

SHELTERED HOUSING FIRE ALARM SYSTEM INSTALLATION

KEY DECISION

This is a key decision as the expenditure for the works exceeds the threshold of £500,000 agreed by the Council.

1. Summary

1.1 Following changes in fire safety guidance and recent inspections of the Council's 12 sheltered housing schemes, there is a need to upgrade the fire alarm systems to the latest specification and provide increased safety for residents.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That, subject to compliance with Contracts Standing Orders, the Strategic Director (External Services) be authorised to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer to deliver the fire alarm replacement works. In the Council's sheltered housing schemes.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 There are currently 12 sheltered housing schemes within Council's housing stock. These accommodate approximately 450 elderly or vulnerable residents over the age of 55.

3.2 Over recent years and following the Grenfell fire, more emphasis has been placed on landlords to manage the risks associated with fire. Kent Fire & Rescue Services has completed inspections of the sheltered housing schemes, offering advice and support on how best to manage fire safety.

3.3 Following these visits it is recommended that the fire alarm systems within each scheme is replaced to provide an early warning system offering links into the care line system that already exists. This link will alert the care line operator of a fire activation allowing residents to talk to a call handler from within their homes to get further advice on what to do in the event of a fire.

3.4 The new linked system will provide additional smoke and fire sensors within each individual resident's home providing immediate alerts when the system is triggered either within an individual unit or a communal area.

3.5 It is important to ensure that the management of the sheltered housing schemes complies with health and safety and other relevant legislation and guidance, to minimise the Council's exposure to risk of all kinds, including financial, legal and reputational.

4 Relationship to the Corporate Plan

4.1 This report relates to the Corporate Plan strategic aim 'to facilitate quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, to create strong and self-reliant Communities and deliver high quality services to service users.

**Cabinet
25 March 2021**

5 Financial, legal, staffing, administrative implications & risk assessments

Financial Implications	A budget of £1m has already been allocated in the 2021/22 HRA capital budget.
Legal Implications	Following a full procurement exercise, the terms of the contract will be agreed in consultation with the Head of Legal Services.
Staffing Implications	None as detailed in the report.
Administrative Implications	None.
Risk Assessment	Failure to appoint and deliver the works will leave residents at risk from not being alerted to fire at the earliest opportunity.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
None	N/A	Peter Dosad	Housing Strategic (Ext Services)	N/A