

CAPITAL REPAIRS – TENANTS IN RENT ARREARS

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

Each year a high number of tenants benefit from the replacement of kitchens and bathrooms through the Capital Programme. This report discusses the issue of deferring such works for tenants in rent arrears.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The City Board is asked to approve the proposal to defer works for tenants in rent arrears who do not come to an agreement to clear the arrears or maintain agreed arrangements to reduce arrears.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 A group of staff recently visited Irwell Valley Housing Association. One of the areas of discussion was a culture of zero tolerance in relation to rent arrears. At Irwell Valley tenants only receive a very basic repair service if their rent account is not up to date.
- 3.2 At the present time over 4500 rent accounts are showing arrears of some kind. Of course a high number of these accounts will be held by tenants who make regular payments by direct debit or other means and their accounts do clear at the point of payment. This proposal is not intended to affect tenants who pay through this method.
- 3.3 During the next financial year we anticipate installing around 500 new kitchens and 350 new bathrooms, the majority of these works will be carried out in the Allenton, Cowsley and Osmaston areas of the City.
- 3.4 If approved we intend to write to tenants who are included within the programme and whose rent accounts are in arrears, and not supported by regular payments and advise them that the work will be deferred unless a payment arrangement is agreed and maintained to reduce the arrears.
- 3.5 If approved by the City Board a similar approach will be taken in future years as the Capital Programme continues to work in other areas around the City.
- 3.6 We believe that this could have a major impact on reducing many low level arrears cases where tenants at the present time may feel that little or no action can be taken against them.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Previous consultation with tenants and leaseholders led to the introduction of a reward scheme which recognises the value of tenants who comply with their conditions of tenancy and affords them certain benefits and access to competitions.
- 4.2 This proposal further recognises that tenants should maintain regular rent payments and comply with their conditions of tenancy to benefit from improvements to their home.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Financial and Business Plan
Legal and Confidentiality
Council
Personnel
Environmental
Equalities Impact Assessment
Health & Safety
Risk
Policy Review

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Background Information: Insert details of any unpublished documents used to prepare your report

Supporting Information: Insert details of any previous reports to Board or Committee