

## HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH 2017

### DECISIONS

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the Housing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on Wednesday, 15 March 2017. Decisions made by the Portfolio Holder will be subject to call-in. Recommendations made to the Cabinet or to the Council are not subject to call-in. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Victoria Wallace.

#### 1. COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND

The Housing Portfolio Holder:

- a) **NOTED** the funding allocated for community led development.
- b) **APPROVED** the proposed use of funds outlined in Option A, agreeing to explore the potential for a joint community led programme with Cambridge City Council, with Community Land Trust (CLT) East providing the Gold Kickstart Package.

**Options Considered: Option A** – To agree to explore the potential for a joint community-led programme with the City Council, with CLT East providing the Gold Kickstart Package. This will provide dedicated support for the Councils to be able to resource community-led development that will enable a bespoke service that will help sustain future funding for our communities in the area. By working with the City Council, there may be scope to tailor the package offered by CLT East at a cost saving and also the opportunity to align policies and share good practice. Any surplus funding can then be used to help seed-fund set up costs for local communities. It will also ensure that both authorities are able to make best use of the resources so that it is not lost to other areas.

**Option B** – To purchase a lower package of support from CLT East. This would not offer the dedicated support that the Council needs in terms of servicing its communities. It is likely that without this support, affordable housing would not come forward through this route, and the Council may lose the opportunity for further funding targeted at communities in the District.

**Option C** – Not to work in partnership with the City Council with regards to developing community-led housing. This may not provide best value for money in terms of buying in services and would lose the opportunity to work jointly across the two Councils.

**Option D** – Use the grant funding to resource additional staffing. There is little scope to provide the management support and expertise in this area and unlikely to be able to recruit someone with the required expertise and skills within the timescales. Funding is likely only to be secured for one year and therefore it is unlikely that the Council would be able to continue to give dedicated support to communities after the first year in order for them to progress schemes. This option is not considered to provide best value for money.

**Reason For Decision:** To enable the Council to support local communities to bring forward affordable housing schemes in their villages as an alternative option to rural exception site schemes. This was identified as a key priority within the service plan for 2017/18.

**2. INTERIM HOUSING STRATEGY STATEMENT 2017**

The Housing Portfolio Holder:

- a) **APPROVED** the Interim Housing Strategy Statement 2017.
- b) **AGREED** the proposals for a joint Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire Housing Strategy from 2018.

**Other Options Considered:** The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the Interim Housing Strategy Statement, with the view to developing a new joint Housing Strategy with Cambridge City Council in the coming year.

**Reason For Decision:** In the absence of a new Housing Strategy, the Interim Housing Strategy Statement provides a 'holding' statement for the Council that sets out the current context for housing within the District of South Cambridgeshire.

**3. AFFORDABLE HOMES SERVICE PLAN 2016/17 AND 2017/18**

The Housing Portfolio Holder:

- a) **APPROVED** the Affordable Homes Service Plan for 2017/18.
- b) **NOTED** the progress to date on existing projects within the 2016/17 Service Plan.

**Other Options Considered:** The Portfolio Holder was requested to approve the key actions identified for the 2017/18 Service Plan and to suggest changes or additions where required.

**Reason For Decision:** The draft Service Plan actions for 2017/18 have been developed taking into account the key aims and objectives of the Council, central government direction and the forthcoming priorities for the Affordable Homes Service.