

## **RABBS MILL HOUSE (TOWER BLOCK), 14 CHILTERN VIEW ROAD**

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Finance, Property & Business Services
<b>Officer Contact</b>	Perry Scott, Residents Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	None
<b>Reasons for urgency</b>	To ensure the necessary information is available to the Cabinet Member and petitioners for the meeting.

### **HEADLINE INFORMATION**

<b>Purpose of report</b>	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition was received by the Council from the Rabbs Mill House Residents Association dated 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2013. The petition has 41 signatories and requests that the Council considers installing new windows to all properties within the block, Rabbs Mill House, Chiltern View Road, Cowley. This is eligible for consideration at a Petition Hearing with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property & Business Services.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	Putting our residents first: Our built environment.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Dependent of future decisions
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Corporate Services & Partnerships Social Services, Housing & Public Health
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	Uxbridge South Ward

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Cabinet Member:**

- 1. Meets the petitioners and considers their request that the Council implements a programme of works to include the replacement of the existing windows.**
- 2. Decides on the appropriate course of action having met with the petitioners.**

### **INFORMATION**

#### **Reasons for recommendation**

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petition with the petitioners.

## **Alternative options considered**

These can be identified from the discussions with the petitioners.

## **Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)**

None at this stage.

## **Supporting Information**

A petition was received by the Council from the Rabbs Mill House Residents Association dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The petition has 41 signatories and requests that the Council considers installing new windows to the 78 dwellings within the block.

The residents have signed the following statement:

*“We the undersigned petition the Council to would like to register our immense dissatisfaction with the replacement window scheme at Rabbs Mill House. Our windows were due to be replaced 2012/13 which then changed to 2013/14 and now we have been told it will not happen and no confirmed date can be given. Our heating bills are extortionate and our flats cold, due to the windows. We would request an investigation into this ASAP.”*

## **Background**

Rabbs Mill House is a Large Panel System (LPS) tower block of 14 storeys built in approximately 1965 and comprises 78 flats. Following the Ronan Point disaster in 1968, where a 22 storey tower block of this design collapsed following a gas explosion, the block was stripped of all gas services and a structural refurbishment was carried out eventually completing in the early 1980's. As part of this refurbishment the windows were replaced.

Since 1986 the block has been managed by a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) and was recently renewed for a further 5 years from 2014 - 2019. While the TMO delivers some of the housing management functions, the Council retains responsibility for other functions such as major works maintenance, major repairs and the management of tenancies and leases. The current occupation structure is 52 tenants and 26 leaseholders.

Leaseholders in the block have been consulted through the current TMO and the management organisation is in agreement with the programme.

A programme of window replacement works was prepared for the HRA Works to Stock Programme for 2013/14. However, this was placed on hold when the Council decided to undertake an independent stock condition survey to ensure that the annual programme of works across the HRA stock was appropriately focused and prioritised.

Officers are currently preparing updates for Members in relation to the Windows Replacement Programme for the current year which will include Rabbs Mill House.; costs are expected to be in the region of £340,000 for the Rabbs Mill House works.

## **Financial Implications**

Should a decision be made to replace the windows and subject to final tenders, the likely financial cost to the Council would be in the region of £340k. A significant proportion of the costs associated with the window replacement is due to access requirements but this estimate has been substantially reduced by the use of a proprietary access platform system rather than traditional scaffold.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

The recommendation will enable the Cabinet Member to discuss with the petitioners their concerns, and allow due consideration on whether or not to agree to their requests.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

This Petition Hearing is an established part of the Council's consultation and Democratic process.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications set out above.

### **Legal**

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council is responsible for replacing the windows at Rabbs Mill House pursuant to its repairing obligations under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Petition.