
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 12
DATE OF MEETING:	11 th APRIL 2002	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	SANDRA WHILES	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	MARK ALFLAT Ext 5716	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Prioritisation system for applicants On the Renovation Grant Waiting List	REF: DB/04
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS02

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To adopt a system to enable applicants on the Renovation Grant waiting list to be prioritised in a fair and consistent manner.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To seek approval to introduce a system to prioritise applicants on the Renovation Grant waiting list.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 House Renovation Grants are a discretionary form of means tested grant available to owner-occupiers. The purpose of the grant is to provide funds for necessary repairs and improvements to render a property fit.
- 3.2 The demand for Renovation Grants at the present time, considerably exceeds the amount of grant budget available and potential applicants must queue on a waiting list.
The average time on the waiting list is currently twelve months. This waiting time is likely to increase further as demand continues to outstrip the available budget.
- 3.3 The current waiting list operates on a date order or 'first come, first served' basis only. This does not take into account any other circumstance, which might justify prioritisation, such as the vulnerability of the applicant or severity of the disrepair.
- 3.4 In order to operate the waiting list in a fair and consistent manner, a 'priority system' is proposed which is attached at Annex 1. The proposed system provides for points to be allocated according to set criteria, for example; condition of the property,

vulnerability of the applicant, their financial circumstances and time on the waiting list. Applicants will then be placed on the waiting list according to their point score.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The limited Renovation Grant budget will be allocated in priority order. Urgent and needy cases identified as 'high priority', will have a shorter time on the waiting list. 'Low priority' cases, facing longer on the waiting list may be encouraged to seek alternative arrangements and no longer require grant funding.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The proposals will demonstrate that proper consideration has been given to the individual circumstances of each application by the implementation of a priority based queuing system. It further demonstrates an unbiased and consistent approach, which is defensible in the event of complaint to the Council or Local Government Ombudsman.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Renovation Grants are an important means to repair and improve properties, which could otherwise deteriorate further and blight the area.