

AUDIT COMMITTEE

19 MARCH 2015

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (LIFE OPPORTUNITIES)

A.7 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE TENDRING DISTRICT

(Report prepared by Richard Barrett)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present to the Committee with an update on the various housing new build, acquisition and development projects in the District.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At their meeting on 18 December 2014, the Audit Committee considered a report that provided a general update on various housing development activities undertaken or in progress within the District.
- In accordance with the Committee's request, this report sets out a further update.
- As also requested by the Committee, a detailed review of housing development in the district has been included within the Committee's 2015/16 work programme that is set out elsewhere on the agenda.
- To date a number of projects have been completed with the first phase of the Jaywick Project, which relates to the potential acquisition of a number of sites in the area, remaining in progress.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee reviews and notes the update on housing development within the District.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The delivery of good quality housing in the district is a key priority for the Council.

The acquisition of the sites in the Jaywick area would help to meet housing need in Tendring, would help to kick-start regeneration and helps to achieve one of the Council's objectives of delivering at least five units of council housing accommodation.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

Budgetary provision of £1 million has been set aside within the Housing Revenue Account for the acquisition or building of council properties within both the 2014/15 and 2015/16 budgets. The Council also has borrowing headroom within the Housing Revenue Account in the event that this is required to either acquire sites or directly develop them and has carried forward a capital balance from 2013/14's acquisition or new build budget.

Risk

There are no direct risks associated with this report although such matters will feature as an important element of the development of specific housing initiatives and projects along with any associated decisions.

The Jaywick Project and other housing development in the district is included as an activity within the Annual Governance Statement outstanding items list that is reported to the each meeting of the Committee.

LEGAL

The Council has the power under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 to acquire land, houses or buildings for housing purposes.

In accordance with the Constitution, Cabinet can authorise the acquisition of the land under its terms of reference and the Property Dealing Procedure.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

None

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**CURRENT POSITION****Jaywick Project**

Cabinet considered a report on 5 September 2014 that set out the initial phase of this project. The delegations agreed included the involvement of the Corporate Directors for Corporate Services and Life Opportunities in consultation with the Council's S151 officer and Monitoring Officer as part of the process of ensuring a robust approach to the delivery of this project.

In accordance with the agreed delegations, an officer decision was published on 21 January 2015 which set out the detailed decision making process behind the purchase of up to 5 sites in Jaywick. Following this decision, a number of sites have now been acquired with activity remaining in progress against the remaining sites that have been identified for purchase.

A further site has subsequently been identified and considered by Cabinet at its 27 February meeting where it was agreed to undertake the necessary activities to purchase it.

The acquisition of sites form the first phase of the overall development project in Jaywick. The longer term aspiration of facilitating development or directly developing the sites will be subject to further decision making and business planning processes. This may involve a mix of options that will need to be considered against the context of the Council's overall financial position and housing revenue account's long term business plan, along with potential funding options that could include prudential borrowing.

In addition to the above, an **£85,000** highway bell-mouth improvement scheme on the Brooklands Estate is currently in progress. This scheme involves bell-mouth reconstruction to 7 roads and patching work to a further 5 bell-mouths in the same area along with repairs

to defective street lights. This scheme is fully funded by a grant from Essex County Council.

Other Housing Projects in the District

Victoria Court, Walton - the acquisition of this block of 6 flats was completed in 2013/14 and are now occupied by housing tenants.

Hastings Place, Brightlingsea - the construction of 2 houses is now complete and are occupied by housing tenants.

Berkeley Road, Clacton - This property was acquired under compulsory purchase order powers with remedial work now in progress.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

None