

# HOUSING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 3 JUNE 2020

Present: Councillor T A Cullen, Chair

Councillors: S A Bagshaw  
L A Ball BEM  
B C Carr  
S Carr (ex-officio)  
J C Goold  
D Grindell  
R I Jackson (ex-officio)  
E Kerry  
H G Khaled MBE  
J W McGrath  
J M Owen  
J P T Parker  
H E Skinner  
E Williamson

## 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record

## 3 RECLAIM OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG)

The Committee discussed the proposal to introduce a policy to reclaim Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) in certain circumstances. The Council has a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants for private sector residential adaptations where the appropriate legislative conditions are met. The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of grant) General Consent 2008 allows local authorities to reclaim up to £10,000 of grant, where the amount of DFG given is over £5,000, and where the recipient (owner occupier) disposes, whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise, of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the completion date.

It was queried who would manage the reclaim process and any rights to appeal.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor E Kerry and seconded by Councillor L A Ball BEM:

Wording be added to the policy stating that reclaim decisions would be agreed after consultation with the Chair of this Committee. Appeals would be logged through a formal complaint to the Council and the Local Government Ombudsman if necessary.

The amendment was accepted.

**RESOLVED to adopt the proposed amendment to the current DFG Policy.**

#### 4 HOUSING DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

Members discussed the process of formal consultations during the pandemic and the possible change of use to council garages. It was confirmed that residents had been written to and 2 surveys had been undertaken with more to follow. Several questions had been raised but only 1 objection. Many garages were currently being used for storage purposes.

#### 5 INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE CHARGE REVIEW

In 2017 HQN was appointed to undertake a review of the Council's Retirement Living Service (now known as the Independent Living Service). The report identified that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was subsidising the Independent Living Service by a significant amount. Up to date calculations confirm this to still be the case. Members discussed the option of a fixed or variable charging scheme.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor T A Cullen and seconded by Councillor B C Carr:

A fixed charge be adopted with an agreed cap – the limit to be agreed at a future meeting.

The amendment was carried.

**RESOLVED that an Independent Living Service fixed charge will be agreed subject to an agreed cap on any increase in charges.**

#### 6 STOCK CONDITION SURVEY

The last stock condition survey was completed in 2008 and members were informed that it was good practice to undertake a regular review of the condition of the housing stock and to inform programmes of work and any remodelling needed to financial projections going forward. In September 2019 Housing Committee approved the contract for a Stock Condition Survey to be completed. Members noted a report on the recent Stock Condition Survey.

#### 7 MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF TENANTS

Members were updated on the approach taken to support tenants.

8 GRENFELL RESPONSE UPDATE

The Committee was updated on actions which have been taken since the last report in September 2019 and work currently in progress and was informed that the internal officer working group has now progressed the actions identified in appendix 1 in anticipation of the likelihood that the Grenfell Inquiry will result in significant suggestions for improvement action on the part of all agencies, including local government.

9 FISHPOND COTTAGE, 51 ILKESTON ROAD, BRAMCOTE AND THE USE OF SURROUNDING LAND FOR REDEVELOPMENT

The Committee considered the options available and it was stated that Fishpond Cottage would not be suitable for social housing if it was redeveloped due to the design of the building. Costs associated with it would also be high.

It was confirmed that Option 2 should say possible demolition rather than proposed demolition. If this option was chosen, the amount of housing built on the site would be doubled.

**RESOLVED that a consultation exercise be undertaken to seek local residents' views on developing the site including the proposed demolition of Fishpond Cottage, following this event, a delegation be made to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Housing Committee, to submit a planning application.**

10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF BUSINESS PLAN - HOUSING - OUTTURN REPORT

Members considered the complaints process and were informed about changes to how these were coordinated. It was confirmed that while every known homeless person had been offered temporary accommodation due to the pandemic, some individuals had found the process too difficult. Alternative accommodation had been offered where necessary and outreach support offered. Only one individual had refused all measures of assistance which was the lowest in the County.

11 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme and agreed that a Review of Payment Options, the Lifeline Service and Housing Repairs be considered at future meetings.

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.**

12 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

**RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

13 INDEPENDENT LIVING STOCK OPTIONS REVIEW

**RESOLVED to present reports to future meetings.**

14 AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS CASE

**RESOLVED that the aids and adoptions works be approved.**