel

Council Representatives (1:0) – Councillor Hamilton.

Tenant Representatives – Mrs M Anderson and Mr A McIntosh.

5 – Update: Syrian Resettlement Programme

The Assistant Director - Housing reported that Cumbria had agreed to contribute to the national resettlement programme and accommodate refugees. A framework had been established with membership from relevant organisations in order to ensure the successful resettlement of refugees. A local Liaison Group had also been established. He advised that the first group of refugees had now arrived and been housed in the north of the County.

He reported that the Council had previously agreed to contribute to the Cumbria Resettlement Programme by providing accommodation for ten people each year over the four years of the programme (Minute No. 28 of the Housing Management Forum meeting 26th November, 2015 refers).

At that time it had been envisaged that the type of property required would probably be family sized houses, three or four-bedroomed. Having regard to the limited availability and demand for such property in the Council's own housing stock, the decision of the Council was that Officers should work with the private sector to identify suitable property. He advised that he had communicated with private landlords who had shown an interest to assist and that over the summer months he would be exploring the option further to identify specific property that would meet the requirements issued by the Home Office.

He reported that from the experience of the first group of refugees, it had become apparent that a range of property would be required. In short, the process would involve the Council identifying suitable property and the Home Office would then look to match the property with the needs of refugees. To that end he requested Members to re-consider the Council's approach to identifying suitable property. In particular, two-bedroomed flats were often more readily available and could be limited in demand due to a range of factors. Should that be agreed, he advised that he would also continue to look to identify private sector property to meet the Council's commitment over the term of the programme.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note the information contained in the report; and
2. To agree that Officers be authorised to make flat-type properties available from its own stock and suspend the requirements of Choice Based Lettings for achieving that purpose.

6 – Housing Management Performance Report 2016/17

The Assistant Director - Housing reported on the end of year performance information which is attached at **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

The performance indicator report showed Housing Management's overall level of achievement against a set of benchmark targets. The benchmark was the Housemark 'median' cross sector performance scores from 2016/17.

The purpose of the report was to demonstrate the progress against the actions which had been undertaken last year and to refresh the background context which had impacted upon the results of 2016/17. The report also outlined the ongoing focus of Officers to service delivery.

Actions for 2016/17

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>Improve monitoring of and management of void property.</i>
Action 3:	<i>Progress the introduction of the new CX software.</i>

Influences for 2017/18

Rent Collection

With a further loss of 1% to rent income and more movement from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit, the Council would look at better ways of working and making the most of CX to help support that movement.

Business Planning

CX would provide opportunities for improved efficiency across the service which would be progressed once the system was operational.

Control of Maintenance Expenditure

The emphasis would still be to reduce void turnaround times, improve routine maintenance services and to maintain Decent Homes standard.

Right to Buys

Right to Buys had tripled in 2016/17 and similar losses to housing stock were expected this year which would impact on both revenue and repair costs. General needs dwellings stand at 2,588.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note the information contained in the report and at **Appendix A** to these Minutes; and
2. To note Actions 1-3 for 2017/18 as follows:-

Action 1 – 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;

Action 2 – Improve monitoring of and management of void property; and

Action 3 – Progress the introduction of the new CX Software.

7 – Housing Maintenance Investment Programme 2017/18

The Assistant Director - Housing submitted a report providing Members with an update of the appointment of suitably qualified Contractors to carry out major void works, bathroom, kitchen and central heating installations following the recent closure of AB Mitchell Developments Ltd.

He reported that Officers had held discussions with representatives from Cumbria Housing Partners (CHP) and Procure Plus Holdings (PPH) in order to identify suitable alternative Contractors from the existing CHP Framework to carry out central heating and bathroom installations and to discuss the option to incorporate kitchens and major void improvements into the existing contract arrangements with Hughes Brothers.

In order to ensure the delivery of the 2017/18 investment programme there existed an urgent need to identify and appoint alternative Contractors to carry out the works. Officers had requested PPH to carry out a detailed review each work stream with regard to the options currently available to the Council. PPH concluded that the Council could seek to appoint the following Contractors:-

- Central Heating Installations – AFM Gas (Direct Selection of No.1 ranked Contractor from the CHP framework);
- Bathroom Installations – Wright Build (Direct Selection of No.1 ranked Contractor from the CHP framework);
- Major Void Improvements – Hughes Brothers (Amendment to the existing responsive repairs and void contract); and
- Kitchen Installations – To be completed by Hughes Brothers when properties become vacant (Amendment to the existing responsive repairs and void contract).

Summaries of the Direct Selection reports for AFM Gas and Wright Build had been appended to the report.

It was noted that PPH had also reviewed the existing responsive repairs and void contract arrangements with Hughes Brothers and had advised that the works previously carried out by AB Mitchell could be incorporated into the existing contract with Hughes Brothers. A summary report from PPH had also been appended to the report

The Assistant Director - Housing advised Members that initial discussions had been held with the Contractors and he confirmed that AFM Gas, Wright Build and Hughes Brothers had been in agreement to undertake this work in line with the existing framework terms and conditions. He further advised that the installation rates provided by PPH represented value for money and had been comparable to the costs provided by the previous Contractor.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To agree to the following Contractor appointments for the remaining period of the existing CHP/PPH Framework (2017/2019):-
 - Central Heating Installations – AFM Gas (Direct Selection procedure); and
 - Bathroom Installations – Wright Build (Direct Selection procedure); and
2. To agree that the following works be incorporated into the existing responsive repairs and void contract with Hughes Brothers:-
 - Major Void Improvements; and
 - Kitchen Installations (to be completed when properties become vacant).

8 – Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance 2016/17 Year End Expenditure

The Assistant Director - Housing reported information relating to the Planned Investment and Planned Maintenance Programme for 2016/17. The information is attached at **Appendix B** to these Minutes.

RESOLVED:- To note the information.

REFERRED ITEMS

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS ARE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

9 – Housing Revenue Account Finances

The Assistant Director - Housing submitted a report to update Members on the savings still required in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to reflect the current reduction in rents and to ensure financial stability and resilience in the medium term.

Housing Revenue Account: Summary of current and future pressures

From a financial perspective, the Housing Service operated on the principle that its operating costs would be met from the income received in rents from its tenants. Similar to other organisations, its viability was often influenced by factors outside its control.

The service was shrinking through Right to Buy; there was little prospect of replacing the stock lost; and there was very limited opportunity to increase income to replace that lost by Right to Buy.

That had been an ongoing issue for many years but was now further compounded by the instruction to reduce rents by 1% annually for a four year period. The Council had focussed on reducing expenditure to reflect the reduction of rent over the last two years, but still needed to consider how it would do so over the next two years.

The Assistant Director - Housing, reported that so far the savings agreed had resulted in a minimal impact on the service from the viewpoint of service users. To continue in that way would become more of a challenge and consideration of the Housing Service's model for service delivery would have to be considered to meet the requirements of becoming increasingly efficient, but fundamentally reducing costs to reflect the loss of income.

Progress to date

He reported that it had been agreed to establish a Housing Service Review Working Group (HSRWG) (Minute No. 58 of the meeting held on 25th August 2016 refers) to consider and suggest a range of possible savings. The HSRWG had identified a range of options which totalled c£450k including some options for increasing income.

Those options had been used to produce the draft HRA budget for 2017/18 which had subsequently been agreed and indicated a nil balance.

The reduction in costs included:-

- Deletion of a Senior Housing Officer post: £20k
- Remaining budget for two temp posts: £24k
- Reduction of tenant incentive schemes: £15k
- Reduction of voluntary debt repayment: £209k

In total, the reductions identified and agreed in the HRA budget for 2017/18 equalled £268k.

He emphasised that the approach was to balance the budget, which had been achieved, but a balanced budget meant the full cost of the impact of the reduced income over the next two years still required consideration. He advised that further meetings of the HSRWG would take place in the near future and that further direction would be provided to that Group to consider the matter.

He reported that the Director of Resources had forecasted the HRA medium term financial position. The headline statement suggested the HRA would move into a deficit position for 2018/19 of £0.3m; for 2019/20 a £0.5m deficit; and deficits in future years.

This projection had been based on a number of factors which would influence the performance of the HRA as follows:-

- Rent - 33 sales in 2016/17; 30 used for future years;
- Rent - 1% reduction continued in 2018/19 & 2019/20;
- Rent - 2% increase assumed from 2020/21 onwards;
- Maintenance - static; properties sold but major works continued plus cost pressures;
- Staff - contracted incremental advancement;
- Staff - pay award 1% per annum;
- Property - utility inflation 5% per annum;
- Property - NNDR increase in multiplier each year;
- Contracts - grounds maintenance inflation 3.2% per annum;
- Contracts - building cleaning inflation 1.7% per annum;
- Pension deficit - increase of 2.2% per annum;
- Income - garage rents increase 2% per annum;
- Treasury - maturing loans repaid;
- Treasury - provision to repay debt at 2017/18 level;
- Treasury - interest on balances reflect HRA finance projections; and
- Treasury - historic PWLB premium and discount written out.

The timing of realising savings and reductions within the HRA was important as the minimum balance would be breached in 2018/19 without action being taken.

The HSRWG had generally, through looking at 'good housekeeping', provided options to achieve the reduction in expenditure and could continue to do so. However the scale of reduction in expenditure required and timing would most likely require a more fundamental review of the service delivery model to progress further.

It was noted that even if the £0.5m savings which were required was achieved, at the end of the current policy period there would remain the challenge of responding to the ongoing reduction of income from Right to Buy.

Progressing the work of the HSRWG

The Assistant Director - Housing advised Members that in his report in August 2016, he had raised the matter of the Council remaining open to alternative options to the ownership and management of the Council's housing stock when he had suggested

establishing the HSRWG. That matter had not been progressed by the HSRWG but in view of the above, he suggested that it must remain an option.

In terms of providing direction for the HSRWG he made the following proposals:-

1. The Council needed confirm its position regarding the option to consider stock transfer or pursue a retention policy;
2. The HSRWG would be required to continue the approach of 'good housekeeping' to provide options for reducing expenditure; and
3. The HSRWG should be instructed to consider the service delivery model provided by the Council, and alternatives, to reflect current challenges and to futureproof the service as far as practical.

It was moved by Councillor McEwan and seconded by Councillor Hamilton that all Members of the Housing Management Forum should meet together with the full Tenants' Forum and Tenants and with Residents to discuss the matter of HRA finances.

It was moved by Councillor Brook and unanimously agreed that the Council should retain its Housing Stock.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note progress on savings in the last financial year and the Director of Resources' projection of further savings required;
2. To agree that the Council adopt a retention policy and not consider the option of transferring stock at this time;
3. To agree the HSRWG continued the approach of 'good housekeeping' to provide options for reducing expenditure;
4. To agree the HSRWG be instructed to consider the model of service delivery provided by the Council to reflect current challenges, and to future-proof the service as far as practical; and
5. To agree that Members of the Housing Management Forum would meet together with the full Tenants Forum and with Tenants and Residents to discuss the HRA finances and the savings required.

10 – Sale of Miscellaneous Land on Council Estates

The Assistant Director - Housing advised Members that he had delegated authority to agree the sale of miscellaneous land within Council estates. It had been sometime since this Policy had been agreed and the purpose of his report was to seek to recommend and confirm the continued approach.

He reported that requests to purchase miscellaneous land on Council estates were ad hoc and small in number (perhaps one or two per year) and in some

circumstances it could be to the mutual benefit of the resident, the Council and the wider community to agree such requests.

For the sake of clarification, miscellaneous land referred to small sections of land on estates which had been originally 'features' of the estate when originally designed. More often or not, from a street scene perspective, the areas of land previously sold could be viewed as a 'garden area' of the adjoining property and their sale had no detriment to the area.

He reported that whilst the sale of the land had a benefit to the purchaser, it was often the case that such sales could resolve a range of problems and in considering a request Officers would in the first instance consider the impact on the estate, and the community. Should a request be agreed, such sales could also lead to savings in grounds maintenance costs.

He advised Members that previously, applicants had been required to make a £100 non-refundable payment at the start of the purchasing process. However, the policy had been updated requiring a £250 non-refundable payment.

A copy of the revised Policy and Procedure had been appended to his report.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. To note the information contained in the report; and
2. To agree the continued Policy for considering and agreeing requests to purchase miscellaneous pieces of land in accordance with the Policy and Procedure note which had been appended to the report.

The meeting closed at 2.55 p.m.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: 2015/16

Rent Arrears & Collection Dwellings (exc. Dispersed)	Actual 2014/15	Actual 2015/16	Apr-June 2016	Apr-Sept 2016	Apr-Dec 2016	Actual 2016/17
£ Rent & Service Charges due (Including empty properties)	£11,265,022	£11,416,157	£2,739,809	£5,553,182	£8,313,971	£11,268,457
£ rent loss due to empty dwellings (voids)	£164,758	£149,667	£39,896	£75,947	£112,481.00	£161,346.00
£ Rent collected from Current Tenants	£11,059,494	£11,267,074	£2,653,648	£5,467,410	£7,956,648	£10,998,033
£ Rent collected from Former Tenants	48,075	56,798	£21,877	£45,876	£62,499	£64,087
Total Rent collected as % of rent due	99.63%	100.01%	98.29%	99.82%	97.01%	99.02%
£ Current Arrears	£395,657	£360,453	£412,851	£462,914	£487,824	£394,752
£ Former Arrears	£192,359	£230,070	£234,690	£235,931	£246,925	£265,780
Write Offs (Gross)	£130,795	£105,959	£18,913	£33,219	£69,702	£96,474
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	11	17	2	6	15	25
£ Rent Arrears UC claimants	£9,779	£36,011	£71,418	£93,942	£99,958	£56,031
Arrears & Collection - Other Properties						
£ Rent arrears Dispersed (Homeless)	£401	£1,778	£888	£2,161	£1,197	£2,203
£ Rent arrears Garages	£2,769	£2,294	£3,197	£8,235	£10,097	£7,748
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£2,966	£5,028	£4,907	£7,422	£6,986	£6,070
£ rent loss due to empty Dispersed (Homeless)	£27,528	£35,255	£8,331	£17,314	£26,545	£32,390
£ rent loss due to empty Garages	£2,501	£1,308	£411	£905	£1,112	£1,656
£ rent loss due to empty Shops	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Void & Lettings (General Needs)						
Total Dwellings	2649	2633	2625	2619	2609	2601
Total number of re-lets	324	254	80	119	182	248
% of re-lets accepted on first offer	72.8%	62.2%	67.6%	71.4%	69.8%	68.1%
Number of re-lets that underwent Major Works	17	101	13	39	65	94
Average relet time in days (Standard)	37	38	15	14	13	12
Average re-let time in days (Major Works)	62	60	41	40	37	40
Average re-let time in days (all re-lets)	44	46	56	54	52	52
Number of units vacant and available for letting at period end	5	31	20	19	23	37
Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end	26	12	11	9	19	5
No.Tenancies terminated	267	271	67	122	194	261
Tenancy Turnover %	10.1%	10.3%	2.6%	4.7%	7.4%	10.0%
ASB						
Number of new anti-social behaviour cases reported	38	84	7	13	18	38
Number of closed successfully resolved ASB cases	100%	1	2	2	3	5
Number of closed unresolved anti-social behaviour cases		66	1	2	3	3
Repairs & Maintenance						
Average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs	16.48	15	14	19	18	18
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit	N/A	96.4%	94.9%	97.34%	95.62%	94.85%
% all responsive repairs completed on time	78.4%	86.7%	89.7%	81.97%	84.26%	85.88%
Number Repair Orders completed	10,282	10,290	2,031	4,250	4,499	6,190
Average Responsive repairs per property	3.9	3.9	0.8	1.6	1.7	2.4
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	N/A	88.0%	91.97%	93.23%	85.05%	87.59%

Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance						
Percentage of dwellings with a gas safety certificate renewed by anniversary	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	2.8%	0.49%	0.38%	0.38%	0.34%	0%
*Average SAP rating of dwellings at end of year (based on RD SAP 9.83)	69.2	69.4	69.4	69.4	69.4	69.4
Homeless						
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	52	70	38	67	65	77
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	36	22	29	33	37	62
Homeless Total Cases Closed	689	894	255	333	581	
Homeless Advice	178	227	139	210	358	492
Homeless Prevention	321	385	130	233	262	326
Homeless Successful Preventions	174	158	89	123	213	277
Eligible Homeless (Owed a full duty)	16	17	2	4	7	11
Staff satisfaction with employer	Actual 2014/15	Actual 2015/16	Apr-June 2016	Apr-Sept 2016	Apr-Dec 2016	Actual 2016/17
Average permanent employee headcount	56	53	55	54	54	54
Number of leavers	0	3	0	1	0	0
Ave. working days lost / sickness absence	14.3	18.8	12.5	12.6	12.75	13.08
Customer contact & complaints						
The number of Stage 1 complaints upheld in the year	2	2	1	1	2	4
Percentage of complaints resolved at first contact						
Water Charge Collection						
Direct Debit payers	765	793	785	790	773	772
Successful applications for Support Tariffs	510	570	567	527	520	562
Housing Register						
Cumbria Choice Register	1421	1242	1285	1369	1080	1186
Active Direct Applicants	1151	1018	1057	1075	882	960
Active Transfer Applicants	270	224	228	294	198	226
Housing Stock						
Houses	1263	1252	1242	1237	1231	1223
Flats	1230	1213	1215	1214	1210	1209
Bungalows	156	156	156	156	156	156
General Needs Dwellings	2649	2621	2613	2607	2597	2588
Dispersed	10	10	10	10	10	11
Homeless (Cold Weather Provision)		3	0	0	2	1
New Lives Project		2	2	2	2	2
Adelphi Court	0	12	12	12	12	12
Total Dwelling Stock	2659	2648	2637	2631	2623	2614
Community Centres	5	5	5	5	5	5
Leaseholds	208	208	209	210	212	212
Garages	489	489	497	497	504	504
Shops	19	19	19	19	19	19
TOTAL PROPERTIES	3380	3369	3367	3362	3363	3354

RTB Properties / Land (Values)						
Houses	£509,170	£498,310	£394,875	£601,035	£883,765	£1,170,025
Flats	£60,540	£0	£25,960	£44,560	£87,820	£87,820
Bungalows	£28,670	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Land	£3,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TL	£601,380	£498,310	£420,835	£645,595	£971,585	£1,257,845
Satisfaction						
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall	88%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	87%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are listened to	78%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of the home	90	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%
Percentage of residents satisfied with the neighbourhood	84%	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their rent provides VFM	90%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their service charges provide value for money	81%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%

APPENDIX B

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2016/17

SCHEME	PROCUREMENT TYPE	AVAILABLE BUDGET	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPL. DATE	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS	Leaseholders affected?
RE-ROOFING AND POINTING WORKS -ROOSEGATE ESTATE PHASE 3 (2-3 YEARS DELIVERY PLAN)	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£1,319,625	£ 1,534,840	1.5.2016	20.12.2016	DLP Roofing	100% COMPLETE	No
RE-POINTING/ RENDERING ORMSGILL ESTATE (PHASE 2)	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£250,000	£ 398,057	01/08/2016	20.12.2016	DLP Roofing	100% COMPLETE	No
WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENTS VARIOUS HOUSING AREAS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£400,000	£ 480,460	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	TOP NOTCH	100% COMPLETE	No
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE PAINTING - CENTRAL	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£10,000	£ 22,661	01/10/2016	31.3.2017	GEORGE JONES	100% COMPLETE	Yes
GARAGE IMPROVEMENTS	CUMBRIA ROOFING	£75,000	£ 1,655	01/10/2016	31.3.2017	CUMBRIA ROOFING	100% COMPLETE	No
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£355,300	£ 406,154	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	K WILSON	100% COMPLETE	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£149,400	£ 142,846	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
KITCHENS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£125,000	£ 1,619,921	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£455,000	£ 387,521	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	AB MITCHELL	100% COMPLETE	No
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£150,000	£ 80,830	01/04/2016	31.3.2017	G JONES	100% COMPLETE	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2016-17

	Funding Available 2016-17	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£ 1,070,200	£ 1,026,965	£ 20,581	96%
Voids	£ 503,044	£ 683,400	£ 9,674	136%
Gas Servicing	£ 195,392	£ 322,891	£ 3,758	165%
Decoration Vouchers	£ 30,000	£ 34,283	£ 577	114%
Environmental Impmts	£ 25,000	£ 20,093	£ 481	80%
Disabled Adaptations	£ 100,000	£ 238,478	£ 1,923	238%
Electrical Testing	£ 81,000	£ 39,955	£ 1,558	49%
Door Entry Maintenance	£ 20,000	£ 23,317	£ 385	117%

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 6
Date of Meeting: 14th September, 2017	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Recharge Proposal: Amendment to the 'Standard Repair Charge Pricelist'	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to agree the future approach for the cost of recharging tenants or former tenants in accordance with the Rechargeable Repair Policy.	
Recommendations:	
Members are recommended to agree the principle that future charges will be based on the actual cost of the Schedule of Rate item at the time of the repair being completed.	

Background

At your meeting held on 1st December 2011 members agreed to following recommendations regarding the Rechargeable Policy;

- Agree to stricter management of Responsible Repairs which fall outside the responsibility of the Tenancy Agreement to reduce the overall volume and cost of repairs.
- Agree the principles outlined in the Rechargeable Repair Policy proposal and recovery procedures from current and former tenants and Leaseholders.
- Agree the transfer of the responsibility for Rechargeable Repairs from the Borough Treasurer's Department to Housing.

Report

The aims and objectives of the recharge policy agreed by members in 2011 remain unchanged:

- Current tenants take a responsible attitude towards the maintenance of their home through the payment of necessary repairs which are deemed as negligent or who have caused deliberate damage.
- Tenants or former tenants are recharged for repairs required which are not fair wear and tear or due to damage.

Whilst the procedure for recovering monies owed by Tenants or former Tenants is well established, the Standard Repair Charge Pricelist was based on prices submitted by Vinci Facilities and hence is now out of date.

Since the original price list was agreed, we now have a new Contractor in place and there have been changes to the Schedule of Rates cost to the Council for delivering repairs.

I would propose in the future that the Council agree that the costs recharged are based on the Schedule of Rate item pertinent to the time the repair is required.

(i) Legal Implications

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

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has no implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

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

(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

Rechargeable Repair / Work Procedure (2011)

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting: 14th September, 2017	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Fire Safety	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to update Members on our approach to fire safety in the housing stock and agree our approach to particular matters.	
Recommendations:	
1) To note the Council's approach to fire safety in the residential housing stock;	
2) To agree actions to review Risk Assessments in residential properties and for shops and community centres in the housing stock; and	
3) To agree that the cost of such surveys be identified within the existing agreed maintenance budget.	

Background

Since the introduction of the Regulatory Reform Act – Fire Safety 2005 the Council in its role as a Landlord has a responsibility to ensure the appropriate action is taken to protect its Tenants from the event of a fire. We have completed and regularly review such assessments for our three storey residential blocks of flats. Following on from such assessments, over a number of years we have instigated various work to ensure Residents are kept safe, including more recently installing linked heat and smoke detectors throughout three-storey blocks to ensure a fire in one location would ensure a warning to all Residents.

Report

Following recent national events, Officers have considered our approach to completing fire assessments. We completed assessments some ten years ago and have reviewed them annually since. Such assessments have focused on three storey residential property. Following such reviews, from time to time we have identified various actions to improve safety for Residents. This goes back some years and included removing the opportunity for Residents to keep refuge in communal areas, linked smoke and heat alarm systems to the design of communal entrance doors.

There are 48 x three-storey and 75 x two-storey flats.

It is most likely, following the concerns about fire safety in high rise property, there will emerge over time further guidance and review of building Regulations suggesting changes to current practice. Whilst we do not have any properties over three storey, it is appropriate for us to consider the issue in the context of our own property.

In consideration of our current position, I would suggest it is probably appropriate to consider a “specialist” adviser to work with our technical staff to review our current position and complete new assessments. In doing so I would highlight the following:

- Current assessments are for three storey only, perhaps this should be extended to two storey with enclosed communal entrances.
- There are 23 shops under the management of the Housing Service, some have separate living accommodation above which are rented to an individual not linked to the occupier of the shop.
- We have three operating community centres.

It has been Officers’ view previously that the most significant risks relate to three storey properties. However for the sake of completeness I would recommend in appointing a specialist adviser we include all the properties highlighted above.

Until the assessments are complete we cannot forecast whether any additional measures will be required, but if they should we would look to build them into future maintenance plans.

We are currently obtaining estimates for completing the assessments and expect the cost to be below £20k. No specific monies were identified in the maintenance budget for this purpose but I would suggest it will be possible to fund it from the existing agreed budget.

Summary

It is sometime since we took advice regards fire risk assessments. Officers have regularly reviewed our existing assessments and instigated appropriate actions over the years. However, following consideration of the matter I would recommend the appointment of a specialist to review and update our assessments and take the opportunity to include additional properties.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has minor legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has minor implications.

(iii) Financial Implications

The recommendation has minor financial implications.

(iv) Health and Safety Implications

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

Background Papers

Nil

HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM	(D) Agenda Item 8
Date of Meeting: 14th September, 2017	
Reporting Officer: Colin Garnett, Assistant Director - Housing	
Title: Management of Communal Entrances	
Summary and Conclusions:	
The purpose of this report is to highlight to Forum Members an issue in enclosed communal access routes in flats and consider an approach to dealing with the matter.	
Recommendations:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) To acknowledge and agree the presence of Residents' belongings in communal routes is unacceptable;2) To agree no action is taken at the current time to provide alternative storage arrangements for such possessions but this position may be reviewed at a future date; and3) To agree the approach of the Housing Service to adopt an approach of negotiation with Residents to resolve the problem but that in some instances resorting to legal action maybe the only option.	

Report

This Report specifically relates to residential properties where access to such properties is via an enclosed communal entrance used by all Residents in the block.

I would also highlight that this matter relates to a hazard which is relevant to Agenda Item No. 7 re: Fire Safety.

More recently, following a complaint by a Resident to the Fire Service regarding mobility scooters being stored in communal entrances, a Fire Officer visited the block in question with a member of the Technical Team.

In short the Fire Officer made it clear that the parking of such disability scooters was unacceptable to the Fire Service as they, can in themselves be a fire hazard because they are powered by a battery and secondly are a hazard should the particular block need to be evacuated.

Following the visit Housing Officers did carryout a one off survey of all blocks to establish the extent of the problem. From the survey it was self evident that there were a number of instances where Tenants', or visitors' possessions were evident in communal stairwells.

Whilst I understand the complaint related to mobility scooters, the survey revealed an array of possessions from bikes to prams to Residents clearly trying to improve the appearance with plants and pieces of carpet.

It has been our practice to tackle such problems in the past and have regularly asked residents to not leave, for example bikes in such areas. However, I would suggest action has been on a piecemeal basis and we have been less vigilant with regards disability scooters and where Residents are trying to improve such entrances.

With reference to the Tenancy Agreement, and the draft revised agreement, both have provision to exclude such activity.

I should be grateful for Members' advice on the approach to be adopted by the Housing Service.

I would ask you to acknowledge that Housing should adopt the approach that communal entrances be kept clear and action taken to remove such hazards. I would ask you to consider the following approach:

- We will publicise by directly targeting Residents in properties with enclosed communal entrances that they should be kept clear of any possessions.
- We will seek to identify Residents who do not follow the advice by visiting, looking at alternative arrangements and negotiating a solution.
- We will only use legal action as a very last resort should Residents not co-operate which would most probably be an injunction in the first instance.
- Of course the final option is the least desirable because, should it be a mobility scooter such actions could be interpreted as being heavy handed. With regards this last point I have shared this report with the Barrow & District Disability Association and will share any comments I receive at your meeting.

I would also add further comments for your consideration.

- 1) This is all about reducing hazards for the benefit of all residents in the block. However the Resident with the disability scooter maybe reliant on it to enable them to get out and this approach maybe distressing. However for the safety of all I do think it needs to be tackled and we will, as we would normally adopt an approach that is as sensitive as possible to seek a solution.
- 2) Where Residents have plants or small carpet pieces, they have previously been interpreted as them improving the appearance of the area over and above what the Council has done. Should such not deem to be a hazard to all Residents should an evacuation be required, at this time we will not focus on this issue but review it after new Fire Risk Assessments are completed.
- 3) We have considered the option to provide "storage" for mobility scooters in particular. It is not clear this could be a universal solution and secondly who would meet the cost. As the process of dealing with the matter progresses, we will consider the options with regard to this.

In terms of operational arrangements, the responsibility for resolving such matters lies with the Operations Team. In addition we have scheduled inspections of such areas periodically by our Mobile Caretaker Team who record a range of factors pertinent to the block.

In addition, we do operate a regular cleaning service in such blocks and I can report we have excellent working arrangements for communication and whilst not a part of the service specification, will provide the possibility of their operatives reporting back any possessions left in such entrances.

Our current working arrangements do not allow for weekly visits to such blocks, but through the above arrangements we do ensure regular visits and reporting systems.

Summary

Whilst other actions are proposed regarding the safety in communal flats, I recognise the leaving of possessions is a hazard and this is confirmed by the Fire Service. I do expect there will be resistance to the approach suggested and the approach of negotiating a solution will be time consuming. At the present time the Housing Service are, as a team, focused on introducing the new IT system imminently, but the Forum's direction on the matter will be helpful in planning an appropriate approach to the matter.

(i) Legal Implications

The recommendation has no legal implications.

(ii) Risk Assessment

The recommendation has significant implications and action is required.

(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 little impact on users with disabilities and Barrow & District Disability Association has been consulted.

(vi) Health and Well-being Implications

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

Background Papers

Nil

PLANNED INVESTMENTS 2017/18

SCHEME	PROCUREMENT TYPE	AVAILABLE BUDGET	EXPEND. TO DATE	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS	Leasholders affected?
RE-ROOFING AND POINTING WORKS ROOSEGATE ESTATE PHASE 4	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£490,000	£225,452	1.4.2017	1.8.2017	DLP Roofing	100% COMPLETE Final account stage	No
WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENTS VARIOUS HOUSING AREAS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£200,000	£0	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	TOP NOTCH	0% COMPLETE	No
WALNEY RENDER & DAMP PROOFING WORKS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£234,000	£0	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	DLP Roofing	SCAFFOLDING ERECTED WORKS IMMINENT	Yes
DALTON CAVITY WALL TIE REPLACEMENTS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£150,000	£0	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	DLP Roofing	SCAFFOLDING ERECTED WORKS ONGOING	No
CRAVEN PARK COURT RE-ROOFING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£120,000	£759	1.10.2017	1.4.2018	DLP Roofing	DUE TO COMMENCE WORKS IN OCTOBER 2017	Yes
YEW TREE ESTATE RE-ROOFING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£240,000	£0	1.10.2017	1.4.2018	DLP Roofing	DUE TO COMMENCE WORKS IN OCTOBER 2017	Yes
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE LIGHTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£40,000	£0	1.11.2016	1.4.2018	GEORGE JONES	DUE TO COMMENCE IN NOVEMBER 2017	Yes
COMMUNAL ENTRANCE PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£10,000	£0	1.11.2017	1.4.2018	GEORGE JONES	DUE TO COMMENCE IN NOVEMBER 2017	Yes
GARAGE IMPROVEMENTS	CUMBRIA ROOFING	£75,000	£0	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	CUMBRIA ROOFING	GARAGE SITES IDENTIFIED WORKS DUE TO START OCTOBER 2017	No
REWIRES	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£306,000	£113,005	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	K WILSON	50% COMPLETE	No
BATHROOMS	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£126,000	£117	1.8.2017	1.4.2018	WRIGHT BUILD	PRE START SURVEYS IN PROGRESS	No
HEATING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£420,000	£24,313	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	AFM GAS Ltd	10% COMPLETE	No
PAINTING	CUMBRIA HOUSING PARTNERS	£180,000	£17,595	1.4.2017	1.4.2018	G JONES	10% COMPLETE	Yes

HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMMITMENTS 2017/18

	Funding Available 2016-17	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	Weekly Available	Gross Comm. as a % funds available
Tenant Demand Repairs	£1,394,575	£203,039	£26,819	15%
Voids	£480,038	£85,098	£9,232	18%
Gas Servicing	£293,000	£76,708	£5,635	26%
Decoration Vouchers	£30,000	£8,051	£577	27%
Environmental Impmts	£25,000	£5,557	£ 481	22%
Disabled Adaptations	£250,000	£9,103	£ 4,808	4%
Electrical Testing	£81,000	£9,353	£1,558	12%
Door Entry Maintenance	£19,176	£5,324	£ 369	28%

HOUSING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Rent Arrears & Collection Dwellings (exc. Dispersed)	Actual 2015/16	Actual 2016/17	Apr-June 2017/18
£ Rent & Service Charges due (Including empty properties)	£11,416,157	£11,258,442	£2,951,021
£ rent loss due to empty dwellings (voids)	£149,667	£163,054	£37,030
£ Rent collected from Current Tenants	£11,267,074	£10,997,130	£2,698,975
£ Rent collected from Former Tenants	56,798	£85,881	£18,005
Total Rent collected as % of rent due	98.69%	97.70%	74.96%
£ Current Arrears	£360,453	£396,319	£461,177
£ Former Arrears	£230,070	£264,642	£259,731
Write Offs (Gross)	£105,959	£98,187	£18,116
Tenants evicted for rent arrears	17	25	3
£ Rent Arrears UC claimants	£36,011	£56,031	£76,003
Arrears & Collection - Other Properties			
£ Rent arrears Dispersed (Homeless)	£1,778	£3,375	£3,351
£ Rent arrears Garages	£2,294	£7,648	£9,157
£ Rent Arrears Shops	£5,028	£6,070	£5,717
£ rent loss due to empty Dispersed (Homeless)	£35,255	£30,663	£7,926
£ rent loss due to empty Garages	£1,308	£1,377	£286
£ rent loss due to empty Shops	£0	£18	£0
Void & Lettings (General Needs)			
Total Dwellings	2633	2603	2595
Total number of re-lets	254	248	63
% of re-lets accepted on first offer	62.2%	68.1%	60.3%
Number of re-lets that underwent Major Works	101	94	21
Average relet time in days (Standard)	38	12	15
Average re-let time in days (Major Works)	60	40	42
Average re-let time in days (all re-lets)	46	52	53
Number of units vacant and available for letting at period end	31	37	32
Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end	12	5	10
No.Tenancies terminated	271	261	64
Tenancy Turnover %	10.3%	10.0%	2.5%
ASB			
Number of new anti-social behaviour cases reported	84	29	4
Number of closed successfully resolved ASB cases	1	25	6
Number of closed unresolved anti-social behaviour cases	66	1	0
Repairs & Maintenance			
Average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs	15	18	12
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit	96.4%	95.5%	95.5%
% all responsive repairs completed on time	86.7%	85.9%	90.5%
Number Repair Orders completed	10,290	6,190	989
Average Responsive repairs per property	3.9	2.4	0.4
Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	88.0%	82%	87.6%

Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance			
Percentage of dwellings with a gas safety certificate renewed by anniversary	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard	0.49%	0%	0%
*Average SAP rating of dwellings at end of year (based on RD SAP 9.83)	69.4	69.4	69.4
Homeless			
Homeless ave. days in temporary dispersed accommodation	70	77	38
Homeless ave. days in temporary B&B accommodation	22	62	3
Homeless Total Cases Closed	894	1099	128
Homeless Advice	227	492	81
Homeless Prevention	385	326	63
Homeless Successful Preventions	158	277	61
Eligible Homeless (Owed a full duty)	17	11	6
Staff satisfaction with employer	Actual 2015/16	Actual 2016/17	Apr-June 2017/18
Average permanent employee headcount	53	53	51
Number of leavers	3	0	2
Ave. working days lost / sickness absence	18.8	13.1	15.2
Customer contact & complaints			
The number of Stage 1 complaints upheld in the year	2	4	0
Percentage of complaints resolved at first contact	unavailable	unavailable	unavailable
Water Charge Collection			
Direct Debit payers	793	772	789
Successful applications for Support Tarifs	570	562	563
Housing Register			
Cumbria Choice Register	1242	1186	1206
Active Direct Applicants	1018	960	969
Active Transfer Applicants	224	226	237
Housing Stock			
Houses	1252	1223	1218
Flats	1213	1221	1221
Bungalows	156	156	156
General Needs Dwellings	2621	2600	2595
Dispersed	10	12	12
Homeless (Cold Weather Provision)	3	1	0
New Lives Project	2	2	2
Adelphi Court	12	12	12
Total Dwelling Stock	2648	2627	2621
Community Centres	5	5	5
Leaseholds	208	212	213
Garages	489	504	504
Shops	19	19	19
TOTAL PROPERTIES	3369	3367	3362

RTB Propertles / Land (Values)			
Houses	£498,310	£1,170,025	£190,740
Flats	£0	£87,820	£13,500
Bungalows	£0	£0	£0
Land	£0	£0	£0
TL	£498,310	£1,257,845	£204,240
Satisfaction			
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's services overall	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	91%	91%	91%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are listened to	80%	80%	80%
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of the home	91%	91%	91%
Percentage of residents satisfied with the neighbourhood	86%	86%	86%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their rent provides VFM	88%	88%	88%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their service charges provide value for money	83%	83%	83%

Relet & Terminations run from 1/4/17 to 31/3/18