

REPORT TO: HOUSING, DUNDEE CONTRACT SERVICES AND
ENVIRONMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE -
14 JUNE 2010

REPORT ON: DEMOLITION OF VARIOUS PROPERTIES IN
WHITFIELD

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO: 311-2010

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the demolition of 149 properties in Whitfield.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

2.1. Agree to declare surplus and demolish 149 flats at the following locations:

- **1-12 Small Meadow Court**
- **22-33 Tranent Walk**
- **50-174 Whitfield Avenue**

2.2. Remit the Director of Housing to award priority rehousing status to the remaining tenants, together with the statutory Home Loss payment of £1,500 and to manage the rehousing process in accordance with the details of paragraph 4.8 of this report.

2.3. Approve, in principle, the repurchase of 4 owner-occupied properties, remit the Director of City Development to enter into negotiations with the owners on a "without prejudice" basis, and remit the Director of Housing to award the appropriate financial and rehousing package.

2.4. Remit the Director of City Development to prepare tenders on a phased basis and seek offers for demolition and post demolition treatment at the appropriate time.

2.5. Remit the Director of Housing to bring forward proposals for redevelopment at the appropriate time, with a potential estimated receipt of £120,000 to support delivery of the SHQS.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. Demolition and post demolition costs are estimated at £858,942. These costs will be met from an allowance in the 2010/2011 HRA Capital Budget.

3.2. Home Loss Payments for the remaining 128 tenants and repurchase of the 4 owner occupied properties is estimated at £432,000. These costs will be met from an allowance in the 2010/2011 HRA Capital Budget.

- 3.3. Should full rehousing not be achieved during 2010/2011, allowances will be made in future HRA Capital Budgets.

4. **MAIN TEXT**

- 4.1. Reference is made to Housing Committee Report 489-2004 which specified the criteria for declaring properties "at risk" of demolition. These criteria included:

- No sustainable demand.
- Void levels greater than 5% for 6 months.
- Unpopular house type.
- Consideration of development opportunities.
- Capital investment is economically unjustified.
- SHQS requirements.
- Financial Viability Study.
- Demand and supply of Council houses.
- Tenants and staff views.
- Lost rents and management costs and properties.

- 4.2. The present management performance of properties above are:

4.2.1. **1-12 Small Meadow Court (12 properties) (One 5 storey high walk-up block)**

Voids	2
Turnover	17%
Offers per let	4.50
R&M Cost/house/year	£1,622
Void loss/year	£26,649

4.2.2. **22-33 Tranent Walk (12 properties) (One 5 storey high walk-up block)**

Voids	0
Turnover	0
Offer per let	0
R&M Costs/house/year	£413
Void loss/year	£0

These properties, although showing suitable management performance, have capital requirements to meet the SHQS above the city average of £5,000.

- 4.2.3. There is no express demand for these properties from applicants on the Council's waiting list. Existing tenants regularly complain about the general condition of internal fittings and fixtures, difficulties in heating their homes, lack of security and lack of defensible private/personal space.

Due to extensive redevelopment of their immediate environs these blocks are now surrounded by low density, quality, social rent and owner occupied houses. Their austere image and reputation somewhat blights the blocks and has a negative effect on the immediate neighbourhood.

It is considered that these blocks are unsustainable in the long term and are incongruous to the components of achieving successful regeneration in Whitfield.

4.2.4. 50-174 Whitfield Avenue (125 properties - 4 sold)

Voids	15
Turnover	15%
Offers per let	2.77
R&M Costs/house/year	£769
Void loss/year	£234,744

4.3. The requirements to meet the SHQS by 2015 are as follows:

	Per House	Total
1-12 Small Meadow Court	£16,700	£200,400
22-33 Tranent Walk	£16,700	£200,400
50-174 Whitfield Avenue	£17,700	£2,212,500
Total	£17,538	£2,613,300

4.4. Consultation was carried out with the residents regarding the future of the properties. The outcome of the consultation was as follows:

4.4.1. 1-12 Small Meadow Court and 22-33 Tranent Walk

The 22 remaining tenants were approached with 13 in favour of demolition, although they requested to be rehoused in the Whitfield area.

4.4.2. 50-174 Whitfield Avenue

The 110 remaining residents were approached with 30 responding with attendance at a meeting. All were in favour of demolition. In addition to this a petition was handed to Housing Department staff with 47 residents of Whitfield Avenue requesting demolition.

4.5. The properties above have poor management performance, extremely high investment requirements and in consultation the residents are in favour of demolition. It is therefore recommended these properties are declared surplus and demolished.

4.6. The demolition of these properties provides the City Council an opportunity to develop these sites, in line with the Whitfield Planning Framework 2010 which promotes Whitfield as a sustainable community embracing principles designed to make it:

- a popular place to live;
- an area with a positive identity;
- an area with recognisable communities created within it;
- an area with a mix of tenures;
- a safe place to live in.

4.7. It is perceived that redevelopment of the land at Small Meadow Court and Tranent Walk will generate a small receipt to the HRA for the delivery of the SHQS Citywide.

Redevelopment of the land at Whitfield Avenue will potentially require investigation of ground conditions and an innovative approach towards capacity within the site to achieve the most suitable effective and efficient use of usable ground. Any receipt generated from this site to the HRA will be utilised for the delivery of the SHQS Citywide.

4.8. Rehousing of 132 residents must be achieved in a practical manner. A programme of rehousing will be established to ensure an orderly rundown of the blocks.

4.8.1. Subject to the recommendations of this report being approved the Director of Housing will:

- Award priority rehousing status to the residents of 1-12 Small Meadow Court and 22-33 Tranent Walk immediately. Once the last resident is rehoused from each of these blocks and the services are disconnected the buildings will be demolished as quickly as possible.
- There are 19 blocks at 50-174 Whitfield Avenue. In order to empty out whole blocks at a time and ease the process for residents, rehousing will be managed on a block by block basis with residents being awarded redevelopment priority points at the appropriate stage. Due consideration will be given to the individual needs and aspirations of all residents throughout this process, especially those with particular needs, e.g. medical recommendations, but the focus will be to demolish a block then to arrange for its demolition as soon as practically possible.

4.9. Consideration will be given to increasing the proportion of relets for redevelopment to find attractive relets for tenants as quickly as possible and to enable demolition of the empty blocks as soon as possible.

5. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6. **CONSULTATIONS**

6.1. The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Director of Finance, Assistant Chief Executive and all other Chief Officers have been consulted in the preparation of this report. No concerns were expressed.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Whitfield Planning Framework 2010 - City Development Committee - 8 March 2010.

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING
JUNE 2010