



Report to:	Cabinet – Monday, 11 July 2022
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor Bill Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Communities
Lead Officer:	Anne Ainsworth, Chief Operating Officer

Northstowe – Update and Recommendations

Executive Summary

1. This report provides an update on a range of issues related to Northstowe and makes a number of recommendations related to provision of community buildings; development of the Enterprise Zone; and funding, including the Section 106 (s106) shortfalls.
2. The report recommends that the Council invest more than £12 million in funding and move forward on its commitment to deliver high-quality community facilities for Northstowe residents.
3. This would include the growing new town's Sports Pavilion and Community Centre on phase one, and Civic Hub and additional Sports Pavilion on phase two.
4. The report also recommends pausing further development work on the Enterprise Zone, to allow time to focus on the community facilities; and proposes the creation of a Member Governance Board to oversee progress on the buildings the Council is responsible for delivering.

Key Decision

1. Yes

The key decision was first published in the June 2022 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

2. The report asks that Cabinet makes the following recommendations to Council:
 - i. Approve additional funding for the Phase 1 community buildings of:
 - a. £1.53m for the Sports Pavilion (including an allocation of £300k from the Renewable Energy Reserve)

- b. £6.5m for the Community Building funded from Capital Receipts.
- ii. Approve an amendment to the Capital Programme to increase the allocation by £1.38m for the Phase 2 Civic Hub funded by the s106 to reflect the total allocation after indexation.
- iii. Approve an additional £2.82 allocated to the Civic Hub programme funded from Capital Receipts.
- iv. Note that the Phase 2 Sports Pavilion is likely to be underfunded, but that delivery is not expected until 18 months after the 500th occupation on Phase 2. Although an exact amount cannot be estimated at this time, it is proposed an additional allocation of £2m be made in the General Fund Capital Programme, funded from Capital Receipts, for this project.
- v. Create a further provision of £433,000 (£219,000 plus indexation) for the Phase 1 Section 106 shortfall.
- vi. Create a provision for Phase 2 Section 106 commitments of £1.6m
- vii. Request that officers undertake a further review of infrastructure prioritisation in the S106 agreement for phase 2 in light of this report and report the matter back to the Planning Committee for consideration.
- viii. Agree to the Community Centre and Local Centre being built on Parcel 6 via a Direct Delivery or Development Manager model.
- ix. Pause the wider Enterprise Zone development (on Parcels 1,2, 3 and 4) for an initial period of 12 months.
- x. Agree the approach to Parcel 5 taking into account the option agreement set out in the exempt section of this report

Cabinet is also recommended to:

- xi. Establish a Member Governance Board for Northstowe

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3. The Council has an obligation as set out in Appendix A to deliver community facilities at Northstowe. These recommendations would enable the Council to move forward with the development of these buildings.

Details

- 4. Please see attached Appendix A

Implications

5. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

6. The report recommends increasing the Capital Programme allocation for Northstowe to £34.6m of which £12.85m to come from Council Capital receipts and £21.75m from existing s106 agreements.

Staffing

7. Any additional staffing resources or skill-sets that may be required in the next phase of delivery at Northstowe, will be discussed with the Member Governance Board.

Risks/Opportunities

8. There is a comprehensive risk register which is updated and monitored weekly by the project manager. The risk register is shared with the Senior Responsible Officer and project board weekly. The risk register reflects the risks detailed in the report to include, but not limited to, the rising increase in costs and the mitigation for these. The risk register also highlights the opportunities such as place making, adherence to the Council's Section 106 obligations and the achievement of the Council's goal of making Northstowe a Healthy New Town.

Equality and Diversity

9. The community buildings specifications have been altered to include disabled-adapted facilities now required by law. This ensures access for all and encourages inclusivity. The cost of this is included in the project budget.

Climate Change

10. SCDC are committed to tackling the climate crisis. Some of the increased costs associated with the delivery of the Community Buildings are as a result of design decisions made with regard to the heating, cooling, and ventilation of these buildings. Buildings have been designed to include renewable technologies, including air-source heating, solar pv, waste-water heat recovery and increased air-tightness levels. A decision not to fund the full request, would likely impact the renewable technologies that could be included.

Health & Wellbeing

11. As with any new development, many people moving to the town will be forming new social circles and creating links that will support positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Good quality community spaces play a key role to ensure a sense of community and a place to meet. The plans also include statutory services, such as primary care, which are essential to the success of any new town.

Consultation responses

12. Building-specific community and stakeholder consultations have been undertaken in relation to the Phase 1 sports pavilion and the Phase 2 Civic Hub. Consultation on the Phase 1 Community Centre has formed part of the wider consultation on the draft masterplan for the EZ and Local Centre.
13. Pre-planning consultations for the Phase 1 sports pavilion were carried out with Cambridgeshire FA, Cambridgeshire RFU, Longstanton Parish Council and Meridian Trust. Early designs were presented at the Northstowe Community Forum and Drop-in.
14. Full statutory consultation on the Phase 1 sports pavilion was undertaken as part of the planning process.
15. The Phase 2 Civic Hub has also been subject to stakeholder consultation. Consultants Civic have carried-out extensive consultation across a wide range of stakeholders, including dedicated session with Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Care Commissioning Group who will provide statutory services from the building. Subject to approvals regarding the proposed delivery of this facility, community consultation on the proposals will follow.
16. As part of the work in developing the draft Masterplan into its current state we have held several consultation events.
17. The phase 1 Consultation took place between June-August 2021 with the main aim to introduce the project to the public, uncover local aspirations and needs, and gain insights into stakeholders' views about the masterplan opportunities for the area.
18. Phase 2 consultation took place between September – November 2021, with the main objective being to provide a project update, present outcomes from phase 1 consultation, present key objectives for the masterplan and gather feedback for the masterplan.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

19. The Community Centre, Local Centre, and wider Enterprise Zone (employment area) development is vital to support and catalyse commercial growth in Northstowe. The complementary aspects of a Local and Community Centre integrated within the wider EZ will serve as a best-in-class example of modern, green and integrated placemaking. With employment land scarce across our District, it is important to develop this site into an exciting place where people want to work and play and where businesses want to be seen.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

20. SCDC's Asset Management Strategy recognises that as a housing provider we are about more than just bricks and mortar – that we look to build communities that can thrive and grow. Our Business Plan 2020-25 reflects this and commits to delivering in Northstowe the community facilities that will support housing delivery, including the phase 1 sports pavilion and community centre, and the phase 2 civic hub and pavilion.

Being green to our core

21. SCDC'S Business Plan 2020-25 commits to identifying and delivering opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from our estate. The designs for the Community Buildings account for the use of renewable technologies.

Background Papers

- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe Phase 1 – Section 106 Funding: February 2014
- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe Phase 2 – Community Infrastructure Delivery & Requirements: July 2015
- Report to Cabinet: Property Acquisition – Northstowe Enterprise Zone: November 2019
- Report to Cabinet: Town Centre Development – Northstowe Phases 1 and 2: March 2020
- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe EZ & LC: September 2020
- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe EZ & LC Procurement: December 2020
- Report to Cabinet: Acquisition 60 Affordable Homes and Commercial Unit at Northstowe 2 B – Restricted Item: February 2022
- Report to Council: Northstowe Acquisition of Interim Community Facilities - Restricted Item: March 2022

Appendices

Appendix A: Northstowe Report – Update and Recommendations

Appendix B: Community Development

Appendix C: Revised EZ Masterplan

Appendix D: Development of the EZ – History and the Current Masterplan Process

Appendix E: Market Conditions and Market Engagement

Restricted Papers

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