

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Northstowe Portfolio Holders Meeting

8 September 2010

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director Operational Services/ Corporate Manager Planning
and New Communities

RAMPTON DRIFT DEMONSTRATOR PROJECT

Purpose

1. Project Update
 - (a) Latest information regarding grant award
 - (b) Summary of changes to proposed project
 - (c) Plan going forward
2. This not a key decision because this is a report on progress made against the previously approved proposals.

Recommendations and Reasons

3. That the Portfolio Holder note the reduction in funding, and progress with the Rampton Drift and other eco-town projects.

Background

4. As reported to the last meeting, in March CLG awarded £365,000 to fund a co-ordinated set of studies and capital grant of £1.135m for an Eco-Town Demonstrator Project focussing on low-carbon lifestyles. The capital project consisted of two elements:
 - (a) A retrofit scheme for homes in the existing community of Rampton Drift
 - (b) An exhibition and learning facility at the Longstanton Park & Ride site.

Considerations

5. In July, it was announced that grant would be reduced. The amount allocated for the studies was reduced to £182,500 and for the demonstrator project was reduced to £567,500, giving a total award of £750,000. The date for substantial completion of both projects was to remain at the end of March 2011.
6. The reduced grant award causes issues for delivery of the demonstrator project and studies in terms of timescale and viability in terms of cost. Work is currently being undertaken to review the need and benefit of the studies, with the aim of reducing the money spent on studies. This exercise is due to be complete by the Northstowe Delivery Board meeting on 14 September, and involves consultation with the Joint Promoters. Subject to CLG approval, this process could allow grant not required for the studies to be transferred to the demonstrator projects. At present officers are re-working the Rampton Drift retro-fit project to fit a budget of £320K.
7. Confirmation of the award is subject to the approval of an option appraisal. The Option Appraisal is due to be submitted in September. At the same time, CLG will be asked to allow the projects to be delivered over a period of 11 months, in order to particularly meet the requirements of the County Council regarding delivery of the

exhibition and visitor centre. A revised timescale will also assist the Rampton Drift project. It is expected that CLG will respond quickly to the submission of the Option Appraisal.

8. It was reported to the last meeting that, at a meeting for residents of Rampton Drift in May, residents asked that the grant be used to improve their homes rather than purchasing and improving two that are for sale. In view of the wishes of the local community and the reduction in grant, the programme of works has been amended as described below.

9. The Works Proposed

9.1 The work programme has been amended to allow improvements to be made to 10-15 homes within a budget of £320K. It is proposed that each property taking part in the scheme will be individually assessed and a proposal developed which is suited to the needs of the property and matched to the homeowner's lifestyle requirements. To facilitate this a menu of works will be established and used to help each homeowner to appraise the options most suited for inclusion in the work to their property.

9.2 A key aim of the project has always been to identify the costs, effects and benefits of carrying out the refurbishment of the existing houses already within the boundaries of the proposed Eco-town and to encourage and enable the residents to enhance their own properties to reduce energy usage and carbon emissions.

9.3 The fundamental requirement to achieve reductions in CO₂ emissions is a highly insulated building fabric, combined with excellent dwelling airtightness and an efficient heating system. To reduce emissions further, heat and/or electricity may be generated through the use of micro-generation.

9.4 All the properties involved in the project will be enhanced to achieve a base level of environmental performance by carrying out the following works where they are necessary and appropriate:

- (i) Provision of adequate insulation within the roof space
- (ii) Provision of cavity wall insulation if appropriate
- (iii) Provision of other forms of insulation to the external walls
- (iv) Draught proofing

9.5 Additional work will be carried out to install a combination of systems appropriate to each house selected from the following list:

- a. New Insulated Floor with provision for under floor heating and new floor finishes
- b. Replacement of windows and external doors with high performance triple glazed windows and high performance doors
- c. Alterations to roofing to accommodate provision of solar heated hot water systems and/or solar photovoltaic panels for the generation of electricity
- d. Minor modifications to lighting & taps
- e. Addition of atrium to provide passive heating
- f. Installation of ground source heat pump
- g. Installation of air source heat pump
- h. Installation of new combination boilers
- i. Provision of Provision of heat recovery ventilation system
- j. Installation of equipment to allow the performance of the home to be monitored.

- 9.6 Ongoing Monitoring of energy use and home performance will be an important part of the programme. Officers are exploring methods of doing this, including collaboration with Anglia Ruskin University, and assistance from members of the Climate Change Working Group. The collection and analysis of reliable energy usage and carbon emissions data will be essential if we are to establish the most cost effective and efficient ways of improving the existing housing stock. Energy meters and monitoring equipment will be installed as part of the work on each property renovated no matter what the extent or value of the work undertaken.
- 9.7 The project has potential links with the Sustainable Parish Energy Project. Care will be taken to ensure that learning from Rampton Drift is shared with the SPEP, and also that learning from the SPEP is shared with the Rampton Drift project.

Options

- 10 Three options are included in the option appraisal:
- a. Do nothing which will not result in any of the project aims being met at this time and would raise the problem of finding other means and resources to achieve them at a later date.
 - b. To select a number of properties and carry out high quality renovation works on each as indicated in the work schedule above.
 - c. Select one property and carry out major renovation work to a very high standard in cooperation with the owner occupier and using the remainder of the funds to renovate other properties
- 11 Option (b) above is being recommended. It is the option that is most compatible with the aims of the project, and with the criteria set by the CLG that will be used to select and approve the schemes seeking approval and funding.

Implications

12	Financial	The award of the grant will allow the project to proceed
	Legal	Agreement required regarding CLG grant, and regarding works to individual householder's homes will be required.
	Staffing	Project to be delivered within existing staff resources
	Risk Management	Risk assessment is required as part of the option appraisal, and their management will be overseen by the project steering group.
	Equal Opportunities	The project plan will allow every eligible resident of Rampton Drift to apply to take part
	Climate Change	Good impact. The whole aim of the project is to reduce energy consumption and to reduce carbon emissions in the existing housing stock

Consultations

- 13 The project steering group for both aspects of the Demonstrator Project and the studies is chaired by South Cambridgeshire District Council, and includes representatives from Cambridgeshire Horizons, Cambridgeshire County Council, and Go East. Wider consultation has also taken place with Renewables East and Huntingdonshire District Council to ensure effective links with other initiatives.
- 14 The next meeting with residents of Rampton Drift is arranged for 16 September.

- 15 A report on the retro-fit project is due to be presented to the Climate Change Working Group at its meeting on 9 September.

Effect on Strategic Aims

- 16 The project supports the delivery of the following strategic aims:

A We are committed to being a listening council, providing first class services to all
The project has been reshaped as a result of consultation with local residents, and effective engagement with residents is a key feature of the scheme.

B We are committed to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for you and your family

Investment in housing improvements is expected to have a positive impact on health. This will be monitored through the evaluation aspect of the project.

C We are committed to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live

It is expected that the exhibition centre will be a showcase for Northstowe, the improvements to Rampton Drift and the Sustainable Parish Energy Project amongst other things.

D We are committed to assisting provision for local jobs for you and your family

The works at Rampton Drift and for the construction of the Exhibition Centre will provide training and employment opportunities for local people.

Conclusions / Summary

- 17 The reduction in the grant available means that the previous proposal to buy and renovate two properties and spend the remaining funds on other properties is no longer viable. This revised proposal achieves the original main project aim of enhancing the environmental performance of as many of the existing homes in Rampton Drift as possible in line with the Eco-town aspirations for Northstowe. It will also help develop the knowledge, skills and experience needed to apply eco-technology to upgrade existing homes.
- 18 Working with the Homeowners it is proposed to refurbish 10 - 15 properties, if there is a good take-up. Each home will achieve a minimum base level of insulation and energy performance, and additional features may be added from a menu of options available, including the installation of alternative forms of micro generation. This will allow the effectiveness of a range of interventions to be monitored and assessed.
- 19 It is intended that the homeowners will be asked to enter into an agreement with the Council which will confirm what is to be done, the costs and any contributions to be made by the homeowner. The agreement will include arrangements for keeping a diary and post-installation monitoring. The homeowners may also be asked to participate in a programme of 'open days' to share their experience with the wider community. The contents of the proposed agreement will be discussed with local residents.
- 20 The project requires funding from CLG through the government's eco-town programme. Confirmation of the grant is subject to approval of an option appraisal that is due to be submitted in September. At that time, CLG will be asked to extend the timeframe for the projects so that they may be delivered over 11 months. It is expected that CLG will respond quickly to the submission of the Option Appraisal.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Northstowe Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on Thursday, 11 March 2010

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 13 May 2010

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 27 May 2010

Northstowe Portfolio Holder's Meeting Wednesday, 9 June

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