

Report of: Head of Oxford City Homes

To: City Executive Board

Date: 11 June 2008 **Item No:**

Title of Report: Strategy for Blocks of Maisonettes and One Bed Flats.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval to commission a study into options for the future of one bed flats and maisonette blocks.

Key decision: Yes

Board Member: Councillor Ed Turner.

Report Approved by:-

Board Member: Councillor Ed Turner

Director: Tim Sadler

Legal: Jeremy King

Finance: David Higgins

Policy Framework: More housing, better housing for all.

Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board approves the commissioning of a study into options for the future of one bed flats and maisonette blocks.

Background –

1. A long-term asset strategy to ensure that the housing stock meets the decent homes target of 31 December 2010 was presented to the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 8 November 2007 and approved by the Executive Board on 3 December 2007.
2. The Council's stock of one bed flats and maisonettes was included in that report and it is clear that the Decent Homes Standard could

be met within these homes. However, achieving the Decent Homes Standard would not address the wider issues associated with these properties in respect of poor and outdated design and the associated tenant dissatisfaction and anti-social behaviour.

3. One bed flats

The Council has a stock of 1658 one bed units. These meet the demand for single accommodation but do not assist in addressing the most pressing need in Oxford, i.e. the need for family accommodation.

4. Maisonettes

There are 36 maisonette blocks within the city, predominantly in Blackbird Leys and the Friars Wharf area. These provide 367 homes, 80 of which have been let to leaseholders.

Options

5. There are three broad options in respect of these properties.
 - i) Meet the Decent Homes Standard without further investment to improve the appearance and environment around the blocks;
 - ii) Meet the Decent Homes Standard and invest to modernise and improve the appearance and environment of the blocks;
 - iii) Demolish and re-develop the sites, provide mixed family accommodation to modern standards and provide more units in total.

Financial Implications

6. The cost of employing consultants to carry out detailed feasibility studies on the development potential, including possible funding streams, will be the subject of a carry forward request from underspend budgets in 2007/08.

Proposal

7. The proposal is to commission a study from consultants to explore the options and give detailed financial advice.

Consultation

8. Initial consultation will be carried out with tenants and leaseholders via the Housing Advisory Panel and the Repairs and Improvements Topic Panel. This will be followed by full, in depth, consultation with tenant/residents groups and residents of the affected blocks after the study has been carried out.
9. That the City Executive Board approves the commissioning of a study into options for the future of one bed flats and maisonette blocks.

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Background papers^[x2]: Cluttons report data

