

**HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

27 September 2018

5.30 - 7.55 pm

**Present:** Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Cantrill, McGerty, Payne, Sheil, Thittala and O'Reilly

Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Johnson

Executive Councillor for Finance and Resource: Councillor Robertson

**Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives:** Lulu Agate, Diane Best, Kay Harris, Diana Minns (Vice Chair)

**Officers:**

Strategic Director: Suzanne Hemingway

Strategic Director: Fiona Bryant

Head of Housing: David Greening

Head of Housing Development Agency: Claire Flowers

Business Manager & Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team):  
Julia Hovells

Housing Services Manager: Sandra Farmer

Housing Services Manager: James McWilliams

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****18/32/HSC Apologies**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing to his first meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee. He also requested that the Committee's thanks be placed on record to Councillor Price, former Executive Councillor for Housing, for his hard work and commitment during his appointment.

Apologies were received from Councillors Bird and Massey, Mandy Powell-Hardy and Mark Tunstall. Councillor O'Reilly attended as an alternate for Councillor Massey.

The Committee **resolved** to write an expression of thanks to former tenant representative John Marris for his service on the Housing Scrutiny Committee and to congratulate him on his recent marriage.

**18/33/HSC Declarations of Interest**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Councillor Cantrill	18/40/HSC	Personal: Is a Trustee of Wintercomfort

**18/34/HSC Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 19 June were approved subject to the following amendment (additional text underlined and deleted text ~~struck through~~).

Page 10 of the minutes, page 14 of the agenda pack:

- i. Expressed concerns that homelessness duties could be discharged by offering applicant accommodation ~~many miles~~ up to fifty miles from Cambridge City away from their family or wider support networks.

**18/35/HSC To Note Decision Taken by the Housing Scrutiny Committee****4a Co-Option Of Tenant Representative Committee Vacancy**

The Committee noted the decision.

**18/36/HSC Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

**18/37/HSC Zero Tolerance Policy –Storage in Communal Areas**

This item was Chaired by Diana Minns (Vice-Chair)

**Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval to replace the existing policy on storage on housing owned communal areas and to approve a zero tolerance policy for all blocks where Cambridge City Council was the freeholder of the building.

**Decision of Executive Councilor for Housing**

- i. Agreed to change the title of the Policy to ‘Storage in Communal Areas – Zero Tolerance Policy’.
- ii. Agreed to replace the existing ‘Policy on Storage on Housing Owned Communal Areas’ as shown in appendix 2 of the officer’s report.
- iii. Approved a Zero Tolerance Policy to be applied to all flat blocks in Cambridge where Cambridge City Council was the freeholder of the

- building as shown in appendix 3 of the officer's report.
- iv. Agreed to support officers of the council in enforcing the policy and ensuring fire safety procedures were implemented.
  - v. Approved the amendment of the Tenancy Conditions as required reflecting the Zero Tolerance Policy.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Housing Services Manager. The purpose of the replacement policy (following a review of fire safety as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire) was to ensure a clear, consistent approach to prevent the storage of any items in the communal areas to reduce risks and improve the overall appearance of the internal communal areas of Cambridge City Council's owned flats.

In response to the Committee's comments the Housing Services Manager and Strategic Director said the following:

- i. Could not advise of cost implications for the implementation of the new policy but would be closely monitored.
- ii. It would be possible to determine if additional space such as the installation of bike racks or communal storage was required as the risk assessments were undertaken. These proposals for improvements would then be brought forward as part of the budget proposals for estate improvements.
- iii. Officers were currently undertaking surveys of the estates to identify and prioritise what work was required to enhance and develop the tenant blocks and estates. This work would link to the same budget proposals.
- iv. It was not possible to advise when these projects would be concluded for the Committee's consideration.
- v. Risk assessments in the north of the city had started, with an outcome of 700 actions to remove items or for residents to take items back into their properties; some of those actions had been completed.
- vi. Work continued to be carried out with residents to explain why the policy needed to be applied. It was all about engagement to ensure the policy would be adhered to.

- vii. An article to inform residents of the adoption of the new policy would be published in the October edition of 'Open Door' magazine. The policy had also been referenced in previous editions to give residents advanced warning.
- viii. Acknowledged that residents wanted to make enhancements to either outside their front doors and / or communal areas with the addition of such things as plants, flowers and rugs; but individual risk assessments would be undertaken on all properties and those items which were deemed causing a hazard would be removed.
- ix. Noted the suggestion of identifying communal outdoor spaces / gardens as part of the consultation process.
- x. Had not looked at the policies of other local authorities.
- xi. The policy had been produced with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service officers who had a local knowledge of the buildings and the possible risks.
- xii. Reiterated that the policy was about fire safety. If items were deemed to cause a trip hazard and / or a fire risk these would be removed.
- xiii. Regular fire safety inspections of the communal areas were undertaken as the Council had a legal responsibility to maintain a safe environment for tenants and leaseholders. The policy was therefore part of a wider fire safety process.
- xiv. In adopting the policy, officers would work with all residents to complete the risk assessment and determine alternative locations for those items which were causing an obstruction.

The Executive Councillor concluded the policy had been drafted in consultation with tenants and leaseholders with input from the fire services. It was a zero tolerance policy against the risk to fire safety. Officers would work with local residents to determine alternate solutions to personalise their communal spaces and budget proposals would be brought forward when determined for future consideration.

#### The Committee:

Diane Best proposed that the title of the report should be changed to the following 'Storage in Communal Areas – Zero Tolerance Policy'.

This amendment was **carried 8 votes to 0**.

The Committee **resolved 8 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations**.

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

**18/38/HSC Review of Shared Ownership Housing at Virido, Clay Farm**

This item was Chaired by Diana Minns (Vice-Chair)

**Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval to re-market the shared ownership housing using new valuations and a different marketing agent, exploring creating a show flat and reducing the level of rent which the City Council would charge for the unsold equity.

**Decision of Executive Councilor for Housing**

**Resolved** unanimously:

- i. To approve that the rent to be charged on the unsold equity (the proportion of the dwelling retained by the Housing Revenue Account) be reduced from 2.75% to 2.25% for all units at Virido, Clay Farm.
- ii. To note the decision by officers to re-market the unsold shared ownership homes at Virido, Clay Farm using the latest market valuations for the shares to be sold, employing a new agent to market and sell the homes and using a show flat or open day, as advised by the successful sales agent.
- iii. To approve that if after 3 months of active re-marketing, homes are still not selling; delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing, to explore, and if appropriate, convert the homes to affordable rented accommodation.

**Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant. The report referred to the need to re-market the shared ownership housing using the new valuations, using a different marketing agent, exploring creating a show flat

and holding an open day and also reducing the level of rent which we would charge for the unsold equity.

Councillor Cantrill informed the Committee that he welcomed the concept of price adjustment. It had been recognised that along with the need of social housing there was a need for key workers who worked in the city to purchase property. He suggested that the exploration to convert the homes to affordable rented accommodation should begin alongside marketing the homes for sale.

The Executive Councillor confirmed that exploratory work would begin in parallel with the marketing of the properties to avoid them being voids.

The Committee **resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

### **18/39/HSC Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy**

Recommendation (part 1) was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair /Tenant Representative) and recommendation (part 2) was chaired by Councillor Todd-Jones

#### **Matter for Decision**

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provided an opportunity to review the assumptions incorporated as part of the longer-term financial planning process, recommending any changes in response to new legislative requirements, variations in external economic factors and amendments to service delivery methods, allowing incorporation into budgets and financial forecasts at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing (part 1)**

- i. Approved the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy attached, to include all proposals for change in:
  - Financial assumptions as detailed in Appendix B of the officer's report.
  - 2018/19 revenue budgets and future year forecasts as introduced in Section 5, resulting from changes in financial assumptions and the financial consequences of change and the need to respond to unavoidable pressures, as introduced in Section 5, detailed in Appendix D of the document and summarised in Appendices G (1)

and G (2).

- The level of fees charged to new build schemes by the Housing Development Agency, as detailed in Section 7 of the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- ii. Approved that delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director to be in a position to confirm that the authority can annually renew its investment partner status with Homes England.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing (part 2)**

- iii. Approved proposals for changes in existing housing capital budgets, as introduced in Sections 6 and 7 and detailed in Appendix E of the document, with the resulting position summarised in Appendix H, for decision at Council on 18th October 2018.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from Principal Accountant.

In response to the Committee's comments the Principal Accountant and Strategic Director said the following:

- i. Comments from the Committee on the Government's Housing Green Paper should be sent to the Housing Services Manager. A draft response would then be circulated to the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokes. Members of the Committee would be sent a copy of the final response when it had been sent to Government.
- ii. Money could be taken from the strategic expenditure fund for work on the Storage in Communal Areas – Zero Tolerance Policy. This could occur if savings were identified in other areas and officers brought forward bids to carry out work on this project as part of the budget setting process in January 2019. The five year Strategic Investment Fund and Savings Fund would also allow officers to put forward proposals for funding if required as the project continued.
- iii. An additional £100,000 had been included in the MTFs to advance with the back log of work which had resulted from the stock condition survey.
- iv. Due to staffing issues the stock condition data was not as up to date as it should be on the Council's financial management system. The

recommendation for additional resource would resolve the issue if approved by the Committee.

- v. The demolition to disposal reported in the previous year (2017/18) mainly related to the demolition of the flats and bungalows at Anstey Way. The new build programme on this site would double the properties that had been pulled down.
- vi. Recruitment had been undertaken to all posts which had been created as part of the restructure for Housing Services / City Homes. The budget allowed for 97% of the total salary bill recognising there would always be a natural turnover of staff.
- vii. There would be a small underspend concerning staffing costs in Maintenance and Assets with a number of vacant posts covered by interim and agency staff; the new Head of Service would start in October while the Operation Managers post was being covered on an interim basis. The market was very competitive due to the upturn of residential and construction build in Cambridge and the surrounding areas.
- viii. There could be a possible underspend in programme delivery due to the shortage of Surveyors in Maintenance and Assets. Recruitment in this area was proving difficult but was being covered by agency staff.
- ix. Was aware of the comments made by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority that it was possible to build a house of for £100,000 on land that they owned.
- x. Independent consultancy advice was being carried out to review the cost that the Council were paying for staff and services.
- xi. A range of measures were in place internally and externally to deal with the impact of Universal Credit internally and externally. Advisors from Citizens Advice Bureau funded by the Council would be present at Job Centre Plus, as would Revenue and Benefit Officers. Resource for an additional Financial Inclusion Officer in the City Homes Team was also in place.

Councillor Cantrill put forward the following questions to the Executive Councillor for Housing (highlighted in bold).

**When elected the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority stated he would not go back to Government and request extra finances. But he has made a request to the Treasury last week. Would the Executive Councillor for Housing request a proportion of this funding to be spent on Cambridge; with the Authority receiving £100,000,000 to be spent outside of the City, there is an urgent need for money to be spent in Cambridge?**

The approach taken by the Combined Authority seemed to concentrate on funding mechanisms, not where housing was most needed and solutions on how this could be provided; particularly in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire where there was a greater need. It did not also address the problems that Housing Associations faced and how their housing stock could be increased.

**The Chancellor stated in the last Budget he was prepared to allow certain authorities to raise their borrowing cap to undertake new house building. To what extent has the Council made advances to Government to increase the borrowing cap to address the housing needs to in city?**

The issue had been raised with Government Ministers on several occasions, particularly during the devolution discussions about the need to review and revise the borrowing cap. It was disappointing the Green Paper had not addressed this issue as it was important that Councils had the freedom of flexibility in managing their Housing Revenue Account. It was a matter the Council would continue to lobby Central Government to change their approach.

The Committee resolved **by 8 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations (i to ii)** in the officer's report.

The next vote was taken after Item 14 of the agenda

The Committee **resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation (iii)** in the officer's report.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

## **18/40/HSC Homelessness Prevention Grants to Agencies**

This item was chaired by Councillor Mike Todd-Jones

### **Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval for the programme of grant funding to organisations providing homelessness prevention services for 2019/20.

### **Decision of Executive Councilor for Housing**

- i. Agreed, subject to any changes that may be made as part of the budget

setting process and the formal adoption of the 2019/20 budget by Council, the proposed grant funding allocations as outlined in appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

- ii. Agreed to delegated authority for the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing, to use the unallocated portion of the grant to support ad-hoc in-year awards to projects or other activities meeting the purposes listed in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
- iii. Agreed to delegated authority for the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing, to reallocate funds in the event that an organisation is unable to deliver the service.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Housing Service Manager. The report referred to the programme of grant funding to organisations providing homelessness prevention services.

In response to comments from the Committee, the Housing Service Manager said the following:

- i. Cambridge Woman's Aid had not received the full amount of funding as their financial status was deemed healthy. Also increased homelessness prevention advice was being carried out by the Council as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- ii. Confirmed that all organisations were advised of the funding that the Executive Councillor was minded to make before being presented for scrutiny at Committee.
- iii. Hope into Action worked with those individuals who had been living on the streets for a long period of time and were resistant to help. The approach was to deal with their personal difficulties and the impact on their behaviour.

The Committee **unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

## **18/41/HSC Update on the Programme to Build New Council Homes Funded through the Combined Authority**

This item was Chaired by Councillor Mike Todd-Jones

### **Matter for Decision**

This report provided an update on the programme to deliver 500 Council homes by March 2022 with funding from the Combined Authority.

### **Decision of Executive Councilor for Housing**

- i. Noted the overall progress on the Combined Authority programme to deliver 500 Council rented homes.
- ii. Noted the overall Cambridge Investment Partnership Programme.
- iii. Approved subject to specific project approvals) the addition of the following sites to the Councils rolling development programme to contribute to the 500 Council home delivery: Clerk Maxwell Road, Campkin Road, Ditchburn Place Day Centre, Cromwell Road and Mill Road phase 2.
- iv. Noted the risk plan for the delivery of the affordable housing programme.
- v. Noted the reporting arrangements with the Combined Authority.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a progress report from the Head of the Housing Development Agency on the delivery of 500 Council homes by March 2022; with further named projects added to the rolling delivery programme, each of which would be individually brought to the appropriate Council committee as they moved forward.

In response to Members questions the Head of the Housing Development Agency, the Principal Accountant and the Executive Councilor for Housing said the following:

- i. The report had identified a total build of 497 homes. There were a number of sites that had not yet been publicised due to ongoing feasibility studies and was confident the target would be met.

- ii. The term 'potential sites' referenced in the report were actual schemes which were currently being worked on. Further details would be brought forward to future meetings.
- iii. Confirmed that work would start on site next week at Anstey Way.
- iv. Demolition work had begun on Mill Road; the scheme would not be completed for approximately two years.
- v. The Council would not pay the full amount for the housing being built on Cromwell Road. This would be discounted as it was HRA land which the Council had put in at the beginning. This arrangement with CIP was to ensure that 'right to buy receipts' could be spent.
- vi. The value of the land went into the building project which would then be repaid out of the revenue costs that were gained from the market sales of that site. All monetary contributions made by the Council would have interest attached but as the costs were repaid this would be a neutral cost.
- vii. Officers would bring an update of the delivery of 500 councils to Committee for scrutiny. If officers felt that the target could not be met this would be brought to the Committee's attention following due process.

The Committee **unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

### **18/42/HSC Redevelopment of 66-80b Colville Road Phase 2**

This item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

### **18/43/HSC Conversion of Ditchburn Day Centre**

This item was Chaired by Councillor Mike Todd-Jones

#### **Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval for the conversion of Ditchburn Place day centre into 2No. one bedroom self-contained sheltered accommodation flats. The 2 units would be in addition to the current 51 unit refurbishment of Ditchburn Place. The report also requested approval for a capital budget for the HRA and Devolution grant expenditure covering costs for their conversion.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing**

- i. Approved inclusion of a capital budget of £125,000 to meet the land acquisition costs, recognising the transaction was carried out under delegated authority earlier in 2018/19.
- ii. Approved the indicative capital budget for the conversion of £207,000 to cover all of the construction costs, professional fees and associated fees to deliver the extra units.
- iii. Approved the addition of the works to create the 2 units to the existing build contract with Cocksedge Building Contractors Ltd. This contractor was currently on site working on the larger refurbishment scheme.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Development Manager, Housing Development Agency.

The Committee **unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

## **18/44/HSC Cromwell Road Project Update**

This item was Chaired by Councillor Mike Todd-Jones

### **Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval to provide additional social housing to meet the housing needs in Cambridge and replace social housing lost through Right to Buy. This included replacing existing council social housing that no longer met current standards or was becoming less popular with residents due to factors relating to space and the impact of fuel poverty. Building new house types will better meet the overall mix of future affordable housing needs and improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing**

- i. Noted the update on the purchase of the land at Cromwell Road.

- ii. Noted the addition of the land at Cromwell Road as a development site in the Housing Investment Programme as proposed in the Officer's report on the programme presented to this committee.
- iii. Approved the Strategic Development Brief for Housing Development and Delivery on the site. The land would be developed in accordance with CIP's strategic development brief for the site, the Council's strategic and corporate objectives and with the output from the public consultation and pre application planning process. The land would be transferred to CIP for development by appropriate lease in line with the development land transfer model approved by Executive Cllr following Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in October 2017.
- iv. Noted the requirements in the S106 Agreement and set out in section 4.10 of the officer's report which was approved as part of the Outline Planning Approval for the site relating to Early Years provision; and also noted CIPs intention to explore providing a flexible nursery space which could also be used for community purposes.
- v. Approved CIPs intention to submit a new planning application in relation to the site.

**The Executive Councillor for Housing and the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources:**

- i. Approved the indicative proposed investment plan for Cromwell Road outlined in confidential Appendix 3, with the high level commitments associated with the General Fund and HRA. The investment plan would be refined in line with final project plans post planning permission determination and approval by the CIP Board, with the Council's funding built in to the relevant Budget Setting Report.

**Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Director

In response to Members questions the Strategic Director said the following:

- i. The Council had followed the Community Centre Strategy which laid out the requirements for community centre facilities in the city and how support should be prioritised,
- ii. In the area of Romsey and Petersfield the Council were working to support community facilities through S106 funding and other appropriate funding streams.
- iii. The location of the community facility at Mill Road had been on the recommendation the Communities Team, which was to have a larger facility that could be shared by both the Mill Road and Cromwell Road development.
- iv. Listened to the views of those residents who had expressed their concerns and proposals were being explored for additional space on the site as part of the early year's provision.
- v. Space had been allocated for the Chisholm Trail to run through both the Mill Road and Cromwell Road development.
- vi. A series of discussions had taken place with County Council to discuss the possibility of the two sites to be connected by either a tunnel (too expensive) or a bridge. The initial bridge design expanded 140 metres into the Mill Road development and would have taken out 50 units.
- vii. A further proposal had been brought forward for a bridge to end in Hooper Street and on the other side the Network Rail site. Further engineering studies had shown the cost would be very expensive and the County Council had determined that a bridge would not be possible.
- viii. Reiterated that the report had set out the level of need for community facilities based on the evidence that had been supplied.
- ix. Believed that the one community facility would have the potential to bring together the two communities.
- x. Would continue to listen to opinions on both developments.

The Executive Councillor for Housing said that all views would be taken into account and there was a planning process to be followed. However there was policy and process on community facilities which went through the Council last year.

The Committee **unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing and the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources approved the recommendations.

### **18/45/HSC Strategic Development of Mill Road Depot Site**

This item was Chaired by Councillor Mike Todd-Jones

**Matter for Decision**

The report sought approval to provide additional social housing to meet housing needs in Cambridge and replace social housing lost through Right to Buy. Replace existing council social housing that no longer meet current standards or was becoming less popular with residents due to factors relating to space and the impact of fuel poverty. Build new house types that would better meet the overall mix of future Affordable Housing needs and improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock.

**Decision of Executive Councilor for Housing**

- i. Noted the updated Phase 1 development which will be delivered at the back of the site as shown on the plan in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Approved the strategic brief for the front part of the site following the withdrawal of YMCA Trinity Group. Development of this land will form Phase 2 of the development and will primarily be a housing development with the affordable units contributing to the Devolution Programme target. Phase 2 would also deliver the in perpetuity council owned community facility, delivery of which will be funded through S106 contributions.
- iii. Approved the proposal for a second planning application for the front of the site. The development proposal on which the planning application will be based will meet the strategic brief outlined in paragraph 4.8 and the Council's strategic and corporate objectives for the site. It would be informed by the output from the public consultation and pre-application planning process. Submission of the final planning application to be delegated for approval by Board and Strategic Director and the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) Board.
- iv. Approved to delegate authority for agreement of the final mix of affordable housing to the Strategic Directors in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing. Note that the scheme is still indicative and authorise the Strategic Directors in consultation with the Executive Councillor to approve variations to the scheme including the number of units and mix of property types and sizes outlined in this report in line with Council strategic objectives and housing requirements.

**Decision of the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources**

- i. Approve the indicative proposed investment plan for Phase 2 of the development as outlined in confidential Appendix 4 of the Officer's report with the high level commitments associated with the General Fund and HRA. The investment plan would be refined in line with final project plans

post planning permission determination and approval by the CIP Board, with the Council's funding built in to the relevant Budget Setting Report.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Director which referred to the transfer of the land known as Mill Road Depot to CIP for redevelopment; in December 2017 the land was transferred to CIP.

In response to Member's questions the Strategic Director and Executive Councillor for Housing said the following:

- i. Agreed it was unfortunate the YMCA Trinity had been withdrawn from the development.
- ii. A significant number of viability assessments had been undertaken and believed the plans for both phase 1 and 2 was the best approach for the development.
- iii. Phase 2 would allow the Council to deliver an additional 20 council houses on the site which was a welcome contribution.
- iv. The site had been developed in line with the sustainable housing guide, as were all Council build programmes.
- v. There were a number of factors that contributed to the cost of development of affordable housing on site and why the Council choose to maintain 50% of affordable housing on site:
  - For the scheme to be viable and to be deliverable, subsidies from the sale of private housing were needed to contribute to affordable housing
  - The higher the number of affordable housing the bigger the impact on the funding available.
  - When clustering high levels of affordable housing on site, there was a need to consider whether it could be supported from a community and sociable point of view to have increased levels of affordable housing in one place, such as at the front of the site.
  - To increase the number of council homes would unfortunately decrease the value of the individual market units. It was not simply a case of requiring additional funding to increase the number of council houses. An additional increase would decrease the income gained from the sale of the private houses, thus losing income.

- vi. Many developments in the City had less than 40% affordable housing on site, therefore 50% was an achievement the Council should be proud of.
- vii. The Council planned to purchase 20 of the market units for sub market rent; the level of rent had not yet been agreed.
- viii. Phase 2 would deliver in perpetuity council owned community facility which would be at the front of the site.
- ix. It had been proposed to have one larger community facility shared by the Cromwell Road and Mill Road development, located in the centre of the two, within a 15 minute walk.
- x. Possible community space available in the evenings for community activity on the Cromwell Road development.

The Committee **unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.**

The Executive Councillor for Housing and the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources approved the recommendations.

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

**CHAIR**