

Shortlife Review Programme

A programme of handbacks for shortlife singles properties (130 dwellings) was considered by Housing Committee in October 1999 and Ratification Committee in July 2000, including full and partial disposal options. A steering group was established involving the Southwark Federation of Shortlife Users (SFSLU), Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and members to agree a programme of handbacks and discuss rehousing arrangements for those eligible. It was agreed that:

- 21 properties be repaired by the Council under an 'Initiative to Create Larger Units' programme;
- 16 properties be sold to Hexagon Housing Association for refurbishment and letting as permanent rented accommodation;
- Capital receipt generated be recycled under regeneration rules to fund the development of 64 new homes by Hexagon Housing Association;
- Any overspends be contained within housing resources;
- Progress be noted on further proposals for the use of capital receipts to generate units for management by Black and Minority Ethnic Registered Social Landlords or agencies

The handback timetable was agreed with the SFSLU, but a number of these handbacks were dependent on suitable accommodation being available via the Council for households to move.

Because the total estimated costs for completing the properties on site and those proposed were now in excess of the original £1.35m allocated, a report was taken to Investment Programme Group (IPG) [a sub-group of SMT] 24 July 2002 to get approval for increased budgets to complete the whole programme. The report to IPG in September set out the following options:

Option 1: To dispose of the remaining properties and recycle the receipt as Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) to fund a new build Housing Association scheme

Option 2: To dispose of the remaining properties setting aside 75% of the receipt and using 25% for the Council's own new build or conversions.

Option 3: A partial refurbishment and disposal option, recycling receipt as in option 1 and completing the remaining properties through the major voids contract.

Option 3 was approved which, as it involved a variation of the previous decision made by Ratification Committee in July 2000, resulted in the report to Executive of 3rd December 2002 which agreed to the disposal of four properties and the recycling of the receipt for a new build RSL scheme at Underhill Road.

Package 1 was tendered with tenders returned in November and interviews taking place with contractors in December 2002. Because of the value of the contract the tender acceptance report was a key decision included in the Forward Plan and scheduled for a decision in February.

It is the tender acceptance report that has been called in for scrutiny.

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