

URGENCY ITEM - MINUTE OF DECISION

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman has agreed to take this urgency item as a late item of business in order to publish prior to the next scheduled meeting after May 2015.

Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which it make necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate Committee (Constitution incorporating a scheme of delegation approved by the Council in May 2013).

Subject: Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund

Appropriate Committee: Policy & Finance

Details of Item (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

The Department for Communities and Local Government has launched an £84 million Fund over two years to help tenants, who are eligible for the Right to Buy, to access home ownership. The prospectus published on 20th February 2014 invites bids for the Fund for 2015-16, for which £42 million is available.

Local authorities are invited to submit bids for funding to provide a local scheme to provide a one-off cash payment, not exceeding £20,000 (£30,000 in London boroughs) per application, to eligible tenants in place of their Right to Buy discount to enable them to purchase a property on the open market.

The prospectus states the local scheme should prioritise: older tenants seeking to move into more appropriate accommodation, or move closer to family elsewhere in the area or further afield; working age tenants who wish to move to a different area to access job opportunities; and tenants that struggle to get a mortgage because of the nature of the property in which they live. Bids made will be evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they meet the criteria set out in the prospectus.

The deadline for submitting bids is 18 March 2015.

Due to the timescales involved in preparing a bid submission officers have drawn up a local scheme that is seeking a grant payment of £400,000 to enable 20 eligible Council tenants to take up the cash incentive to access home ownership on the open market, thus protecting 20 Council properties from the Right to Buy.

Tenants will be targeted from the following priority groups:

- Older tenants primarily those under occupying their current home.
- Tenants seeking to move closer to their employment.
- Tenants residing in non-traditional housing but unable to raise a mortgage against this property.

In order to support the above priority groups the local scheme will also focus on those tenants who are able to afford mortgage payments but unable to raise the necessary deposit.

It is advised that successful bidders will be notified by the end of March 2015 and grants will be paid under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003

Decision:

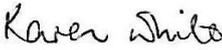
That a bid submission is made to the Department for Communities and Local Government Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund requesting a grant payment of £400,000 in the period 2015/16 for a local scheme to enable 20 Council house tenants to access home ownership on the open market.

Members Consulted:

Councillor Roger Blaney (consulted on 9th March)

Councillor David Lloyd (consulted on 17th March)

Councillor Abbie Truswell (consulted on 9th March)

Signed: 

Date: 17th March 2015

Karen White
Director - Safety