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**RELEASE OF CAPITAL ALLOCATION FOR  
THE HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member -  
Councillor Veronica Copeland, Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Paul Wildsmith,  
Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks approval for the release of £5.827m from the Housing Revenue Account to fund the 2014/15 Housing Capital Programme.

**Summary**

2. The Housing Revenue Account 30-year Business Plan was agreed at Special Cabinet on 18 February 2014.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that the Capital funding of £5.827m is approved for the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.

**Reasons**

4. The recommendation is supported to enable the Council to deliver an appropriate level of services to tenants to meet housing needs and to support the economic growth of the Borough through housing development

**Paul Wildsmith,  
Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

Heather McQuade : Extension 2324

S17 Crime and Disorder	The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect .
Health and Well Being	There are no issues relating to health and well-being which this report needs to address
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report
Diversity	There are no diversity issues
Wards Affected	This will have an effect on the majority of the Wards in the Borough.
Groups Affected	All Council Tenants and Lifeline Service Users
Budget and Policy Framework	The issues contained within this report require Council approval
Key Decision	This is a key decision because agreement to the recommendations will result in the Local Authority incurring expenditure which is significant. There will also be a significant effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the area of the local authority.
Urgent Decision	This is an urgent decision for Cabinet, as the approval will enable the capital programme to commence.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report has no particular implications for the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Efficiency	As the HRA is a ring fenced budget every effort is made to maximise income and identify savings in order to maintain a high quality service.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Housing Business Plan

5. Members considered the Council's 2014/15 Capital Medium Term Financial Plan on 27 February 2014, including the Housing Capital Investment Programme. Prior to works commencing this detailed report is required to approve the physical works and formally release the capital resources.
6. The Council cannot borrow to finance major refurbishments and therefore all capital expenditure needs to be funded from revenue. The revenue contributions from the Housing Revenue Account used to fund the Capital Programme have been extended to be £5.643m.
7. The priorities identified through the Housing Business Plan to be funded from the estimated capital resources for 2014/15 are shown in Table 1 overleaf:-
8. Table 1: Housing Investment programme 2014/15

Programme	£000's	2014/15 Total
<b>Planned Maintenance &amp; Renewals</b>		
Adaptations <sup>(a)</sup>	330	
Heating Replacement <sup>(b)</sup>	1,035	
Internal Planned Maintenance <sup>(c)</sup>	2,210	
Energy Efficiency <sup>(d)</sup>	572	
Structural Repairs <sup>(e)</sup>	120	
Smoke Detectors <sup>(f)</sup>	50	
Roof work <sup>(g)</sup>	400	
Lifeline Services <sup>(h)</sup>	80	4,797
<b>Estates &amp; Community Improvements</b>		
Garage Improvements <sup>(i)</sup>	75	
Repairs Before Painting <sup>(j)</sup>	100	
External Works <sup>(k)</sup>	500	
Pavement crossings <sup>(l)</sup>	25	
Door Entry Systems <sup>(m)</sup>	30	
Communal Works <sup>(n)</sup>	50	
Fees	250	1,030
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,827</b>

9. The priorities identified through the Housing Business Plan to be funded from the estimated capital resources for 2014/15 include:
- (a) Adaptations - the adaptations budget is to deliver adaptations within the Council's housing stock to enable tenants with a disability to remain in their own home and live independently across the Borough.
  - (b) Heating Replacement – 250 new condensing boiler and central heating upgrades will be completed. This work will predominantly be completed in the following wards: Eastbourne and Park East. There will also be some miscellaneous properties which will be included in the programme and we will be running a “just in time” programme of replacement for those boilers that fail before their due replacement date within the financial year.
  - (c) Internal Planned Maintenance – 250 replacement kitchens and bathrooms, rewiring of electrical systems and heating system upgrades where required. This work will predominantly be completed in the following wards: Haughton East and Eastbourne. There will also be some miscellaneous properties which will be included in the programme and we will incorporate additions to the programme when void properties which have been omitted from previous year's programmes become available.
  - (d) Energy Efficiency - £570,000 has been set aside for the second year of a two year programme to invest in energy efficiency which will improve the thermal efficiency of the properties and reduce tenants' energy costs. The work will include replacement PVCu windows and the installation of composite doors to 300 properties identified as the hardest to treat in relation to other basic retro fit measures. Priority will be given to properties in the Hundens area followed by Harrowgate Hill.
  - (e) Structural Repairs – a budget of £120,000 has been set aside to address any structural issues that may be identified within the year.
  - (f) Smoke Detectors - £50,000 is required to replace 230 existing hard wired smoke and heat detectors where systems are now 10 years old and reached the end of their recommended lifespan.
  - (g) Roof Work - £400,000 is required commence a programme to replace aging and defective roofs. It is anticipated 160 properties will be selected based on current asset management data relating to their age, the material lifespan, condition surveys and the analysis of current disrepair and maintenance costs. Primary areas to receive work will be Hundens and Harrogate Hill.
  - (h) Lifeline Services - £80,000 is set aside to continue to provide upgrades to Lifeline equipment. There will also be investment to replace the existing telecommunications equipment to improve the level of service that can be provided to residents.

- (i) Garage Improvements - £75,000 will be invested in improvements to the Council's garage blocks in areas to be determined.
- (j) Repairs before Painting - £100,000 will be invested in joinery repair works in anticipation of the cyclical external painting programme in areas throughout the Borough. An average of 1000 properties receive work linked to this budget on a yearly basis.
- (k) External Works - £500,000 has been set aside for External Works including fencing replacement and external footpath improvements in areas to be confirmed throughout the Borough. The funds will also pay for the just in time replacement of rotten and defective external doors with new composite doors on a Borough wide basis.
- (l) Pavement Crossings - £25,000 has been identified to fund pavement crossings across the Borough.
- (m) Door Entry Systems - failing door entry systems to communal blocks will be replaced and upgraded at a cost of £30,000.
- (n) Communal Works - £50,000 will be spent on the upgrade and improvement of communal doors and flooring of communal areas across the Borough.

### **Aims and objectives of the Housing Investment Programme**

- 10. The aims and objectives of the Housing Investment Programme are:
  - (a) To meet the increasing expectations of local authority tenants.
  - (b) To ensure that Darlington continues to meet an 'Enhanced Decent Homes' standard.
  - (c) To improve the thermal comfort, safety and wellbeing of local authority tenants.
  - (d) Provide a cyclical programme of improvement works.
- 11. The programme is not designed to remain static and priorities will be continually reviewed in the light of updated information such as public sector stock condition information. In accordance with best practice guidelines the ratio of planned to responsive works remains within the 70/30 ratio.