

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### HOUSING COMMITTEE – 31 JANUARY 2001

#### FLATTED PROPERTIES AT 2 – 110 CASTLEVIEW AVENUE, GALSTON

#### Director of Homes and Technical Services

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend actions in respect of the flatted / maisonette properties at 2 – 110 Castleview Avenue, Galston.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A report on the condition of the five maisonette blocks in Castleview Avenue, Galston including options for future action was considered by the Housing Capital Sub Committee on 30 August 2000. A report on the outcome of a subsequent tenant consultation exercise was submitted to the sub committee meeting of 25 October 2000. The Director of Homes and Technical Services was authorised to continue dialogue with the tenants concerned with a further report on the outcome to be submitted to a future meeting.

### 3. TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 At the meeting of 30 August 2000, the Director of Homes and Technical Services reported the outcome of a full and comprehensive survey of the maisonette blocks. This survey had identified a number of structural problems common to each of the 5 blocks and also highlighted the need for a range of other works to bring the flats up to modern standards. The report detailed the specific works required and suggested three options for remedial action. These were:

- Option 1 – Comprehensive and total refurbishment of the buildings at an estimated cost of £1.6M.
- Option 2 – Continue to carry out wind and water-tight items to safeguard the property with internal refurbishment deferred and carried out under future years capital improvement programmes. Estimated costs of immediate works £0.8M.
- Option 3 – Demolition of the existing maisonettes. Estimated cost - £.035M.

All the estimated costs exclude VAT and any decant costs and disturbance allowances for tenants.

- 3.2 The department remains of the view that the measures needed to tackle the problems identified by the survey cannot be dealt with on an individual repair basis although day to day repairs continue to be carried out in accordance with the previous sub committee decision.

#### 4. HOUSING ISSUES

- 4.1 On 30 August 2000, the department reported 11 vacancies out of the 55 flats with a further 8 tenants having applied for re-housing. The area housing team now reports 19 vacancies with 10 tenants now requesting a transfer to other accommodation. These changes may be due in part to uncertainty as to the future of the blocks but, perhaps as likely, the changes reflect the continuing decline in demand for this type of property which the current discussions have served to emphasise.
- 4.2 The department has held two public meetings in Galston to which all households resident within the maisonette blocks were invited to attend. The second, held on 31 October 2000, was attended by the Director of Homes and Technical Services. All householders were also visited in their own homes to enable each one to discuss privately, their own concerns and views of the future.
- 4.3 The views expressed by householders during these interviews have now been collated and updated in the light of any subsequent changes. Table A below considers the views of householders on each of the three options proposed by the council. Table B sets out respondents views on their own future housing moves.

**Table A**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Preferences</b>
Full Modernisation	18
Wind and Watertight	3 (1 owner occupier)
Demolition	10
Partial Demolition	2
No Opinion	3
No Reply	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>36</b>
Voids	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>

**Table B**

<b>Consider Future Move?</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	24 (10 live transfer requests)
No	12
No opinion	0
No Reply	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>36</b>
Voids	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>

4.4 From these findings, it is evident that only 50% of resident households support the option of comprehensive and total refurbishment. When viewed against the current 35% vacancy rate in the blocks, absence of registered housing demand for these maisonette flats, and noting that 67% of all those surveyed expressed a wish to move elsewhere, the evidence suggests that there is no compelling case for the level of investment required to bring the flats up to a modern standard and indeed, there is growing evidence to support the case for demolition with the cleared site being reinstated to improve the amenity of the wider area, and to facilitate and future development plans for the area.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The HRA Capital Programme for this year is fully committed and proposals for either refurbishment or demolition, if agreed, would require to be funded in future years. Costs of carrying out essential wind and watertight repairs will continue to be met from the revenue budgets. Rent lost due to voids will continue to be monitored and reported.

## **6.0 POLICY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 One of the flats within the maisonette blocks has been sold previously under the right to buy legislation. The council would be required to repurchase the flat should demolition proceed.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 It is recommended that members:

- Note the terms of the report and in particular, the result of the consultation exercise;
- Approve the re-housing of the existing tenants and the subsequent demolition of the five maisonette blocks, the timing of demolition to be carried out on a phased and programmed basis to minimise the risk to adjoining householders;

- Authorise the Solicitor to the Council to begin negotiations for the re-purchase of the former council flat at 50 Castleview Avenue, Galston where necessary through compulsory purchase;
- Instruct the Director of Homes and Technical Services to commence detailed discussions with individual householders on re-housing options and to begin re-housing as soon as possible.

James Lavery  
Director of Homes and Technical Services  
(CMcA/AB)

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Nil**

For further information please contact Mr C McAleavey, Head of Homes on 01563 – 554876.

Implementation Officer: Chris McAleavey, Head of Homes

**AGENDA**