

## **POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**25 NOVEMBER 2021**

### **YORKE DRIVE AND LINCOLN ROAD PLAYING FIELDS REGENERATION - UPDATE**

#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the report from the Homes & Communities Committee meeting held on 22 November on progress with the Yorke Drive and Lincoln Road Playing Fields Regeneration project including the successful grant funding award from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) of £1.05m.
- 1.2 To approve delegation of the signing of the funding agreement to ensure external funding can be accessed in a timely manner.

#### **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 The Yorke Drive Regeneration project emanated from the original Bridge Ward Neighbourhood Study in 2012 and has the following objectives:
  - Transformation of the estate and area through selective demolition and building of new mixed tenure homes for rent and sale
  - To achieve a cross subsidy from the sale of market properties to support delivery of new affordable rented homes and improvements to the whole estate
  - Providing improved sports and leisure facilities for all (including a new sports pavilion)
  - Improving road access and the road network in the area
  - Making the whole area a better and safer place to live
  - Providing an economic stimulus to the Newark and Sherwood Economy
- 2.2 Outline Planning Permission for the selective demolition of 130 homes and development of up to 320 homes was secured in November 2019.
- 2.3 The exempt report presented to Policy & Finance Committee in September 2019, approved the maximum financial capital commitment from the Council and the appointment of Lovells Partnerships Ltd. as developer through their regeneration arm Compendium Living.
- 2.4 In April 2020, the Policy & Finance Committee approved progressing with the project despite disappointment at being deemed ineligible for Homes England funding under the Affordable Homes Programme.
- 2.5 The project has suffered a delay in the programme last shared with Homes and Communities Committee which anticipated a Reserved Matters Planning Application in March 2021. An explanation for this, along with revised time-frames is detailed below.

#### **3.0 Project Update**

- 3.1 Key Updates

Key actions	Update
Land Assembly through acquisition of privately owned properties.	<p>Fourteen privately owned properties fall within the demolition zone and the Council has progressed negotiations with owners with a view to purchasing these through an agreed voluntary sale.</p> <p>Seven properties have been purchased with an additional one expected in the coming months. A compulsory purchase order will be sought as a last resort to ensure land assembly and Weightmans Law has been appointed to support the Council through this process if necessary. A further Committee Paper for approval of the Compulsory Purchase Order application will be brought forward in due course.</p>
Acquisition of 1-9 Lincoln Court from Paragon Asra	<p>The Council has now acquired 1-9 Lincoln Court from Paragon Asra. The existing tenants have transferred to secure Council tenancies. The Council also secured the agreement of Homes England to permit the grant attached to the properties to be put into a Recycled Capital Grants Fund which can be utilized in the delivery of further affordable housing.</p>
Preparation for decant and the move of 130 households	<p>The project phasing has been designed such that disruption to residents is minimized with one move only as far as is practicably possible. It is also anticipated that some households will choose to move off the Drive rather than be rehoused in the new development. The Council's Decant Policy was approved at Policy and Finance Committee in November 2019 with the Resident Compensation Guide approved in April 2020.</p> <p>To date nine properties have been decanted including five within the first six due for demolition. In addition, six natural voids (where a resident has chosen to leave for reasons other than the regeneration project) have been held void. This is supported within the overall decant and rehousing strategy.</p>
Management of vacant properties	<p>The benefits and disadvantages of holding naturally occurring voids in Phase 1 (i.e. rent loss and potential of Anti-Social Behaviour, versus requirement for statutory compensation payment and risk to programme from delayed decant) have been considered and naturally occurring voids in Phase 1 are currently being held rather than re-let.</p> <p>Void properties have been shuttered and made secure with additional patrols from Street Wardens and Tenancy Officers to manage any potential Anti-Social Behaviour.</p> <p>Last winter, a number of short term lettings were facilitated in a number of void properties to support the Council's Winter Shelter provision. In addition, a number of void properties have been earmarked for short term letting. Using voids in this way supports the project through minimizing rent loss, supports wider council objectives and helps reduce the risk of Anti-Social behavior. Temporary lettings do not put additional pressure on the project as temporary residents are not entitled to statutory Home Loss Compensation.</p>

<p>Reserved Matters Planning Phase 1 secured</p>	<p>The project has suffered a delay to the submission of a Reserved Matters Planning Application which was originally anticipated in March 2021 and is now programmed for May 2022. This delay has come as a result of a number of impacts on the overall design and issues emerging from detailed site investigations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of noise levels to the east of the site in excess of required levels (despite earlier work to mitigate)</li> <li>• The requirement to build in the new Parking Supplementary Planning Document – <b>June 2021</b></li> <li>• The requirement to build in the Future Homes Standard – <b>January 2021</b></li> </ul> <p>As a result of the above, the project had paused whilst the team worked through the implications. An element of redesign is now underway for the eastern boundary and it is anticipated a solution will be presented to residents for consultation in January 2022.</p>
<p>Community and resident involvement</p>	<p>Community and resident involvement remain key to the success of this project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Resident Panel has now met for the first face to face panel since the pandemic began, on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021</li> <li>• The ‘Yorke Drive Focus’ newsletter is produced every two months, with the next due end November 2021</li> <li>• Regular updates are provided through Facebook to the Yorke Drive Focus page</li> <li>• Direct consultation with residents on elements of redesign is programmed for January 2022</li> <li>• There is ongoing direct liaison with Ward Councillors fortnightly</li> </ul>
<p>Pavilion stakeholders</p>	<p>In addition to the development of housing, the delivery of the new Pavilion and enhanced playing field and open space provision is central to the regeneration project.</p> <p>The proposal to bring forward demolition as part of the grant funding agreement (see section 3.2 below) will require the identification of appropriate alternative accommodation for the current users of the pavilion for the duration of works.</p> <p>Further consideration is required on the future management of the facility and to maximize the benefits from this new provision alongside other community facilities in the area so that there is complementary provision.</p>

## 3.2 Grant Funding Success

3.2.1 In the Autumn Budget, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021, the project was awarded £1.05m grant funding from DLUHC to cover:

- Land Acquisition/ Property Buy Back
- Service Diversions Design
- Demolition
- Property Decommissioning

- Design Fees
- Surveys
- Planning

3.2.2 The funding requires spend to be completed by March 2022, hence the Council and Developer bringing forward works that can be delivered in this timeframe, to support the overall viability of the project.

3.2.3 The Grant Funding Agreement is expected from the DLUHC by mid-November and a further report will be brought forward to Policy and Finance Committee for approval to enter into this agreement.

#### **4.0 Equalities Implications**

4.1 Equality implications for this regeneration scheme have been considered with a full Equality Impact Assessment presented to Policy and Finance Committee in November 2018.

#### **5.0 Digital Implications**

5.1 There are no additional digital implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 Financial Implications - FIN21-22/8677**

6.1 The current capital budgets for Yorke Road are split between HRA and General Fund works. The profiling of the budgets will be updated to reflect the delays as set out within the body of this report.

6.2 The successful grant allocation for £1.050m has not as yet been included within the capitals budgets. Once confirmed through the grant agreement, the total allocation for the project will increase by £1.050m.

6.3 Once the grant offer letter has been received and the plans to utilise prior to the grant end date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 are in place, a request for its inclusion will be made to Policy and Finance.

#### **7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives**

7.1 The rationale for the project has been clearly articulated in this and previous reports, its strategic importance is reflected through its inclusion in the Council's Community Plan. Following extensive and continued consultation with residents on the estate, the project is also supported by the overwhelming majority of residents.

7.2 The proposals directly relate to the following objectives within the Community Plan:

- *Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area*
- *Deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth*
- *Create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority*

- *Continue to maintain the high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment*
- *Enhance and protect the districts natural environment*
- *Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase feelings of safety in our communities*
- *Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents*

## **8.0 Comments of Director**

8.1 The Residents Panel held on 10 November made clear the Council's ongoing commitment to this regeneration scheme and what residents can expect to see on the ground in coming months as a result of our successful bid with DLUHC.

8.2 This report shows next steps to achieving the next milestone of submitting reserved planning.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:**

- (a) the progress on the delivery of the Yorke Drive Regeneration Project be noted;**
- (b) as and when grant funding is received, it is absorbed into the capital programme budget to enable spend to be achieved within timeframes set; and**
- (c) the signing of the funding agreement be delegated to the Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing and the Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Services to minimise any delays in receiving funding.**

## **Reason for Recommendations**

**Although the full details of the funding agreement are not currently available they are unlikely to hold any onerous conditions, therefore delegated authority is sought for expediency and will enable the project to progress.**

## **Background Papers**

Nil.

For further information please contact Cara Clarkson on Ext 5923.

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