

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

12 November 2018

Report of the Director of Central Services

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STOCK CONDITION MODELLING EXERCISE

Summary

This report outlines the Council's approach to undertaking a private sector housing stock modelling exercise to update on the current stock condition and inform future policies and targeting of housing resources and services. The cost of the modelling exercise is contained in Part 2 of the Board papers.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Housing Act 2004 to keep the housing conditions in their area under regular review. This duty is usually met by undertaking a house condition survey on a regular basis, approximately every five years.
- 1.1.2 In 2013 the Building Research Establishment (BRE) undertook a private sector stock modelling exercise for the Council. A further stock modelling exercise is now proposed and this latest modelling will include some additional features.

1.2 Stock Modelling Approach

- 1.2.1 A housing stock modelling approach produces a series of models describing the housing conditions in an area. It is a desk top model approach utilising data from national datasets, such as the English House Condition Survey, and basic dwelling information. The model data is provided as a database and presented in spreadsheet form and as a series of maps illustrating the following housing indicators across the Borough:
 - Category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazard;
 - Category 1 hazard for excess cold;
 - Category 1 hazard for falls;

- estimated Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating, energy efficiency rating of a building - referred to as 'Simple SAP' to emphasise its origin from a reduced set of variables;
 - presence of a household in fuel poverty;
 - indication of disrepair in relation to the Decent Homes standard; and
 - presence of a vulnerable household where a member of the household is in receipt of an income related benefit.
- 1.2.2 The presence of category 1 HHSRS hazards indicates the residential accommodation does not meet the minimum standard for housing. The category 1 hazards for excess cold and falls gives a link with the key health related determinants for excess winter deaths and hip fracture in 65 year olds and over. The SAP rating gives an indication of the energy efficiency rating of the property.
- 1.2.3 These indicators provide useful information that we can use as the evidence base for any housing and health related strategies and targeting of financial assistance under our Housing Assistance policy. There is no doubt that extensive use has been made of the previous modelling exercise in shaping our Housing Assistance policy and enabling us to focus our scarce resources.
- 1.2.4 The BRE will also develop an authority wide integrated house condition and energy database. They identify likely sources of data and how these can be combined into the BRE modelled data and they present a series of options from which the Council can choose.
- 1.2.5 The BRE says '*The models can, in our view, be successfully enhanced by using the council's own data where these are available. The major advantage of using the authority's own data is that it reduces the reliance on modelled data by replacing either input or output variables with real values*'.
- 1.2.6 Officers have considered a range of additional local data options and have decided on the following:
- Basic integration of Energy Performance Certificate data (EPC)
 - Integration of Energy Efficiency and Energy Planning Variables (BRE modelled data not sourced from EPCs)
 - Local Land and Property Gazetteer integration to enable local benefit data integration, local Building Control/Planning variables integration and additional analysis and report writing to produce an Integrated Database Report.
- 1.2.7 This additional authority wide integrated house condition and energy database is also available via BRE's on line platform, the BRE Housing Stock Condition Database (HSCD). This provides dwelling level data from the modelled data and enables local authorities to update, view and query their own local data. The dwelling level data can be downloaded from the HSCD.

- 1.2.8 The findings from the stock modelling data and maps will be reported to Members at a future meeting of this Board.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Housing Act 2004 to keep the housing conditions in their area under regular review. This modelling exercise plays a key role in fulfilling this duty.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The BRE has provided a quote for the housing stock modelling exercise and housing stock model report and database. This quote (which is commercially sensitive) is detailed in Part 2 of the Board papers.
- 1.4.2 In accordance with Rule 13 of the Contract Procedure Rules, a waiver will be sought from the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Transformation in order to authorise the award of a contract to BRE without obtaining at least three written quotes in advance. The waiver will be sought on the basis that the BRE are the only contractor who can provide this detailed and specialist work as a complete package.
- 1.4.3 The cost of the survey will be covered using the Housing Survey Reserve.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Failing to review housing conditions in our area will result in a failing to meet our statutory requirements. It is also important to have up to date information so that any financial assistance offered to improve housing conditions is spent wisely and targeted to best effect to achieve the desired outcomes.

1.6 Recommendations

- 1.6.1 Subject to agreement to the cost detailed in Part 2 of the Board papers, Members are **RECOMMENDED** to **AGREE** the instruction of BRE to undertake a housing stock modelling exercise and to develop an authority wide integrated house condition and energy database.

The Director of Central Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

Nil

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