

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Cabinet Member Decision

**Subject:** Homes England- Cladding Safety Scheme Pre-Tender Funded Work

**Date of Decision:** 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026

**Report of:** Cabinet Member for Housing

**Contact Officer:** Name: Martin Reid  
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**Ward(s) affected:** All Wards

**Key Decision:** No

**For general release**

### 1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Resident safety and the safety of those who visit and work on our council homes is our key priority. As part of our ongoing programme to improve the safety of our homes, we have applied to the government for building safety grant funding. This will support any work required to the exterior façades of our buildings to ensure they meet enhanced fire safety standards under the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety (England) regulations. This national Homes England Cladding Safety Scheme (CSS) supports an assessment, through specialist surveys, of whether any improvement work is required to the exterior of our buildings.
- 1.2 The council does not have any Grenfell Tower type cladding on any of our blocks. We have bid to the CSS to fund remediation works where we have some high-rise blocks with elements of facade or curtain wall material that may be deemed to pose a high-risk of fire spread. This includes in some cases, spandrel and balcony infill panels and some paneling that may encompass some stairwells. CSS funding will mitigate the costs of related fire safety measures to the Housing Revenue Account and leaseholders.
- 1.3 The council has been successful in bidding for pre-tender funding under the CSS to take forward appointments of a specialist project team, formed from external specialist consultants. The team will undertake design of the works and put together the necessary documents for the tender for substantive works required to the façade of blocks where fire safety remediation work may be needed to the exterior of the building. The sole purpose of this funding is to support the early-stage mobilisation and pre-tender activities required to progress façade remediation works. It cannot be used for any other purpose.
- 1.4 In awarding the funding, Homes England are clear that it is imperative that we progress with the appointment of our project team as soon as possible,

with the mandatory roles expected to be fully formed within a very tight timescale, within 1 month of the first grant payment being made.

In order to progress these requirements to set up of pre-tender project team as soon as possible in compliance with the terms of the Homes England funding, Cabinet approval is sought for the use of Homes England Cladding Safety Scheme (CSS) on up to X sites in Brighton & Hove. The council have received funding approval for 7 sites to date. It is envisaged that there will be one specialist project team undertaking design and completing tendering to be ready to submit our Works Package for substantive works required to the façade for each of the blocks for which we receive CSS funding. In addition to Livingstone House, to date confirmation of CSS pre-tender funding of £667,500 per block has also now been received for a further 6 blocks as follows: Hazel, Hollyhock, Viscaria, Damson and Cherry blocks on the Bristol Estate. We have also received CSS funding for St James House. Homes Grant Funding Agreements are received on a block-by-block basis as funding is agreed by Homes England and are signed off by the Corporate Director, Homes & Adult Social Care.

- 1.5 It is important to note that: this funding is being rolled out nationally across local authorities. The market for expert consultants is expected to rapidly reach capacity, particularly for fire engineers, façade engineers and other specialist consultants. Early engagement and appointments of the professional team are therefore critical to securing capability and maintaining programme certainty.
- 1.6 Notwithstanding this CSS funding bid, the existing fire safety and mitigation measures the council has already put in place in our buildings, including where required waking and fire alarm systems, remain in place to ensure our residents continue to remain safe in their homes. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, Regulator of Social Housing, and where appropriate Building Safety Regulator, have been informed and kept updated on this funding and related matters as part of our ongoing regulatory engagement.

## **2. Recommendations**

That the Cabinet Member for Housing:

- 2.1 Agrees delegated authority for Lead Member for Housing, in consultation with Corporate Director for Homes & Adult Social Care to utilise allocated Homes England funding for improvement to fire safety in Brighton & Hove for all agreed and future Cladding Safety Schemes

## **3. Context and background information**

- 3.1 In line with our Council Plan and Housing Strategy priority of Improving Housing Quality, particularly to '*Invest in building and fire safety to meet new duties under the Building Safety Act*' our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget proposals include continued significant investment to keep our residents safe in their homes. The investment required is a result of the implementation of the more stringent Building Safety Act and Fire Safety (England) Regulations. This includes work required to ensure compliance

across the council's stock and will impact on both HRA revenue and capital budgets over the medium term, reflecting our additional fire safety survey work on compartmentation, fire doors and external wall insulation and other works.

- 3.2 As outlined in the Housing Revenue Account Budget & Capital Investment Programme 2026-27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy report approved at Budget Council, where possible we are applying for Government and Homes England funding to mitigate the costs of works, including from the Waking Watch Replacement Fund and Cladding Safety Scheme.
- 3.3 The Homes England Cladding Safety Scheme (CSS) is the national government grant programme for funding the remediation of unsafe cladding and external wall systems on residential buildings in England. The CSS is part of the wider Building Remediation Portfolio whose objectives include ensuring that residents are safe from risks associated with fire safety. Funding is available towards eligible costs that would be borne by residential or commercial leaseholders whether they benefit from protections against having to pay service charges towards equivalent works. The CSS funding relates to all residents in the blocks.
- 3.4 The Council welcome the availability of this funding to support social landlords with the cost of remediation of work now required to the external wall systems in some of our blocks to meet new more stringent building safety standards. This is in line with the letter Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing, wrote to the then Secretary of State for Housing & Communities, dated 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024, requesting specific funding, policy changes and powers to increase housing supply and standards. This included a request for *'Separate funding for health & safety and regulatory programmes, as well as works resulting from new legislation and other issues to ensure compliance as standards in social housing'*.
- 3.5 The Council does not have any Grenfell Tower type cladding on any of our blocks. We have bid to the CSS to fund remediation works where we have some high-rise blocks with elements of façade or curtain wall material that may be deemed to pose a high risk of fire spread. Where we have such situations, the Council has also put additional fire mitigation measures in place as required, such as a waking watch or upgraded fire alarm system.
- 3.6 Brighton & Hove City Council have currently applied for pre-tender funding for 26 blocks across the city. To date 6 funding bids have been approved, 3 have been declined, 17 are under Homes England review. The 3 that have been declined were deemed lower risk with no CSS funded works required for these blocks. These figures are subject to change as funding considerations and decisions are applied to further blocks. This Cabinet Member Approval will cover the cost of pre-tender works at Livingstone House only so the council can commence setting up the pre-tender specialist delivery team. Overarching approval for spending the Homes England CSS funding agreed on further properties will be included in a future report to Cabinet once we have the full package of funding confirmed for all eligible blocks.

- 3.7 A key contractual Homes England obligation is for submission of monthly progress reports, with HE being clear on funding award that *'it is imperative that you now progress with the appointment of your project team; the mandatory roles are expected to be fully formed within 1 month'* HE are also clear that *'Our expectation is that most projects can appoint their team, undertaken design and complete tendering and be ready to submit your Works Package within 6 months (9 months if your buildings is subject to BSR, 18m+/7 storeys or more)'*.
- 3.8 The funding received will be used to put in place a specialist delivery team and progress façade remediation works at pace. The specialist team will include fire engineers, façade engineers and specialist consultants. Given that this is a national scheme we are anticipating high demand for these specialist services and authorisation will allow us to start agreements with these specialists. Our proposed specialist project team is proposed to include the appointment of the following consultancy roles:
- Project Director.
  - Project Managers x 2.
  - Lead Designer.
  - Fire Safety Engineer.
  - Quantity Surveyor.
  - Resident Engagement Lead.
  - Client Technical Advisor.

The blocks for which we have applied for CSS funding are listed below, with their current Homes England status outlined. We are currently forecasting, based on what has been approved and rejected to date, 9 blocks will be funded. We anticipate that this is going to be a substantial project where we are successful in achieving funding, with work funded as pre-tender for 6-12 months, with works to blocks following from month 12-24 should further funding be made available, should this be required, for works delivery:

**The blocks for which we have applied for CSS funding – this information is subject to change as funding considerations and decisions are applied to further blocks.**

Funding approved

- Livingstone House – Funding approved Grant Funding Agreement Signed (£667,500 inc. VAT)
- Hazel (Bristol Estate) - Funding approved, Grant Funding Agreement Signed - (£667,500 inc. VAT)
- Hollyhock (Bristol Estate) – Funding Approved, Grant Funding Agreement Signed (£667,500 inc. VAT).
- Cherry (Bristol Estate) – Funding Approved, Grant Funding Agreement Signed (£667,500 inc. VAT).
- St James House (LPS block) – Funding Approved, Grant Funding Agreement signed ( )
- Damson (Bristol Estate) – Funding Approved, Grant Funding Agreement signed ( )

- Viscaria (Bristol Estate) – Funding Approved, Grant Funding Agreement signed ( )

#### Funding Declined – Fire Safety

- Theobald House. CSS funding declined.
- Dudeney (LPS block) – CSS funding declined.
- Nettleton (LPS block)- CSS funding declined.

#### Funding Application in process

- Calendula - (Bristol Estate) Application in review
- Allamanda – (Bristol Estate) Application submitted.
- Meadowsweet - (Bristol Estate) Application submitted.
- Jasmine - (Bristol Estate) Application submitted.
- Sorrell - (Bristol Estate) Application submitted.
- Ecclesden - Application submitted.
- Thornsedale - Application submitted.
- Kestrel - (LPS block) Application submitted.
- Heron - (LPS block) Application submitted.
- Swallow - (LPS block) Application submitted.
- Falcon - (LPS block) Application submitted.
- Kingfisher - (LPS block) Application submitted.

## 4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 The funding received is allocated on a block by block basis for use on this works at Livingstone House only, cannot be used for any other property or scheme by Brighton & Hove Council. Therefore, the alternative option would be to not authorise use of the funding and would be a missed opportunity to improve fire safety in the block.

## 5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 As part of our reporting, Homes England will ask the council to submit evidence of the communication we have sent out to leaseholders and residents in the building. Homes England advise *that 'It is essential that you ensure that leaseholders and residents are kept informed of progress'*. Homes England recommend that at this stage we provide information including the following:
- That we have signed the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) for the CSS received PTS (if applicable) and will be progressing work to prepare works and costs.
  - Explanation as to works we expect the CSS to cover.
  - Identification of how costs for any ineligible works will be met.
  - Indicative timeframes for next steps (including submission for building control or BSR approval)
- 5.2 Homes England will review our communications *'to ensure that these are helpful and informative and will be actively escalating cases where communication is not occurring or meeting the standards we expect to see'*. Homes England advise *'At this point in the process, it is crucial that*

*leaseholders understand the progress that has been made and the next steps.*

## **6. Financial implications**

- 6.1 The CSS pre-tender funding of £667,500 for Livingstone House was received by BHCC on 17th March and has been allocated against the HRA balance sheet. The funding will be drawn down from the balance sheet to cover the cost of setting up the specialist project team during 2026/27.
- 6.2 More detailed financial implications will be included in a future Cabinet meeting, setting out approval of further CSS funding.

Name of finance officer consulted: Mike Bentley Date consulted (01/04/26):

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1 Procurement of a team of specialist consultants will need to be made in accordance with procurement legislation and the Council's Contract Standing Orders. Procurement will advise on the appropriate route to market to secure these consultants based on the value and scope of their services.
- 7.2 Legal Services input will be required to support the tender for the works contract for the work at Livingstone House. The tender for the works will need to be made in accordance with procurement legislation and the Council's Contract Standing Orders

Name of lawyer consulted: Eleanor Richards Date consulted 16/04/2026

## **8. Risk Implications**

- 8.1 In order to qualify for funding within this scheme, the property will need to have been assessed as having enough combustible material in its structure to pose a risk to residents. Whilst there is no immediate risk, other mitigations are in place. The work completed will improve fire safety for those residents, and it is important to minimise the associated risks.

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 Not applicable

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 Not applicable

## **11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:**

- 11.1 Implementing this scheme will demonstrate council commitment to improving fire safety for residents in Council properties around the city and will give reassurance that they are safe in their homes.

## **Other Implications**

### **12. Procurement implications**

- 12.1 We support this approach, provided that our Procurement Service either leads or informs the procurement aspects of this project. This will help ensure consistency, oversight, and compliance with BHCC Contract Standing Orders (CSO's).

Name of Procurement Contact consulted: Jason Duncombe Date consulted (09/04/2026):

### **13. Crime & disorder implications:**

- 13.1 Not applicable

### **14. Conclusion**

- 14.1 This report seeks approval to use Homes England Cladding Safety Scheme (CSS) to complete the design and tender preparation needed to progress any external wall remediation works at sites in Brighton & Hove. Approval will enable the Council to meet Homes England timescales, maintain programme certainty, while ensuring procurement and governance requirements are followed. Throughout the pre-tender phase the Council will continue to keep residents and leaseholders informed and will maintain existing fire safety mitigation measures as required, reinforcing our commitment to resident safety and compliance with the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety (England) regulations.