

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMUNITY 15 JANUARY 2008

EXECUTIVE 22 JANUARY 2008

CREATION OF NEW POST OF STOCK CONDITION SURVEYOR

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To obtain approval for the creation of a new permanent, full time post of Housing Stock Condition Surveyor to undertake internal and external stock surveys on the Council's housing stock.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A full internal and external survey of the Council housing stock was completed in 2004 by engaging temporary stock condition surveyors. This survey information was fed into the stock condition database (known as Axiom) and then used to inform the Housing Unit's capital programme. It was also used to develop the 30-year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- 2.2 It is essential that the housing service has up-to-date and accurate stock condition information to establish its Decent Homes and other capital programmes, as well as development of an accurate business plan. Previous experience has shown that the use of several different stock condition surveyors employed on a temporary basis has produced inconsistencies, and in some cases, errors in the information collected. This could result in anomalies in the capital works programmes and that the levels of funding required to maintain the stock are wrongly calculated.
- 2.3 In 2004 the decision was taken to replace the stock condition database. It was also decided to suspend further survey work until this new software was fully implemented. During this period no new surveys have been undertaken.
- 2.4 The funding to carry out the stock condition survey is taken from the Housing Revenue Account. A sum of £50,000 is included each year.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 To ensure more consistent surveying and more accurate data collection the Council could employ a permanent member of staff whose specific responsibilities will be to undertake the rolling stock condition survey. Such a proposal would give greater control over the surveyor's work programme and ensure more accurate recording of information. Information gathered will be entered into the new stock condition database and will help inform the review of the HRA Business Plan, the decent homes programme and the creation of an Asset Management Strategy for the Council's housing stock. Also, because the cost of employing such a surveyor will be less than the existing budget the proposal will also produce a saving on the current budget.

3.2 The post will report to the Head of Contracts and Direct Services who currently has management responsibilities for the stock condition database. Because of the nature of the work the post will need to be designated as an operational car user.

3.3 As the £50,000 funding from the Housing Revenue Account will no longer be required this will be used to fund the post and the remainder used to help fund the housing major works programme.

4. RECOMMENDED

that Scrutiny supports and Executive agrees that:

- 1) the post of Housing Stock Condition Surveyor be created, and
- 2) any budget saving from this proposal be used to help fund the housing capital programme.

HEAD OF CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES

HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:LP/Committee/108SCC10
3.1.08

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling the report: -

None