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COMMITTEE: EXECUTIVE REF NO: E/25/48
DATE: 10 FEBRUARY 2026
SUBJECT: PLANNED MAINTENANCE
PROGRAMME FOR THE
COUNCIL'S HOUSING STOCK
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR ALASDAIR ROSS
SENIOR OFFICER: GAVIN FISK

Short description of report content and the decision requested:

This report requests approval for Maintenance & Contracts to procure a new planned maintenance contract for the maintenance and improvement of the Council's housing stock based on the national Decent Homes Standard and the Council's local Ipswich Standard.

The report asks if Executive wish to award the contracts itself or if it wishes to delegate the authority to award contracts to Officers.

Ward(s) affected:

All

List of Appendices included in this report:

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

The following appendix is to be considered in Part 2 of the agenda as it is likely that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information:

Appendix 1 - Financial Budget

This report has been prepared by

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This report was prepared after consultation with:

Internal consultees

Corporate Management Team

Head of Maintenance & Contracts

Head of Procurement

Maintenance and Contracts Senior Managers

Finance Department

Legal services

The following policies form a context to this report

National Decent Homes Standard for Social Housing - [A decent home: definition and guidance - GOV.UK](#)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(papers relied on to write the report but which are not published and do not contain exempt information)

None

OTHER HELPFUL PAPERS

(papers which the report author considers might be helpful – this might include published materials)

1. Housing Asset Management Strategy – E/23/34

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Executive adopted the Housing Asset Management Strategy (2025 - 2030) (E/23/34) which outlines the objectives and commitment that the Council's retained housing stock will be maintained to meet the Decent Homes Standard and the higher, locally determined, Ipswich Standard. The Ipswich Standard is ambitious and provides indicative timescales for assessment and replacement of key building components.
- 1.2 This next cycle of Planned Maintenance seeks to carry out works to properties commencing in the 2026/27 financial year, through to the end of the 2031/32 financial year. The scope of works included within this project is the renewal of major components to the external fabric of Council-owned properties.
- 1.3 Authority is sought to commence a procurement for these major works, that follow previous programmes and include the replacement of major building components, including roofs, windows, rainwater goods, windows, and doors. In addition, the project includes installing Solar PV and upgrading insulation (where required) and the external redecoration of every single property and the internal redecoration of communal areas. External revenue repairs also form a part of the project, and these may include (not exhaustive) renewal or repair of paths, steps, hard standings, fencing, brickwork etc. The replacement and maintenance of property using a planned approach will ensure tenants have a well-maintained, safe, and weather-tight home.
- 1.4 To assist in identifying those homes requiring upgrades and key component replacements, data is sourced from the asset management system, Keystone, which highlights replacement lifecycle. However, the condition of each home will be surveyed at an individual level on site to ascertain if the works are required. The condition survey is used to ultimately assess disrepair and consider if a building component is 'old' and needs replacing. A component cannot fail the Decent Homes Standard on age alone, so works are only carried out when deemed to be required. Indicative replacement cycles under the Ipswich Standard are roofs 57 years, doors and windows 40 years, external redecoration 7 years. In rare circumstances, work can also be brought forward, if need of replacement is due to condition or other valid management reasons.
- 1.5 Authority is sought to procure contracts to deliver the next cycle of external planned maintenance works to ensure the Council's homes remain decent and safe.

2. Background

- 2.1 The previous planned maintenance contract was awarded using the National Housing Federation contract (NHF) M3NHF rates and the contract was procured across six different lots. It is the intention this next phase will replicate this methodology from the last contract, where it proved to be successful, and will again be divided into six lots.
- 2.2 Therefore, it is proposed to have the following lots:
- Scaffolding
 - Roofing
 - Windows & Doors
 - Painting
 - General Building work (including insulation)
 - Solar PV
- 2.3 The splitting of the work into lots will allow local small & medium enterprises (SMEs) the opportunity to bid for work in addition to national companies. The Council will directly programme manage the project which is a tried and tested approach and will allow the Council to achieve better outcomes such as completing the work on time, ensuring quality and standards of workmanship are maintained and to ensure tenants experience a good quality service. The Council's in-house quantity surveyors will monitor all contractor payments to ensure the Council receives value for money. The Council will also employ Customer Liaison Officers to work directly on the contract, who will regularly communicate and liaise with tenants.
- 2.4 The Contract(s) would be procured using a nationally recognised schedule of rates, produced by the National Housing Federation. This is considered to be the most appropriate schedule to use as it is well known to contractors and provides clear specifications of the works required.
- 2.5 The Council has recently worked with a company called Saanchi Solutions Limited to review and update specifications relating to the installation of doors, windows, and Solar PV, to ensure the Council is using the most advantageous products that are compliant with the latest Building Regulations. These specifications will be included within the contract documents.
- 2.6 The new contracts will be procured in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 with notices that will be published on Suffolk Sourcing and Find a Tender (the central digital portal (CDP)).

2.7 All submitted tenders will be evaluated based on 60% price and 40% quality. The following criteria will be used for evaluating the tenderer's quality element:

- Experience & knowledge of projects with similar requirements
- Quality of service delivery
- Project management
- Customer care
- Environmental
- Health and Safety
- Supply chain management
- Social value including community benefits & apprenticeships

2.8 All bids will be subject to a financial assessment and compliance checks which will be completed by Procurement. The price and quality evaluations will be completed by a panel of suitably qualified and experienced officers.

3. Relevant Policies

3.1 The Corporate Strategy reflects the commitment to building a thriving Ipswich that leaves no-one behind. The Council believes that by working together with its communities, local businesses, and partners, it can achieve sustainable growth, improve the quality of life for all residents, and create a town that all can be proud of.

3.2 The five key aims from the Corporate Strategy are:

A thriving town centre	Council housing that is located close to the Town Centre will be included in this contract.
Meeting the housing needs of our community	This contract ensures all of our Council homes remain safe, decent and of a good quality, that tenants can afford to live in.
A carbon neutral council	Environmental objectives for the contractors will be included within the contract, to ensure any work can be completed in a socially and environmentally friendly manner, seeking to minimise carbon emissions. Some of the work being carried out will improve the environmental efficiency of the homes, such as insulation or Solar PV.

Promoting community wellbeing and fairness in Ipswich	This contract will ensure homes are well maintained to provide a safe and decent environment, which will contribute to better health outcomes for our tenants.
A financially sustainable Council providing good quality services.	This contract will ensure we continue to provide a range of good quality, efficient and reliable services.

4. Options Considered / Under Consideration

The following options were considered:

- 4.1 **Option A – Tender the contract awarding the entire project to one company** – This approach has been tested before by the Council and based on the Council’s experience and contract performance outcomes at that time, it is considered there are better options available. With this option, the Council can lose direct control of the supply chain, whereas selecting and being closer to the suppliers doing the work has proved much more beneficial in achieving better quality outcomes for tenants.

It is recommended this option is rejected.

- 4.2 **Option B – Appoint contractors using a National Framework** – These contracts could be inaccessible to local SMEs who are unable to access the framework. This could prove detrimental if the Council cannot provide an opportunity to highly skilled and competent local suppliers who are well placed to bid and undertake the work to a very high standard. It is also considered this option has the potential to give the Council less control over the process as it would have to adhere to the terms and conditions under the Framework.

It is recommended this option is rejected.

- 4.3 **Option C - Strategic Partnership or Joint Venture** - This option would involve entering a longer-term partnership with a contractor or consortium, with shared risk/reward and performance incentives which encourages innovation in sustainability and social values. The disadvantages are that the contracts are very complex to set up and manage with a risk of over-dependence on one partner if governance is weak. Furthermore, the Council lacks experience of this approach, which presents an unnecessary risk, compared to other options.

It is recommended this option is rejected.

- 4.4 **Option D – Split the contracts in work-related trade lots and programme manage the work in-house using the Council’s in-house team** – This option would encourage and allow SMEs to bid, allow the Council to control project timescales and provide best value for

money. This option follows the methodology from the last planned maintenance contract, so it is tried and tested, and there were many successful outcomes. The Council already has a team of highly trained and competent Programme Managers who have successfully worked with supply chain to produce work to a good standard for the benefits of our tenants.

This option is recommended.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 In accordance with the requirements of Section 20 Landlord & Tenant Act 1985, leaseholders will be served with notice of the Council's proposal to enter into a Qualifying Long-Term Agreement in accordance with Schedule 2 regulation 5(2) of the Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 5.2 There are two stages of leaseholder consultation which will require a Notice of Intention sent explaining the works and services proposed and the reason for doing these. Details will be provided where and when the leaseholder can inspect the documents.
- 5.3 The leaseholder has 30 days to respond with any written observations.
- 5.4 At Stage 2 the landlord must provide a Notice of Estimate which will include at least two estimates for the proposed works, a summary of leaseholder observations received during Stage 1 and the landlord's responses and details of where and when leaseholders can inspect the full estimates.
- 5.5 The leaseholder will have 30 days to respond with any further observations.
- 5.6 Notice of Reason, at Stage 3 the landlord must consult with leaseholders and explain the reason for the contractor selection.
- 5.7 The Ipswich Standard has previously been adopted by the Council's Executive, as part of the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy.
- 5.8 Tenants were consulted on the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy.

6. Risk Management

Risk Description	Consequence of risk	Risk Controls	Probability of risk occurring taking account of controls (scale 1-6) 1 – very likely 6 – almost impossible	Impact of risk, if it occurred taking account of actions (scale 1 – catastrophic ; 4 – negligible)	Actions to mitigate risk
Failure to fulfil repairing obligations under Landlord and Tenant legislation	Dissatisfied tenant resulting in Compensation claims to the Housing Ombudsman	Effective management of the planned programme	3	3	Programme Managers will hold regular performance review meetings with the supply chain
Failure to meet Health & Safety obligations	<p>Injury or death of persons.</p> <p>Prosecution of the Council, individuals and/or the contractor</p> <p>Bad publicity</p> <p>Providing safe protection of tenants whilst removing hazardous materials</p>	<p>The full Construction Design & Management Regulations apply to this contract.</p> <p>Audited health & safety processes in place with contractors</p> <p>Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 will apply to this contract</p>	3	2	Contractors are monitored to ensure all Health & Safety risks associated with the project are properly considered and measures are taken to eliminate or mitigate.

Failure of the selected Contractor	Delayed progress of the works or poor workmanship on site.	Financial and technical checks will be undertaken to evidence competent.	3	3	Robust checks during the procurement process.
Failure to meet the Decent Homes Standard	Properties that are not in a reasonable state of repair or have serious health and safety hazards.	To ensure programmes of work are in place that keep properties in reasonable state of repair free from hazards.	3	2	Ensure programme of improvements are delivered to the appropriate standards within the anticipated timescale.

7. Environment and Climate Change

- 7.1 The Council has declared a climate change emergency and has resolved to start working towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. All Council decisions should consider and respond to the potential impact that they will have on the climate and wider environment. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed, including public consultation is undertaken for specified types of projects before they can go ahead. Direct and indirect environmental impacts will be identified and quantified. Where these are negative then actions to mitigate these impacts will be identified with measures to reduce or remove the risk.
- 7.2 The Council will consider the impact of its activities on the environment and assess the impact of what it does in order to minimise and where possible enhance environmental impacts of its operational activities.
- 7.3 The procurement process will require bidders to provide details of their environmental policies and compliance regime.

8. Equalities, Diversity and Community Implications

- 8.1 Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 8.2 The protected grounds covered by the equality duty are age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- 8.3 The law requires that this duty to have due regard be demonstrated in decision-making processes. Assessing the potential impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can demonstrate that they have had due regard to the aims of the equality duty.
- 8.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment attached as Appendix 2 concludes that there is no significant impact on any groups that would suffer detriment under the contracts.
- 8.5 The tender evaluation process will ensure that each contractor has robust equal opportunities policies and procedures in place.

9. Crime and Disorder Impact

- 9.1 The Council will take all reasonable steps to prevent crime and disorder (most likely risk may be related to anti-social behaviour around scaffolding) when planning and carrying out the planned maintenance activities, which includes incorporating safety measures and considering the potential impact of the contract on community safety.

10. Financial Considerations

- 10.1 Revenue and Capital Budgetary provision has been included within the proposed 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as part of the Housing Revenue Account's (HRA) 30-year Business plan and is attached as Exempt Appendix 1.
- 10.2 The proposed Planned Maintenance contract will be awarded across a duration of 5-year, 6-month contract term, currently estimated to start in October 2026 and run until 31st March 2032.
- 10.3 The funding for the planned maintenance contract will continue to be weighted to each successful contractor under the six proposed lots (detailed in point 2.2) to align to methodologies taken within the previous Planned Maintenance contract.
- 10.4 The condition of each home will be individually surveyed on site, to ascertain if the works are required. The condition survey is used to ultimately assess disrepair and consider if a building component is 'old' and needs replacing. Therefore, budgets will be regularly updated as we progress through the programme and all condition surveys are carried out. It is advantageous to carry out a survey no sooner than 12 months from when the work will be carried out to a property, to ensure the survey reflects an accurate assessment of property condition.

11. Legal Considerations

- 11.1 In procuring contractor(s) for the delivery of planned maintenance works the Council must comply with the provisions of its Contract Standing Orders vis-à-vis the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.
- 11.2 The Legal Department will provide support to the Client Department and the Procurement Team for the procurement of the works, including drafting the works contract necessary to formalise the arrangement between the Council and contractor.
- 11.3 It is not known if this procurement will impinge on Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Therefore, the impact of TUPE will need to be considered. However, all bidders will be advised of this in the tender documents and asked to seek independent legal advice on whether TUPE applies. If TUPE does apply, this will only affect employees of the existing contractor.

12. Performance Monitoring

- 12.1 It is a contractual requirement that the contractors must meet set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These include tenant satisfaction, defects, completion times, safety, quality and keeping of appointments.
- 12.2 Monthly contract performance review meetings with each of the contractors will review all aspects relating to the performance and safety of the contract and outcomes for tenants.
- 12.3 Regular audits will monitor compliance with Health and Safety legislation. Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of tenants and those undertaking the work.
- 12.4 Work will be monitored and assessed to ensure both value for money and high-quality standards are maintained.
- 12.5 Monthly financial monitoring will be undertaken by Maintenance and Contracts.

13. Conclusions

- 13.1 The proposed procurement will allow the Council to continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard to ensure that tenants continue to enjoy safe, decent, and hazard-free homes. The procurement offers a compliant, transparent route to market which should deliver contracts that provides the ability to respond to tenant requirements quickly and deliver value for money within the agreed budget.
- 13.2 The procurement addresses key corporate priorities and has been constructed to allow the participation of SMEs (wherever possible) and consideration of bidders' social value and environmental commitments.

- 13.3 The procurement process will evaluate price, quality, technical capability, and financial soundness of bids.

14. Recommendations

- 14.1 That Executive authorises the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal Services and Head of Procurement, to progress with the procurement of planned maintenance contracts in lots as detailed in paragraph 2.2 above.**

Reason: To enable bids to be received and evaluated from appropriate contractors.

- 14.2 Subject to 14.1, that Executive authorises the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, Resources Portfolio Holder, Head of Finance, Head of Legal Services and Head of Procurement, to award the planned maintenance contracts within the approved budget attached as Exempt Appendix 1 for the period of 2026/27 through to 2031/32.**

Reason: To enable the Council to enter contracts which provide value for money, with successful providers who can meet the Council's requirements and so are the most advantageous to the Council.

OR:

- 14.3 That Executive reserves the contract award to itself and requests that the Assistant Director of Housing brings a further report to a future meeting of Executive to enable this decision.**

Reason: To enable the Council to enter contracts which provide value for money, with successful providers who can meet the Council's requirements and so are the most advantageous to the Council.