



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee  
10 December 2024

Key Decision [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All in Adur

## **Adur Homes AH- Appointment of a Multi Disciplinary Consultant**

**Report by the Director for Housing & Communities**

**Report Author: Head of Property Services, Adur Homes**

**Officer Contact Details:**

**Keith Meredith**

**Head of Property Services, Adur Homes**

**07795 127531**

**keith.meredith@adur-worthing.gov.uk**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. As part of our Adur Homes Improvement Plan, officers have been developing a maintenance programme, which is a critical part of providing residents with decent homes.
- 1.2. As part of this programme this paper sets out a proposal to use what is referred to as a 'multi disciplinary consultant' (MDC) to project manage a minimum of 8 contracts over a 3 year period of time with the added extension options included.
- 1.3. The MDC role which broadly includes pre-contract design, undertaking surveys, and cost planning and further details are detailed in 4.3 below.

- 1.4. The paper details the role of this consultant and sets out the options for Members to consider. It proposes the appointment of one Multi Disciplinary Consultant to manage the contracted packages of work with the appointed contractor(s). This work will be required for the purposes of obtaining key information to inform the overall scope of work and tender documents and subsequent contract management.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. To approve the appointment of a multi disciplinary consultant for an initial 3 year period for the essential contract professional services required for the development, procurement and management of contracts entered into.
- 2.2. To authorise the spend in respect of the MDC to cover 8 work areas detailed in section 3.3 over a 3 year period. The spend is in accordance with procurement consortium tender price of 4.24% of full contract value and detailed further in section 7.3.

## **3. Context**

### **Adur Homes Investment Programme**

- 3.1. In November 2022, following the death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak in a damp and mouldy flat in Rochdale, the Government ordered Councils to check their housing stock. A subsequent review was undertaken into Adur Homes' stock.
- 3.2. Following this review, In February 2023 Adur District Council (ADC or 'the Council') referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing (the Regulator), following the completion of its review. Since this time, ADC has been providing regular reports to the Regulator on the progress of the Adur Homes Improvement Programme, which also includes the investment in homes.
- 3.3. As part of this work, the team has been developing an investment programme for Adur Homes required to maintain and improve our

housing. As such, the overall Capital budget for this investment programme has been set at £18.4m for 2024/25 financial year and forecast for the next two years at £9m per year for 25/26 and 26/27 respectively. The work areas for the initial contracts that are required under this first wave cover Heating & Hot Water Maintenance and Repairs, major structural repairs to 10 blocks, window and door replacement/repair, kitchen & bathroom replacements, asbestos removal, Legionella testing, roof replacements, Electrical compliance testing, door entry repairs/servicing and boiler/heating upgrades with a combined three year forecast of £20.1m

- 3.4. As part of our contract programme, costs have been built in for Professional Services at £2.2m, £1.1m and £1.1m respectively for the next three financial years based on previous years costs to these work areas and a service provided centrally by Technical Services.
- 3.5. Each contract will require various levels of professional and technical advice and services including but not limited to procurement, tendering, pre-tender estimates, Building Control submissions, Health & Safety, Construction Design & Management, Quantity Surveying, project management, and planning.

#### **4. Proposed Services**

- 4.1. A multi-disciplinary consultancy (MDC) is one that consists of multiple departments, each one specialising in a particular discipline within the construction industry. These multi departments pull together to create a single team of different disciplines or fields of expertise to ensure a project whether that be a maintenance, refurbishment or new build project, however large or small, runs as smoothly as possible from inception through to completion.
- 4.2. At the very outset of each project the MDC will decide which disciplines are required to meet the brief and deliver the project in addition to what stage each discipline will be required in order to meet the programme.
- 4.3. Having a multi-disciplinary team in place has several benefits over what would normally be a fragmented process that has been previously associated with the construction industry in recent decades. For example, there is one single point of responsibility, one integrated team all providing the flexibility to scale up or down to meet the brief throughout the various stages of the project. By having this versatility, multi-disciplinary teams can also undertake multiple projects at the same time and have the ability to report to the client in one step across

all the projects and the various stages that have been completed as well as how the programme is looking moving forward.

- 4.4. All these factors in the long term will save time and money as the one team has the skills, knowledge and experience to multitask therefore making them efficient in what they do. This will be key in delivering the number of contracts the Council is looking to complete over the planned 3 year period.
- 4.5. It has been identified within the overall budget for the Adur Homes Investment Programme but the services of the consultant will be on an as used basis, valued on the contract value and duration based on a percentage of the contract value.
- 4.6. In addition, the scope of the multidisciplinary consultant's appointment will include covering the areas of work illustrated in 3.3 above:
  - 4.6.1. Intrusive investigations and surveys as recommended and as identified following visual inspections.
  - 4.6.2. Updated asbestos surveys where required.
  - 4.6.3. Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) surveys (to identify exact locations of services).
  - 4.6.4. Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Surveyor's advice.
  - 4.6.5. Ecological advice (if bird or bat nesting is identified).
  - 4.6.6. Preparation of the scope of works.
  - 4.6.7. Careful cost planning and consultancy including the production of a RICS pre-tender estimate of costs, based on their knowledge of the market.
  - 4.6.8. Architectural services including the production of Planning drawings and the submission of Planning Applications.
  - 4.6.9. Building Control applications.
  - 4.6.10. Preparation of contract documents and specifications.
  - 4.6.11. Principal Designer duties under CDM Regulations.
  - 4.6.12. Liaising with the Council and the selected contractor to agree programming and sequencing of the works.

- 4.6.13. Agreement of the Construction Phase Plan (CPP) and safe methods of work, with the Council and the Contractor.
- 4.6.14. Participation in resident consultation if required.
- 4.6.15. Regular reporting to the Adur Homes.
- 4.7. This proposal is made as a safeguard to ensure all aspects of the contract management are resourced with the level of expertise and professional capacity as necessary.

## **5. Issues for consideration**

- 5.1. The comparative solution is to provide these services in-house.
- 5.2. The in-house team does not have the skills or capacity to undertake the full professional services.
- 5.3. To employ suitable professional individuals to cover all aspects of this work will not only prove difficult due to the employment market for surveyors and professional services of this nature but will not be financially viable to do so as it will require over and above the establishment to fulfil all the roles required.
  - 5.3.1. A Council Surveyor is on grade 8 with a maximum salary of £49,764 (inc the 2024 pay rise) and with on costs totals £63,799
  - 5.3.2. This will impact the establishment as this will mean at least 5 additional surveyors with the relevant experience and skills, would be required to manage these areas of work alone, an additional resource over and above the current approved establishment of 2.
- 5.4. Direct employment of these services will incur additional costs due to absence cover and overhead recovery and the Council will be required to cover sickness, pension and other direct costs.
- 5.5. Previous contract cost of this nature that were managed by internal corporate teams attracted a 12% charge, so another comparison would be that this would cost in the region of £2.4m
- 5.6. Without the relevant resource, capacity or consultants appointed, the Council will not be able to fully identify all the work that is essential to meet the Investment Programme as part of the Improvement plan and will not be in a position to obtain the necessary permissions required to carry out the works under each contract.

- 5.7. The appointment of one, multidisciplinary consultancy firm is considered to be the most efficient approach to procuring all of the professional services that are required and will save internal resources.
- 5.8. It is proposed that the multidisciplinary consultant is appointed as they will be able to resource all elements of work as and when required providing a full 100% service cover via the Communities & Housing Investment Consortium (CHIC) framework. This is considered an efficient and effective procurement route.

## **6. Engagement and Communication**

- 6.1. The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Lee Cowen has been fully briefed by the Assistant Director - Housing and Homelessness Prevention
- 6.2. The Head of Property Services, Adur Homes has liaised with internal stakeholders within the Council's Finance, Procurement and Adur Homes Departments. The Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness prevention has also been fully briefed.
- 6.3. The Housing Regulator has been informed of this approach to manage the capital investment works and is satisfied with this approach being taken.
- 6.4. For some of these works i.e. structural, roofing, communal areas and other block related works will be eligible for cost recovery from any leaseholders owning properties within the block, therefore all contracts entered into following this appointment, will undertake the relevant Section 20 consultation process with leaseholders where necessary, to consult with leaseholders and the works and costs to enable a full apportioned cost recovery of the works.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. As detailed above in relation to the scope of works and the sections below illustrating the costs, the Committee is asked to approve the appointment of a multi disciplinary consultant as part of the Adur Homes Improvement Programme to manage the procurement, appointment and management of appropriate contractors to fulfil Adur Homes capital investment programme.

- 7.2. The costs of this service will be included within the Capital expenditure and allocated to each works programme accordingly and will be expended dependent on the following:
- 7.2.1. Quantity of surveys, inspections and tests that are required to inform the scope of work.
  - 7.2.2. Whether ecological advice is required.
  - 7.2.3. How many Planning and Building Control applications are required by those departments.
  - 7.2.4. How long the pre-contract period takes to complete. Delays could occur through the Planning or other processes required for a compliant scheme.
- 7.3. The costs associated with this type of agreement will depend on the percentage fee applied that in turn relates to the value of contracts being managed and will decrease as the overall work value increases to provide economies of scale and savings.
- 7.3.1. As the table below illustrates, the higher the overall contract value is the lower the percentage fee that is applied.

VALUE OF WORKS	CONSOLIDATED % FEES
£0 - £50k	17.98%
£50,000 to £250,000	16.64%
£250,000 to £500,000	13.41%
£500,000 to £1,000,000	10.01%
£1,000,000 to £5,000,000	6.99%
£5,000,000 to £10,000,000	4.99%
£10,000,000 +	4.24%

- 7.3.2. With a budgeted 3 year spend across 8 work categories of £20.1m this would equate to a forecast spend of £852.2k using the consortium's tender price schedule of 4.24%.
- 7.3.3. In the initial stages while the contracts are developed and set up over the coming 12 months, the percentage fee may be slightly higher as based on a lower contracted value.

- 7.4. The appointment of a multidisciplinary consultant will enable the procurement of contracts to progress and the essential investment and repairs works to be undertaken.
- 7.5. If a landlord fails to fulfil their obligations under the Landlord and Tenant Act, to invest, upgrade and meet regulations and standards, tenants and leaseholders have the right to take legal action. This action can compel a landlord to make the necessary repairs and, in some cases, provide compensation for any suffering caused by the disrepair.
- 7.6. Any such legal brought about by residents would represent a further cost to the Council.
- 7.7. Any complaints that are upheld by the Ombudsman may lead to fines payable to residents.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 8.2. s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available of assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.
- 8.3. Under the Public Contract Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/5) where a Public Authority is to enter into a contract for the supply of goods & services, and the value of those goods and services exceeds a financial limit of £173,934, any procurement exercise to contract for those goods and services must be conducted in accordance with the Regulations and a failure to do so may be declared upon receipt of a procurement challenge, anti-competitive and in breach of the Regulations.

It is proposed that the Council appoints consultants via the CHIC framework as an efficient and compliant procurement route.

- 8.4. Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as well as various housing standards and regulations, requires landlords to:



- 8.4.1. Keep the exterior of properties in good repair, including the structure and exterior finishes.
- 8.4.2. Maintain all installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity, sanitation, and drainage.
- 8.4.3. Treat any health-threatening issues such as dampness and mould growth or unsafe structures.
- 8.4.4. These responsibilities are not just limited to the physical aspects of the building. The living conditions within the property must be conducive to health, safety and wellbeing. This includes ensuring that the property is free from anything that could cause injury or illness, including harmful substances such as asbestos.

### **Background Papers**

- DCLG - A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation
- National Housing Federation (NHF) Key measures of the Social Housing Regulation Act

### **Officer Contact Details:-**

Keith Meredith

Head of Property Services, Adur Homes

07795 127531

[keith.meredith@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:keith.meredith@adur-worthing.gov.uk)

## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

- 1.1. The physical and aesthetic improvements to the properties, which will follow the appointment of a multidisciplinary consultant, will help regenerate the estates in which they are located. It has long been understood that regeneration of housing and infrastructure has an economic benefit to communities.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1. Social Value**

- 2.1.1. The appointment of a multidisciplinary consultant will progress the Investment Programme which in turn will:

- Improve health and safety including fire risk
- Improve accessibility
- Improve security
- Improve appearance
- Regenerate the areas in which the blocks are situated
- Support the reduction of crime
- Support the reduction of antisocial behaviour (see 2.3 below)
- Foster a sense of community

- 2.1.2. Consultants will be assessed against their Social Value policies as part of the procurement process.

#### **2.2. Equality Issues**

- 2.2.1. As previously stated in this report Adur Homes Investment Programme budgets have been identified for improvements to safety, security, accessibility and compliance with the Decent Homes standards, over the next three years.

- 2.2.2. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published a briefing entitled "*Following Grenfell: the right to adequate and safe housing*" this report states "*The right to adequate housing is one of the most well-recognised economic and social rights internationally. It is central to human dignity and without it, it is effectively impossible to exercise a range of other human rights, including family life, privacy, and health.*"

#### **2.3. Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- 2.3.1. The appointment of a multidisciplinary consultant will progress the introduction of improved security measures to homes such as safe and

secure communal entrance doors, door entry systems, replacement windows and doors to homes and communal areas, and will support the safety and security of residents as well as new kitchen & bathrooms.

- 2.3.2. The Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Strategy 2021-2024 Priority 4 is to *“Increase community cohesion and reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and hate crime”*.
- 2.3.3. In March 2023 The Home Office published a report entitled *“Anti-social behaviour: impacts on individuals and local communities”*. The report found that *“Those living in the most deprived areas were more likely to have experienced or witnessed ASB in the last 12 months compared to those in less deprived areas.”*
- 2.3.4. Housing that is in a visibly poor condition is known to lead to a perception of deprivation in the community. Physical and aesthetic improvements to these blocks will improve perceptions and help to improve community cohesion.

#### 2.4. **Human Rights Issues**

- 2.4.1. UK courts have accepted that international human rights treaties can be used as an aid to interpretation of relevant domestic laws (such as the Housing Act, the Human Rights Act or secondary legislation about the provision of suitable temporary accommodation).
- 2.4.2. The ‘Following Grenfell’ report mentioned above at point 2.2.2 has stated *“Crucially, the fundamental human rights principles of human dignity and nondiscrimination require the right to housing to be ensured to all people irrespective of income, access to economic resources or any other ground of discrimination. They also require that housing is not simply equated with the shelter provided by having a roof over one’s head, but is seen as adequate housing, that is, somewhere you can live in security, peace and dignity.”*
- 2.4.3. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has set out seven key elements of the right to safe and adequate housing. One of these key elements is *“Habitability”*, meaning that residents must be provided with adequate space, protected from cold, damp, rain, wind or other threats to health or structural hazards to guarantee their physical safety.

### 3. **Environmental**

- 3.1. Specialist pre-contract advice will be sought from an ecologist before any work takes place that may affect wildlife or the environment.

#### **4. Governance**

- 4.1. The Adur & Worthing Councils - Housing Strategy states:

*“the Council remains committed to high levels of investment into maintaining and improving the condition of our housing stock, following best practices in investment and management”*

- 4.2. These proposals align with the following Council policies and procedures:

- Adur & Worthing Councils - Housing Energy Conservation Act Report 2021
- Adur District Council - Fire Safety Policy (Housing)
- Adur & Worthing Councils - Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy 2024 to 2025
- Adur & Worthing Councils and Adur Homes Asbestos Policy
- Adur Homes - Asbestos Management Plan - Rev 3.1