

ITEM 25: APPENDIX T

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 1 APRIL 2014

PROPOSED REMODELLING OF FORMER STAFF ACCOMMODATION AT BOWRING HOUSE

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Carole King]
[Wards Affected: Farncombe and Catteshall]**

Note pursuant to Section 100B (5) of the Local Government Act 1972

An annexe to this report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Summary and purpose:

This report outlines the proposal to remodel the present void scheme manager's two storey family accommodation to provide an enlarged tenants lounge area and kitchen to the first floor with a new one bedroom self contained flat for standard tenancy use.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to the Council's corporate priority of providing more affordable housing in the borough for local people in housing need.

Financial Implications:

There are no proposed financial implications to our existing tenants. Service charge levels have been set for the coming year that would be able to absorb the cost of a larger communal space. The 2014/15 Capital Programme includes £250,000 for the conversion of former staff accommodation.

Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

Background

1. Bowring House is one of eight sheltered housing schemes in Waverley. It provides 33 self contained flats within the very popular Farncombe area for older people who are over the state pensionable age and are in need of some support to maintain their independence. A reasonable and positive balanced community will be promoted within the schemes.
2. The present and original communal lounge and meeting room has been found to be too small to accommodate the greater majority of tenants at any one time. Also, the present kitchenette within the lounge forms a safety hazard with little workspace and an incorrectly positioned freestanding cooker; this is considered ergonomically unsafe and only adequate for catering for small groups of people.
3. Adjacent to the communal lounge is the void former managers 3 bedroom accommodation. It is intended to remove the dividing wall and expand the communal lounge into the upper 1st floor area of the accommodation. This would create a much needed large lounge and function area. The proposed layout is attached at Annexe 1.
4. The vacant accommodation is losing rental income and incurring council tax charges. Discussions with Housing Options have highlighted that there is demand for sheltered accommodation in Farncombe and there would be no difficulty in letting any extra accommodation.

Proposed works

5. It is also intended for the lower ground floor parts of the same former manager's house to be simultaneously converted into a one bedroom self contained flat. This new dwelling would be brought back into the scheme for normal tenancy occupation.
6. The scheme would greatly benefit from a larger lounge which is currently too small for the number of tenants living within the scheme and does not positively promote social activities due to the small environment. The lounge area could be extended into the first floor of the previous accommodation to provide a larger communal area that can also be divided in to separate rooms if required.
7. This will provide the opportunity for current and future tenants to enjoy a more relaxed and spacious communal environment that could also entice external relationships. Furthermore, this would also be a better reflection and keeping with other schemes owned by Waverley Borough Council who all benefit from larger and more accessible communal areas.
8. At this stage we need to identify capacity within our current structure. It may be the case that we need additional capacity to deliver this project.

Consultation

9. The tenants originally requested within the last two years for consideration to be given a larger communal meeting lounge/social function room with safer and larger kitchen/server facilities. The tenants have subsequently been met with and had the proposed project explained to them by sheltered staff and surveyor. A further meeting is to be held with the tenants, Scheme Manager, Surveyor and the successful contractor appointed to the works prior to commencement. A final meeting will be held upon completion of the works with all parties present.

Budget

10. Tenders were originally sought from four known contractors. Only two returned prices. The results for the tender to extend the 1st floor lounge and also convert the ground floor parts of the former manager's house are shown in (Exempt) Annexe 2.

Proposed timetable

Appointment of contractor/start of lead in period	Mid April 2014
Pre start tenant consultation meeting	End of April 2014
Start on site	Mid May 2014
Start on site	End July 2014

Future use

11. Bowring House would have the much required space it severely lacks for meetings to carry out private and sensitive conversations, medical appointments, support plan meetings, networking meetings etc. as well as the ability to increase social activities within the scheme and local community.
12. The additional ground floor accommodation would add capacity to a very popular scheme which never has on-going void issues. Discussions with Housing Options have highlighted that there is demand for sheltered accommodation in Farncombe and there would be no difficulty in letting any extra accommodation. They agree with the recommendation and the need to provide a further one bedroom flat within Bowring House.

Weekly Rental Income (estimated)	£91.70
Yearly Rental Income (estimated)	£4768.40

The pay back based on the additional rental income, less extra repair and other costs is approximately 20 years.

Day Centre (attached building to Bowring House)

13. Farncombe Day Centre is attached to the front of Bowring House. The proposed works to Bowring House offer the opportunity to incorporate works required to separate the utility supply at the adjacent Day Centre.
14. The day centre runs completely independently of the sheltered housing scheme. However, as this is an old building, when the day centre was set up, utility costs were not separated and a contribution for these costs was sought. It has been difficult to ascertain the exact amount of utilities used and therefore the charges to the day centre are not a true reflection of the costs.
15. An investigation by the Sustainability Officer indicates that Bowring House is subsidising the cost of utility provision to the day centre by approximately £4,000pa. It is desirable to separate utility costs so both services are independent and it would be sensible to carry out the separation of these utilities at the same time as works are carried out to alter the former staff accommodation at Bowring House to minimise the disruption to tenants. An initial estimate indicates that this work will cost around £20k although a more detailed survey would need to be undertaken before committing to these works. This would give a payback of 5 years.

Recommendation

It is recommended

1. to the Council that the successful contractor shown in (Exempt) Annexe 2 be appointed to carry out communal lounge extension works in addition to remodelling of the ground and first floor parts of the former manager's accommodation, to be funded from the £250,000 budget included in the 2014/15 Capital programme; and
2. that the Executive approve the works necessary to separate utilities of Bowring House and the Day Centre, subject to the outcome of a detailed survey, with the one-off cost being met from the HRA Stock Remodelling Fund.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Jane Abraham

Telephone: 01483 523096

E-mail: jane.abraham@waverley.gov.uk