

**REPORT FROM:** HOUSING, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES MANAGER

**TO:** EXECUTIVE

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**APPROVAL OF AN EMPTY PROPERTY LOAN FOR  
3 MIDLAND STREET, NELSON**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for an empty property loan for 3 Midland Street Nelson that is owned by Councillor Mohammed Sakib.

**RECOMMENDATION**

To Approve the loan for 3 Midland Street Nelson.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

To assist in bringing a long term empty property back into use.

**BACKGROUND**

1. At its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013, this Executive approved the setting up of an Empty Homes Fund. The purpose of the fund is to provide loans to assist the owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use. The scheme originally applied to the following areas – the Railway Street neighbourhood in Brierfield, the Waterside area of Colne and the Bradley and Southfield areas of Nelson. It has now been extended to the whole Borough.
2. The loans enable those property owners to borrow 80% of the cost of the work needed to make the relevant property safe to live in up to a maximum of £15,000 with the remaining 20% being provided by the owner. Any costs of the work over £15,000 have to be funded by the owner in any event.
3. Councillor Sakib has received a previous loan to bring another empty property back into use in 2014 and in that case the work was carried out by Prime Properties (Pendle) Ltd which Councillor Sakib is a director of.

## ISSUE

4. A loan enquiry under the Empty Homes Fund was received from Councilor Sakib in May 2013 to assist him in bringing 3 Midland Street Nelson (which he owns) up to a standard where it could be occupied. Following an inspection of the property a schedule of works was written, prices were obtained by Councillor Sakib and a formal application was submitted to the Private Sector Housing Section.
5. The Council's loan procedure requires that we use the lower of the estimates to calculate the loan. The lower estimate provided was from Prime Properties (Pendle) Ltd
6. An agreement in principle was made to provide Councillor Sakib a maximum loan of £15,000 subject to a formal loan agreement being signed and formal approval being granted.
7. The Council's loan provider was notified of this amount and a loan agreement was sent to Councillor Sakib. Signed copies of this agreement have now been received by Private Sector Housing and approval of the loan is needed.
8. The Empty Homes Fund is administered under the Council's Housing Renewal Policy, Paragraph 10 of which says as follows:  
  
"Applications for financial assistance from Councillors or members of their immediate family should be referred to the Council's Executive before approval is given."
9. The Executive are therefore asked to consider whether to approve the granting of this loan to Councillor Sakib.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Policy:** None

**Financial:** There is a dedicated budget for the provision of empty property loans and funds are available.

**Legal:** None

**Risk Management:** None

**Health and Safety:** None

**Sustainability:** Provision of the loan will lead to an empty property being brought back into use.

**Community Safety:** Empty properties attract anti-social behaviour so the provision of assistance to bring this property into use will reduce this type of behaviour.

**Equality and Diversity:** None

## APPENDICES

None

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None