

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 30 MAY 2013
title: DEVELOPMENT OF A COSY HOME IN RIBBLE VALLEY
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To request a contribution towards the purchase of a 'Cosy Home' in the Ribble Valley.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To reduce fuel poverty in the borough.
- Corporate Priorities – N/A
- Other Considerations – N/A

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 St Vincent's Housing Association have been a partner in the implementation of the Warm Homes Healthy People initiative. St Vincent's have provided technical assistance in the provision of thermal imaging, gas safety assessments and boiler replacements.

2.2 St Vincent's have a committed sustainability team trained to undertake green deal assessments, domestic energy assessments and thermography.

2.3 St Vincent's currently have a 'Cosy Home' in Farnworth, Bolton. St Vincent's purchased the property and fitted out the property with every energy saving initiative appropriate. The 'Cosy Home' demonstrates how fuel bills and fuel poverty can be tackled.

2.4 Within the property there is a mechanical ventilation heat recovery system, a voltage optimisation panel and a 98% efficient boiler and heat recovery system. There is also LED lighting throughout and A rated argon filled windows, PV panels on the roof and thermal insulation.

2.5 The property is available for the general public, landlords and developers and other housing providers to view to see how the new technologies work and how energy savings can be made.

3 PROPOSAL

3.1 St Vincent's are proposing to purchase a rural, hard to treat property in the Ribble Valley and then to retrofit the property with all the latest energy saving technology. Once the property has been fully renovated, it will be used as a 'Cosy Home' to demonstrate to other householders and any interested parties the many energy efficient initiatives available and the impact they can make.

3.2 The property will be open to the general public for tours around the property to encourage the use of energy saving technologies.

3.3 There are many examples of 'Cosy Homes' nationally but they are all in urban settings. This will be the first rural hard to treat Cosy Home.

4 REQUEST

4.1 St Vincent's are looking to purchase a rural property which is off mains gas. Once they own the property they will renovate it and then look to use it as a demonstration property for 12-18 months, depending on interest. At the end of the demonstration period, the property will be sold. The request is for a capital contribution of £15,000 towards the purchase. This investment from RVBC will be registered as a charge and repaid on the sale of the property.

4.2 The investment could be funded as a new capital scheme or use funding received through the Warm Homes Healthy People grants. The Warm Homes Healthy People funding has been ring fenced to deliver boiler replacements and would therefore require approval to allow funding of this scheme.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – request for a £15,000 capital contribution that would be repaid in the next 2 years.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – all the retrofit will be financed by St Vincent's and energy providers.
- Political – energy saving and affordable warmth is a key priority for the Council.
- Reputation – the property will be the first rural Cosy Home to demonstrate energy efficiency technology.
- Equality & Diversity – the cosy home will demonstrate that energy saving technology can be applied to hard to treat properties in rural areas off gas.

6 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

6.1 Approve the £15,000 capital investment from the Warm Homes Healthy People fund for the Cosy Home purchase and support St Vincent's to deliver the initiative.

RACHAEL STOTT
HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 4567.

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