

Procurement of Fire Safety Works

Cabinet	17 September 2020
Report Author	Bob Porter, Director of Housing and Planning
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Helen Whitehead, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Neighborhoods
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Yes
Reasons for Key	An Executive Decision that involves incurring expenditure anticipated to be £250,000 or above.
Ward:	Various

Executive Summary:

This report seeks authority for the council to enter into two new contracts for works to its housing stock.

The works include:

- Passive fire safety works, including fire doors and fire stopping, at Harbour Towers, Trove Court, Kennedy House, Brunswick Court and Staner Court.
- Installation of new fire alarms, fire detection and smoke ventilation at Harbour Towers, Trove Court, Kennedy House, Brunswick Court and Staner Court.

The values of both contracts are detailed in the report and exceed £250,000.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to authorise:

1. The letting of the contract for the completion of passive fire safety works, as detailed in this report.
2. The letting of the contract for the renewal of fire alarms, detection equipment and smoke ventilation as detailed in this report.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets are reviewed annually and include provision for both passive fire safety works and fire alarm renewals.

Legal

The council, as a landlord of residential buildings, has a statutory responsibility to ensure that they are properly maintained.

Corporate

The council's Corporate Statement sets out its commitment to, 'Improve standards and safety in homes across all tenures.'

The completion of the works set out in this report form part of the council's statutory responsibilities to manage fire safety in its housing stock.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The council's tenants and leaseholders include residents that have protected characteristics as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The completion of the works set out in this report will benefit all tenants and leaseholders, including those with protected characteristics.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 The council owns approximately 3,400 tenanted and leasehold homes. All costs, investment and income for these homes is managed with the council's Housing Revenue Account, and budgets for revenue and capital works are reviewed annually.

1.2 In addition to the annual review of revenue and capital budgets, key decisions are also required for approval by Cabinet for any expenditure that:

- is for works or services that exceed £250,000, or
- is for a contract over a number of years with an expected value in excess of £750,000.

- 1.3 The letting of the contracts detailed in this report are therefore considered to be key decisions.

2.0 Passive Fire Safety Works

- 2.1 Passive fire safety works include Flat doors, common area doors, fire stopping works and staircase protection in five TDC owned tower blocks. The blocks are Harbour towers, Trove, Kennedy, Brunswick and Staner.
- 2.2 A similar programme of works has already been completed at Invicta House and has been recognised by the Kent Fire and Rescue Service as best practice. The intention is to repeat the programme of works completed at Invicta House in all of the council's tower blocks.
- 2.3 The pretender estimated costs of these works of £350k per block, totalling £1.75m across the programme. Actual costs of the work may vary once the tendering is completed and contract prices known.
- 2.4 Specialist consultants have been appointed to prepare detailed tender documentation and specifications of work. Procurement will be by means of an open tender, which is anticipated to be ready to be advertised during October 2020.
- 2.5 Works are anticipated to start on site during 2020/21 and take around 4 months to complete.

3.0 Fire Alarms, Fire Detection and Smoke Ventilation

- 3.1 These works include the replacement of fire alarms, fire detection systems and automatic smoke ventilation in council tower blocks. The blocks included are Trove Court, Kennedy House, Harbour Towers, Staner Court and Brunswick Court.
- 3.2 A similar programme of works has already been completed at Invicta House and has been recognised by the Kent Fire and Rescue Service as best practice. The intention is to repeat the programme of works completed at Invicta House in all of the council's tower blocks.
- 3.3 This contract has been advertised as an open tender and work has already been completed to identify a suitable contractor.
- 3.4 The projected cost of the work is £550k, although this sum may vary during the contract if additional works are identified.
- 3.5 Works are anticipated to start on site during 2020 and take around 4 months to complete.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The scope of works for these contracts has been trialled and reviewed at Invicta House with the Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS). KFRS have indicated that

they would like to see the works completed at Invicta House replicated at the remaining five TDC owned tower blocks.

- 4.2 The council has a statutory duty to ensure the provision of suitable fire protection arrangements in residential buildings, and not completing the works identified in this report is not considered to be an option.

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Reporting to: Tim Willis, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

Annex List

None

Background Papers

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Chris Blundell, Director of Finance

Legal: Estelle Culligan, Director of Law and Democracy