

## **URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION**

### **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 make it 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.

### **Subject: Housing Management Service Review – Appointment of Financial Consultant**

The Council is undertaking a review of its housing management services, focusing its review on the two options of: retaining delivery through Newark and Sherwood Homes Ltd; or the provision of in-house management services by the Council.

A timescale has been set for the review work to be undertaken over the months of January and February, recognising that whilst the review needs to be robust and thorough, it is important to undertake the work without undue delay given the inevitable uncertainty that the review will cause. This timeline is challenging, and it is recognised by both Council and Newark and Sherwood homes' officers that it is vitally important for the Council and the Company to co-operate fully and in a timely manner in the provision and exchange of information required for the review if the timelines are to be met.

To assist the Council in its review work, and to ensure independency in the gathering and analysis of the relevant financial and other information, the Council has appointed Steve Partridge of Savills. Steve completed a similar piece of work for the Council in 2012, through Consult CIH, when it reviewed the future options for the management of the Council's housing stock. He has extensive experience of providing consultancy on local authority housing, housing structures and options and housing finance, as well as being a recognised national expert in housing finance. It is proposed that he will carry out all financial aspects of the review, providing a valuable degree of external validation to the process. NSH officers have been consulted on this approach and are supportive, recognising the need for additional resource if the review is to deliver its objectives against the timelines set.

### **Budgetary Implications (Finance Officer's Comments)**

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) require that three quotations be obtained for contracts over the sum of £10,000 unless an exemption is necessary due to, (inter alia), serious disruption to Council services. In such cases approval to an exemption being applied must be given by the S151 Officer. Given the fact that Steve Partridge undertook similar work for the Council as part of the 2012 stock options appraisal, he has underlying knowledge of both the Council and the Company, which will assist with timeliness and robustness of producing the review report. There are relatively few other organisations that could assist with this highly specialised review and going through a quotation process would delay the review work beyond the required timescales. Taking these factors into account an exemption to the CPR is considered to be appropriate and has been approved.

The HRA currently doesn't have a provision within the 18/19 budget for this amount. However, this could be funded from a reduction in contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve and it is anticipated that this would not have a detrimental impact on the Capital Programme going forward.

**Appropriate Committee:**

Policy & Finance Committee

**Details of Item and Decision Taken** (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

To approve the appointment of Steven Partridge, Savills at the sum of £15,000 to undertake the work detailed above to support the Council in the delivery of the review project.

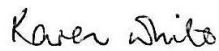
The reason for the urgency is to be able to deliver the review work within the proposed timescale.

**Members Consulted:**

Councillor David Lloyd - Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee – 09.01.19

Councillor Paul Peacock – Opposition Spokesperson Policy and Finance – 11.01.19

Signed



Date: 11.01.19