

## ***Report to the Cabinet***

**Report reference:** C-005-2008/09  
**Date of meeting:** 1 September 2008



**Portfolio:** Housing  
**Subject:** Formation of a Repairs Management Contract Advisory Group  
**Responsible Officer:** Alan Hall (01992-564004)  
**Democratic Services Officer:** Gary Woodhall (01992-564470)

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That a Repairs Management Contract Advisory Group be formed, prior to the introduction of the proposed Housing Repairs Management Contract, for the duration of the proposed contract;
- (2) That the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group be:
  - (a) to provide advice and feedback to officers and the Housing Portfolio Holder on the proposed specification for the Repairs Management Contract;
  - (b) to interview short-listed companies and recommend to the Housing Portfolio Holder which company should be appointed; and
  - (c) to meet periodically (at least quarterly) to monitor the performance of the repairs management contractor and the repairs service generally; and
- (3) That the Advisory Group be comprised of:
  - (a) the Housing Portfolio Holder (as Chairman);
  - (b) the Finance & Performance Management Portfolio Holder;
  - (c) the Chairman of the Housing Scrutiny Panel;
  - (d) the Vice-Chairman of the Housing Scrutiny Panel;
  - (e) the Director of Housing;
  - (f) the Assistant Director of Housing (Property); and
  - (g) two representatives of the Tenants & Leaseholders Federation.

### **Executive Summary:**

The Cabinet has previously agreed to appoint a private repairs management company to manage the combined housing repairs and building maintenance functions. The proposed Advisory Group would provide advice on the proposed specification, interview short-listed

companies and recommend to the Portfolio Holder an appointment. It would also monitor the performance of the repairs management contractor and the repairs service generally.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To increase the level of involvement of Council members and tenant / leaseholder representatives and to form a group with a variety of skills and interests to make recommendations to the Housing Portfolio Holder and to monitor the appointed company

**Other Options for Action:**

- (i) Not to form an Advisory Group;
- (ii) form a Cabinet Committee with delegated authorities; or
- (ii) form an Advisory Group with a different membership and/or for different reasons.

**Report:**

1. At its meeting in March 2008, the Cabinet considered a report on the review of the Works Unit and the housing repairs functions, following the Top Management Review. At that meeting, the Cabinet resolved that an interim management arrangement be put into place for the supervision of the combined Building Maintenance and Repairs Service for up to a three-year period, which would include:

- (a) placing an advertisement in the EU Journal seeking expressions of interest from private repairs management companies;
- (b) inviting tenders based on experience, performance, quality, continuity of service, management support, employment terms and conditions and cost; and
- (c) holding interviews with the individual manager and management team put forward by the management company.

2. In accordance with the Top Management Restructure, the Building Maintenance Section was transferred from the former Works Unit into the Housing Directorate on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008. Since that time, the Assistant Director of Housing (Property), who is responsible for the Building Maintenance Section, has been familiarising himself with its operations. An interim Building Maintenance Manager has been appointed on a temporary contract, to manage the Section until a repairs management company can be appointed.

3. The proposed specification for the new Repairs Management Contract is currently being drafted. As part of this process, because the proposed contract is a relatively new concept, the Housing Portfolio Holder would like to form a Repairs Management Contract Advisory Group, which would operate in a similar way to a Portfolio Advisory Group, but on an ongoing basis for the duration of the contract. The proposed Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group are given in Recommendation (2).

4. All associated decisions would be formally made by the Housing Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate, taking into account the Advisory Group's recommendations.

5. It is proposed that the Advisory Group would comprise those posts set out in Recommendation (3).

6. It should be noted that, separately, an officer project team is being established,

comprising officers from appropriate directorates to oversee the specification and tender arrangements.

**Resource Implications:**

Nil.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

There are no reasons why an Advisory Group cannot be formed in the way suggested, although it would not be empowered to make decisions.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

Nil.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

The current holders of the posts proposed for membership of the Advisory Group have been consulted.

**Background Papers:**

Nil.

**Impact Assessments:**

It is not necessary for formulate an Equalities Impact Assessment.

By establishing the Advisory Group, the risks of the proposed new contract will be reduced, since members with a variety of skills and interests will be overseeing the process.