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**HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2010/11**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Bill Dixon,  
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the resources available for housing capital investment during 2010/11 and to recommend a programme to utilise these resources.

**Summary**

2. The annual Housing Investment Programme delivers essential home improvements for Council tenants to ensure their homes meet their longer term expectations, create a safe and secure environment and meet quality standards over and above Decent Homes.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that the annual Housing Investment Programme for 2010/11 be agreed and the funding released.

**Reason**

4. The recommendation is supported to enable the works and projects identified in the annual Housing Investment Programme for 2010/11 to proceed.

**Cliff Brown  
Director of Community Services**

**Background Papers**

Capital Medium Term Financial Plan 25 February 2010

Alan Glew - 388202

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 considered that some of the improvement works identified in this report will be beneficial in reducing crime.
Health and Well Being	The annual housing investment programme will improve the health and well being of residents.
Sustainability	Investing in council owned housing is helping to create vibrant and sustainable communities where tenants wish to live in modern environments.
Diversity	The annual housing capital improvement programme will improve the accessibility of council owned property.
Wards Affected	Haughton East, Haughton West, Park East, Eastbourne, North road, Northgate, Cockerton West.
Groups Affected	Council tenants.
Budget and Policy Framework	The issues contained within this report do not represent change to the Council's budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision because agreement to the recommendation will result in the Council incurring expenditure that 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	For the purpose of the 'Call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The annual housing capital programme contributes to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy through each of the theme areas.
Efficiency	The annual housing investment programme contributes towards the sustainability of the housing stock and reducing revenue costs. Improvements also assist tenants to benefit from greater thermal comfort in their homes coupled with reduced energy consumption through insulation works.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. Members agreed the Council's 2010/11 Capital Medium Term Financial Plan on 25th February 2010, 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. Table 1 below details the estimated housing capital resources for 2010/11.

6. **Table 1: Estimated Capital Resources 2010/11**

	2010/11
Resources	£000's
Major Repairs Allowance <sup>(a)</sup>	2,586
SHIP3 Funding (Private Sector) <sup>(b)</sup>	154
SHIP3 Funding (DFG's) <sup>(c)</sup>	390
Prudential Borrowing <sup>(d)</sup>	1,515
Capital Receipts <sup>(e)</sup>	350
Disabled Facilities Grant <sup>(f)</sup>	282
RCCO <sup>(g)</sup>	2,184
Total	7,461

- (a) The MRA allocation has been reduced in 2010/11 as the Council took advantage of an opportunity to bring forward the anticipated allocation from 2010/11 into the capital programme for 2009/10 as outlined in the Annual Housing Investment Programme 2009/10 Cabinet report dated 31 March 2009.
- (b) Private Sector SHIP3 Funding is provided on an application basis by GONE. Previously this funding was given purely as a borrowing approval but now comes as a capital grant. This funding is to be used for private sector investment according to the new Regional Private Sector Financial Assistance Policy and energy efficiency measures for vulnerable households.
- (c) SHIP3 Funding (Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's)) comes from the same source as (b), and is a contribution to Private Sector Disabled Facilities funding that the Council provided from the old supported borrowing (HIP) allocation to match fund the DFG grant from central government.
- (d) It was agreed at Council on 22 July 2004, to retain the Council housing stock and use prudential borrowing of up to £20m, over a 6 year period to meet the Darlington Standard for Council Housing. This is the fourth year that prudential borrowing is being utilised.
- (e) Comprising 25% of usable capital receipts from the anticipated sale of Council houses in respect of the Right to Buy scheme.
- (f) GONE allocation of £282k for 2010/11 for the provision of disabled facilities grants for privately owned properties. This budget is combined with the SHIP3 allocation outlined in (c) of £390k to provide a combined DFG budget of £672k.

(g) The Revenue Capital Contribution is funding from the Housing Revenue Account used to fund major capital works.

7. The priorities identified through the Housing Business Plan to be funded from the estimated capital resources for 2010/11 are shown in Table 2 below:-

8. **Table 2: Housing Investment Programme 2010/11**

Programme	£000's	2010/11 Total
<b>Planned Maintenance &amp; Renewals</b>		
Adaptations <sup>(a)</sup>	360	
Heating Replacement <sup>(b)</sup>	392	
Internal Planned Maintenance <sup>(c)</sup>	1,245	
Roxby Court <sup>(d)</sup>	380	
Windsor Court <sup>(e)</sup>	1,600	
Rockwell House <sup>(f)</sup>	800	
Parkside <sup>(g)</sup>	1,101	
Digital TV Aerials <sup>(h)</sup>	50	
Structural Repairs <sup>(i)</sup>	120	
Thorne Court <sup>(j)</sup>	114	
Lifeline Services <sup>(k)</sup>	200	6,362
<b>Estates &amp; Community Improvements</b>		
Pavement crossings <sup>(l)</sup>	25	
Garage Improvements <sup>(m)</sup>	50	
Repairs Before Painting <sup>(n)</sup>	100	
Roof work <sup>(o)</sup>	98	273
<b>Private Sector</b>		
Private Sector Renewal <sup>(p)</sup>	104	
DFG Grants <sup>(q)</sup>	672	
Private Sector Energy Efficiency works <sup>(r)</sup>	50	826
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,461</b>

(a) 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) New condensing boiler central heating systems will be fitted to 71 dwellings throughout the borough but predominately in Haughton East and Park East in 2010-11. The successful delivery of this programme is largely dependent on the responsiveness of utility services to provide new gas services to areas not currently serviced by gas on request from the Council. The Council (wherever possible) aim to programme gas installation works a year in advance of heating replacements being undertaken within specific households to overcome any potential delays.

(c) An internal planned maintenance (IPM) programme to upgrade kitchens, bathrooms, security lighting, and, (where applicable) TV aerials and communal area redecoration. Approximately 179 dwellings located predominantly at Haughton West, Park East and North Road areas of the Town will benefit from these works in 2010/11.

- (d) Roxby Court is due to be refurbished. Improvements will include the conversion of 4 bedsits to provide 2 self contained flats with new kitchens and bathrooms, conversion of the Warden flat to create 2 further self contained flats with new kitchens and bathrooms, improved fencing to the scheme boundary, refurbishment of the guest room and improvements to the communal areas and bin store.
- (e) Windsor Court sheltered housing refurbishment work will be completed in November 2010. The aim of the programme is to improve accessibility within the scheme and thus improve the long term sustainability and lettable of the scheme. The investment will improve and update existing communal facilities, meet full Disability Discrimination Act 2005 standards and provide a safer and more energy efficient sheltered scheme. New kitchens and bathrooms with flat floor showers will be installed as part of the improvements.
- (f) Rockwell House improvement works are scheduled to commence on the completion of Windsor Court in November 2010 and will be completed by November 2011. The proposed improvements include an improved entrance with buggy charging area, removal of communal bathing areas and the provision of flat floor showers within each flat, new kitchens and rewiring works. Enhanced boundary measures are also planned to improve the sense of security and well being alongside some small environmental works. The heating system will be upgraded to improve the energy efficiency of the building.
- (g) A major improvement programme is planned for Parkside including internal planned maintenance and environmental works. Internal planned maintenance will include kitchen, bathroom and heating replacements. Environmental works will include boundary treatments such as new fencing and work to external pathways where appropriate. Other improvements and maintenance works will be required subject to tenant consultation and some detailed property inspections on a sample of the properties within the programme. The programme is expected to commence in June 2010 and will be completed in 2011/12. It is expected that 180 properties will be improved over the two year programme. A further provisional sum of £2.2M has been included in the Business Plan for 2011/12.
- (h) A programme of TV aerial upgrades to meet new digital requirements will be installed to replace outdated analogue systems for communal entrance blocks of flats across the Borough.
- (i) A small budget has been set aside to address any structural issues that may be identified within the year.
- (j) 6 bedsits at Thorne Court will be remodelled to create open plan living arrangements which meet modern standards. Existing tenants will need to be decanted to facilitate the works which will include new kitchens with white goods, new bathrooms and rewiring works.
- (k) £200k has identified in 2010/11 to continue to provide upgrades to the Lifeline Service (in addition to those picked up in the costs for remodelling works) within sheltered housing schemes and blocks of flats throughout the town, and to provide upgrades and modernisation to communal facilities in sheltered housing schemes such as common rooms and kitchens. There will also be investment to replace the existing

telecommunications equipment to improve the level of service that can be provided to residents.

- (l) £25,000 has been identified to fund pavement crossings across the Borough in 2010/11.
- (m) £50,000 will be invested in improvements to the Council's garage blocks in areas to be determined in 2010/11.
- (n) £100,000 per annum will be invested in joinery works in anticipation of the cyclical external painting programme in areas to be confirmed throughout the Borough in 2010/11 and 2011/12.
- (o) £98,000 has been set aside for roofing works throughout the Borough.
- (p) £104,000 has been identified to support the Financial Assistance Policy targeted at areas of poor private sector housing. The programme will be administered by the Home Improvement Agency, Care and Repair.
- (q) DFG grants will continue to be offered according to the mandatory limit of £30k, plus the additional optional "Top up" Financial Assistance Loan of up to £10k as agreed by Cabinet in 2005. The total budget for mandatory DFG grants is £672,000. This is based on SHIP3 funding (£390k) and a Government Office for the North East allocation of £282k.
- (r) Private Sector funding of £50,000 (2010/11), will help deliver targeted energy efficiency works in the private sector in partnership with utility services and match funding Government grants.

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

- 9. The aims and objectives of the Housing Investment Programme are:
  - (a) To meet the increasing expectations of the Council's tenants.
  - (b) To ensure that Darlington continues to meet an enhanced Decent Homes Standard.
  - (c) To improve the thermal comfort, safety and well being of local authority tenants.
  - (d) Provide a cyclical programme of improvement works.

### **Housing Investment Programme Management**

- 10. 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.
- 11. There are also circumstances where amendments may need to be made to this programme:
  - (a) Due to the nature of improvement works scheduled, there will be some inconvenience and disruption to tenants but this will be minimised through careful planning and consultation.

- (b) There is a considerable financial commitment by the Council in delivering the programme but the commitment has been agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

12. The proposed programme is in line with Housing Business Plan priorities as agreed with tenants during the stock option appraisal process, and is aligned with the priorities for investment that have been identified since that time. Consultation has been undertaken with the residents in each of the sheltered housing schemes and designs have reflected their aspirations as far as possible for schemes due to commence in 2010/11. A report was agreed and approved by the Tenants Board in respect of the Housing Investment Programme 2010/11 on 10 February 2010. The annual housing investment priorities follow a strict cycle of replacement and renewal as agreed with the Tenants Board.