

# **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

## **SWT Full Council - 3 December 2019**

### **North Taunton Woolaway Project**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Francesca Smith**

**Report Author: Jane Windebank – Development Manager, Commercial Investment  
Richard Wiseman – Programme Manager, Commercial Investment**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The regeneration of the North Taunton Woolaway Project is an essential part of the Council's commitment to offer a choice of good quality homes for our residents, whatever their age and income, in communities where support is available for those in need. The proposals identified in this Report will assist the progression of vacant possession of Phases B – E in a timely manner.
- 1.2 This Project is the most substantial regeneration scheme of the Council's stock in many years. Not only is this scheme land led by us (rather than a partnering HA), it is larger in scale (number of homes, m<sup>2</sup> of land) and tackles some of our worst performing stock in one of the most socially deprived areas in our County. It is the flagship housing project of our entire housing development programme.
- 1.3 The estimated proposed funding of the regeneration of the North Taunton Woolaway Project is in the region of £45 million and was approved by Shadow Council in February 2019. This was based on a number of assumptions and indicative costs. These assumptions include:
  - 1.3.1 Development Programme of 5 phases over 10-12 years to support the decant of existing residents and enable each phase to be assessed against housing need, affordability and mitigate any future changes which may affect the scheme proposal and financing;
  - 1.3.2 Estimate for Price Inflation and other market factors such as construction costs, rental income, interest rates, rise in house prices etc.
  - 1.3.3 Costs of indicative designs subject to planning approval;
  - 1.3.4 No allowance for contamination or remediation works
  - 1.3.5 Indicative housing type and tenure mix, estimated budget including provision of a range of affordable housing tenures including social rent, affordable rent

and options for residents who aspire to home ownership.

- 1.4 A supplementary budget of £7.2 million was approved by Shadow Cabinet in February 2019 for Phase A based on estimated and indicative costs. Phase A is completely social rented tenure type properties, providing new homes to existing residents within the regeneration area. It also includes the Community Centre; a shared facility for tenants to meet and a space for community activity.
- 1.5 The Project is providing a prudent and proactive approach to addressing the stock condition issues of the Councils' poorest performing assets.
- 1.6 This Report seeks approval for a further supplementary budget drawn down from the £45 million to:
  - 1.6.1 Acquire the remaining private owned homes in the Project area to achieve vacant possession of the scheme, thus alleviating the requirement for timely and costly Compulsory Purchase Orders;
  - 1.6.2 Progress the enabling works and Reserved Matters planning submission for the remaining phases to decrease the time in which it takes to complete the regeneration, and;
  - 1.6.3 To fund the additional costs in Phase A which are explained further in this Report.

## **2 Recommendations**

### **The Executive recommends to Full Council to:**

- 2.1 Delegates the decisions to progress the enabling works for the remaining Phases to the Director of Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing;
- 2.2 Delegates authority to the Director of Housing to negotiate and agree the purchase of the 19 private owned homes within Phases B – E of the North Taunton Woolaway Project area;
- 2.3 Approves a supplementary budget of £5.7 million for Phases B – E of the North Taunton Woolaway Project;
- 2.4 Approves an additional supplementary budget of £1.5 million for Phase A of the North Taunton Woolaway Project increasing the budget for Phase A from £7.2 million to £8.7 million.
- 2.5 The budgets will be funded utilising a combination of capital receipts, Social Housing Development Fund revenue contribution, and capital borrowing. Council delegates the final funding arrangement to be determined by the S151 Officer in line with the Council's capital and treasury strategies, prioritising affordability for the Housing Revenue Account set out in Table 2 below.

## **3 Risk Assessment**

### Phase A

- 3.1 Additional funding is required to cover the higher than originally estimated costs associated with gaining vacant possession of the site, additional professional services to provide expert reports required to clear planning conditions and likely increase (compared with original cost consultant estimates) in build costs for Phase A. If the additional funding is not provided, there will be insufficient funds to complete this phase of the project. Cost estimates will continue to be professionally verified by our appointed cost consultant. Value engineering is not preferred but would be undertaken as part of the contractors duties with client approval, and any underspend would be carried forward to future phases.

### Phases B – E

- 3.2 Should the Council not wish to purchase the private properties now but insist home owners wait until their home is required under the phasing programme, this would increase the risk of not being able to provide a vacant site. The home owners would be subject to the conditions of the housing market at that time which could include changes in interest rates, availability of mortgage finance, open market value of homes, choice of homes on the market etc. By providing a longer period of time to find their new home, home owners are able to purchase a home of their choice and take advantage of market conditions. This could also reduce the risk of having to apply for a Compulsory Purchase Order and will provide vacant possession of these properties in a timelier manner.
- 3.3 The viability and success of a development site depends on major issues such as planning permission, highways agreements and environmental investigations and other issues that may cause significant delay, or even preclude successful development, such as obtaining vacant possession of the site. Failure to provide vacant possession could leave the Council open to a contractor seeking specific performance, litigation, damages, and rescission of the build contract or significantly delays in the build programme.
- 3.4 A home loss payment is a statutory payment made to compensate tenants for having to permanently move out of their home. Tenants must submit a claim to the Council for their home loss payment within 6 years of their move. The Decant Policy states that home loss payments will be paid within 3 months of an eligible tenant making a claim, in line with good practice. Tenants are likely to submit their claim immediately after they have moved home and the Council would not be able to meet their statutory obligations for payment.

## **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

### **4.1 Background**

- 4.2 The Shadow Council in February 2019, approved the redevelopment of the North Taunton Woolaway Project (the Project) following the Structural Engineering report carried out in 2013 and the Report Addendum dated 2016. The 2013 report highlighted that the Woolaway units were showing signs of deterioration. The Addendum Report, following further investigations during the demolition of the Woolaway units at Rockwell Green, confirmed the units were in a worse condition than identified in the 2013 report.
- 4.3 Woolaway homes were Designated Defective under the Housing Defect Act 1984. This does not mean Woolaway units are unsafe, it just prevents any more of this house type being built.

- 4.4 The existing site comprises of 212 Woolaway homes of which the Council retain ownership of 167 and 45 have been purchased through the Right to Buy. A breakdown of the properties is set out below in Table 1:

**Table 1: Tenure of North Taunton Woolaway Project Area**

	<b>In TDBC Ownership</b>	<b>In private ownership</b>	<b>Total</b>
Existing Woolaway Homes	167	45	212
(Acquire) & Demolish	140	22	162
Refurb	27	* See note	27
Newbuilds	226		226
<b>Total Proposed</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>276</b>
Net Increase in SWT stock			86

\*23 homes in private ownership excluded from planned works

- 4.5 The aim of the Project is to work with the community to bring forward a phased regeneration scheme, reducing the time to final completion of all phases. Detailed planning permission for Phase A and outline planning permission for Phases B – E was approved by the Planning Committee in March 2019.
- 4.6 Phase A will deliver 47 new homes and the outline planning permission will deliver up to 230 new build Council homes and refurbish 27 existing Council homes. The indicative scheme will provide a net increase of 86 Council homes.
- 4.7 The mix of homes is indicative at this stage for Phases B - D and will be reviewed prior to submitting Reserved Matters applications for subsequent phases. The intention is to undertake the Project in five phases (Phases A – E), to support the decant requirements of existing residents and enable each phase to be assessed against changes in housing need, affordability to mitigate against any future changes which may affect the scheme. Phase E is the refurbishment of Councils' Woolaway properties rather than new build.
- 4.8 The total cost of the whole North Taunton Woolaway project as presented in the February Report is estimated to be in the region of £45m. This was based on a number of assumptions and indicative costs which are explained in 1.3 above.
- 4.9 A budget of £7.2M to deliver Phase A was approved in February 2019.
- 4.10 Owing to the complexities and size of the scheme the build period was estimated at around a 10 – 12 year programme. However this is currently being reviewed and a further report will be presented to the Council next year setting out options to accelerate the delivery of the development for consideration.

#### 4.11 **Key Achievements**

North Taunton Woolaway Project Masterplan (Phases B – E) Update

- 4.12 Outline planning permission with all matters reserved was granted unanimously by

Planning Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 for the replacement and refurbishment of 186 Woolaway homes and the erection of additional dwellings to provide up to 230 dwellings within Phases B - E.

- 4.13 The proposed scheme has been based on extensive consultation with the community, involving every household as far as possible. A Design Group was formed consisting of 20 residents comprised of home owners and tenants to review the design of the scheme and house types.
- 4.14 The indicative housing mix includes a range of property sizes and types in line with the results of the consultation. The inclusion of 1 bedroom and 5 bed roomed properties, along with an appropriate level of fully adapted disabled units, provides a broader mix than the current housing types to meet the current and future local need.
- 4.15 The Design Group has now evolved into the Implementation Working Group which used to meet monthly but since October 2019 meets bi-monthly with the Project Team. This was at members' request due to the increased trust that the members had in the project team to deliver the Phase A project. Terms of Reference have been agreed with the purpose of the Group being to review the implementation of the Project and to provide feedback to the Project team, helping to shape the way that the Project is delivered and maximising the positive impact upon the community.
- 4.16 The Project has been shortlisted by the Royal Town Planning Institute for a regional award in planning excellence for Community Involvement. These awards celebrate projects and people who have helped create exceptional places and improved the lives of those who live and work there; highlighting how planning and planners work to create a safe, healthy and sustainable future. Just to be nominated for this prestigious award is a clear demonstration of the quality of the Project. A site visit and presentation took place in September 2019 where three members of the Implementation Working Group attending and supporting the Project.
- 4.17 Various skip days have been arranged for residents to be able to prepare for their decant to another property and to assist vulnerable tenants who are unable to remove their rubbish by themselves. The last skip day was in August 2019 where 2 x industrial sized Viridor skips were filled and removed; 3 x van loads of metal was recycled and the DLO cleared 3 x van loads for vulnerable tenants.

#### Phase A Update

- 4.18 Planning permission was granted for Phase A unanimously by Planning Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The scheme was presented to the Design Review Panel and received very positive comments. The Panel considered that the design and community consultation process undertaken had been extremely rigorous and is considered to be outstanding and the design has the full potential to be exceptional.
- 4.19 Vacant possession of Phase A has almost been secured. This has involved decanting 23 council tenants and purchasing 3 privately owned properties. Only one privately owned property remains but acquisition of this home is almost complete.
- 4.20 As part of the decant process, 10 tenants have downsized and 2 tenants to have moved to more accessible accommodation whether it has been a move to a bungalow or a property with better level access. This has improved their quality of life as they were previously only able to enjoy part of their home or unable to easily access their

community due to stepped access to their home.

4.21 Procurement for the demolition and construction of the homes and community centre build of Phase A is well advanced. We have completed our specification, employers' requirements, detailed drawings and procurement strategy. We are now in the process of appointing a main contractor and demolition contractor through competitive procurement exercises.

#### 4.22 **North Taunton Woolaway Masterplan Budget Details**

##### Private Homes

4.23 There are 22 homes in private ownership requiring acquisition to achieve vacant possession of the Project Scheme area. Table 2 below sets out the number of private owners in each Phase.

**Table 2: Number of Private Home requiring Acquisition within each Phase of the North Taunton Woolaway Project**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>No of Private Homes</b>
Phase A	3
Phase B	1
Phase C	7
Phase D	11
Phase E (Refurbishment Phase)	0

4.24 The Phase A private homes are in the process of being purchased. The Council has also purchased 7 additional private homes in future phases of the Project together with purchasing additional homes from the open market in the North Taunton area to assist with the decant process. These additional purchases have been secured via the buy backs programme funded by the Social Housing Development Fund (SHDF) to ensure the Council could benefit from these opportunities as they presented themselves within an approved Council process.

4.25 The benefit of the Council purchasing these additional private properties and the remaining private homes within the Project, prior to them being required under the phasing programme, reduces the risk of not achieving vacant possession of the site and identifies early within the process whether a Compulsory Purchase Order may be required. It will also reduce the financial risk for the Council should property prices increase in the future or as a result of the earlier phases of the regeneration.

4.26 Home owners in later phases (B – D) wish to sell their homes once they have found a suitable property to take advantage of the current market conditions. If they wait until their phase is being developed, there may not be suitable properties on the market

which they can afford. Funding is requested to reimburse the SHDF for the 7 private home purchases already completed (these costs were included within the £45M agreed estimated scheme budget) and enable the purchase of the 12 remaining homes together with the statutory home loss, disturbance allowance and relevant legal and professional fees which have been set out in Appendix B attached to this Report.

4.27 Once purchased the vacant homes can be used either as decant homes for North Taunton Woolaway Project tenants or temporary short lets. This will enable the Council to progress the regeneration of North Taunton sooner, enabling tenants to remain in the area during the development of the scheme and reduce security costs. The Council is currently working with voluntary agencies and the Customer Function who could make use of short term lets for individuals in housing need providing care packages to support their tenants' needs.

#### 4.28 Council Tenants

4.29 A home loss payment is a statutory payment made to compensate tenants for having to permanently move out of their home and is fixed by Section 30 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. This figure is reviewed each September and at 2018/19 the payment amount was £6,300, from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 the payment amount is £6,400.

4.30 Under the Decant Policy for the North Taunton Woolaway Project, tenants are awarded gold banding in accordance with the phasing programme; that is, when their home is likely to be demolished within 12 months. The gold banding enables the tenant to bid on Homefinder Somerset for their permanent home or a decant home if they wish to return to a new build in the Project.

4.31 Some tenants, who are not in the current decanting phase, have been allocated new homes under Homefinder Somerset by virtue of their current status. The Decant Policy states that :

4.31.1 *'If a decision in principle has been agreed to refurbish, remodel, redevelop or dispose of a property, the Council may assist a tenant to move prior to a formal Council decision. In this situation where the Council has asked the tenant to move and a Council Officer is assisting a tenant to move, the tenant will be eligible for disturbance compensation payments. Also once the Council has made a formal decision then the tenant will become eligible for a home loss payment.'*

4.32 To date, 23 tenants who were in properties in Phases B – D have moved to a new home and are seeking payment of their home loss. Funding is requested for payment of these discretionary home loss payment and a provisional estimated sum for an additional 10 tenants who may move before they are awarded gold banding prior to the Report regarding the next Phase of North Taunton Woolaway Project due before Council next year.

4.33 For these tenants on limited income, financial hardship could be caused by having to wait until a formal Council decision regarding the next Phase of development. To mitigate this it is requested that Council approves the discretionary payment of 33 x home loss payments.

#### 4.34 **Phase A Budget Request**

- 4.35 An additional supplementary budget of £1.5 million from the estimated total scheme budget is requested to cover the additional costs associated with the first phase of this flagship scheme. These costs were not included as part of the estimated costs for Phase A agreed in February 2019. The additional estimated costs are set out in Appendix A attached to this Report and include:
- 4.35.1 Expenses incurred in relation to the costs of the master-planning application for Phases B – E, which were not included in the original estimated budget for Phase A.
  - 4.35.2 An estimated increase in build costs based on revised cost estimates compared to those used to obtain the original estimated budget. These costs will remain an estimation until the tenders are returned for the Phase A scheme.
  - 4.35.3 The actual total acquisition costs of the 3 private owned properties within Phase A exceeded the estimated acquisition costs forecasted in the original budget but acquisition of those properties has been achieved without the requirement for Compulsory Purchase Orders. The purchase of these properties were in accordance with the appropriate processes and valuations.
  - 4.35.4 Increased costs in disturbance compensation as homeowners were entitled to claim compensation in accordance with the new Decant Policy which was not considered in the original budget. The level of disturbance compensation will vary from claim to claim and is dependent on the home owner's specific circumstances. The Council is required to pay for special adaptations previously assessed and required in the new property and the Council has incurred costs for significant disabled adaptations.
  - 4.35.5 Additional funding to cover expenditure that were not identified at the time of formulating and seeking approval for the original estimated budget. This includes the extension of consultant appointments and the appointment of new consultants to assist the internal Project team to resolve outstanding issues which require specialist knowledge. For example, the appointment of a Highways Consultant to resolve outstanding Section 278 Highway design and an Ecologist to produce a Wildlife Strategy to discharge a pre commencement condition for planning application 38/18/0465.
  - 4.35.6 Costs associated with preparation of replacement homes for tenants decanted from the scheme and the requirement to keep the Project area maintained to an acceptable standard in terms of appearance, community morale and security of properties that were not identified previously.
  - 4.35.7 The Project team is required to maintain the Project area to a suitable standard and to ensure the experience for households living in the area is not diminished as a result of the Project. As such, expenditure was required to provide suitable measures to secure the void properties and to cover the cost of security inspections via an external organisation during more problematic times of the year e.g. school holidays.
  - 4.35.8 Running costs associated with the Project Office at Rochester Road, including the planning application fees.



- 4.35.9 Increasing the amount of contingency for Phase A to better protect the financial integrity of the phase against further potential costs like those aforementioned and those that could be experienced during construction e.g. increased material costs, increased labour costs etc.

## 5 Links to Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 The scheme compliments the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020 - 2024 - Homes and Communities – to offer a choice of good quality homes for our residents, whatever their age and income, in communities where support is available for those in need.
- 5.2 The Project significantly increases the number of affordable and social homes in Taunton and will be built by the Council including a range of housing types to cater for single person, family, vulnerable and elderly households.
- 5.3 The Project compliments that strategy objectives within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2016 – 2046 objectives:
- 5.3.1 **Providing Quality Homes.** We are committed to investing in our existing homes to deliver good quality of life for residents and value for the money spent, and to developing new homes that meet local needs.
- 5.3.2 **Supporting the most vulnerable.** We are committed to letting homes to people who have the fewest housing options, and will provide additional support that helps people who are older, disabled, or socially excluded to live comfortably in their council-owned home.
- 5.3.3 **Better Service.** We are customer and community focused and are committed to improving our services in line with what our residents have said matters to them. Our approach will support people to move through our social housing provision to cater for their changing needs and aspirations over time.
- 5.4 **A Stronger Business.** We will prioritise efficiency to support delivery of our social priorities and objectives. It sets out how we will improve our business practices, drive out value for money and pursue new activities.
- 5.5 Engaging and listening to our residents has been the primary driver and embedded in the project principles established at the initiation of this project. The key project principles are:-
- 5.5.1 Existing SWT residents within the scheme will be given the opportunity to remain on a social rent level.
- 5.5.2 Existing SWT residents within the scheme will be supported to downsize through the scheme design but retain the right to return to an equivalent size property within the new scheme.
- 5.5.3 The Project is underpinned by the SWT development aspirations and provide new, high quality and energy efficient homes.
- 5.6 The new development compliments The Vision for Taunton as a Garden Town, specifically the themes:-
- 5.6.1 Growing our town greener – quality of the environment. The scheme incorporates green spaces and play spaces and provides more street trees.

- 5.6.2 Growing Quality Places – quality of our places and neighbourhoods. The design of the scheme focuses on places and spaces with high quality homes, green streets and public spaces. The homes will be energy efficient and aim to incorporate sustainable technologies.

## 6 Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 The total cost of the whole North Taunton Woolaway Project as presented in the Report in February 2019 was estimated to be in the region of £45m as set out in Table 3 below modelled on the basis of delivering the scheme over a 10-year period.

	North Taunton Woolaway project	Phase A (current approval)	Revised supplementary Approval requested	Total Revised approval
	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's
Total estimated cost	45,000	7,200	7,165	14,365
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Right to Buy (RTB) receipts	3,468	534	61	595
Major Repairs reserve	8,953	0	0	0
External borrowing	32,579	6,666	7,104	13,770

- 6.2 The Council agreed the estimated funding allocations in principle, and delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer to update this as the programme progresses in line with the Council's capital and treasury strategies, prioritising affordability for the Housing Revenue Account. Any such updates to the funding arrangements would be reported to Councillors through the normal financial reporting process.

	Phase A approved Budget	Phase A forecast	Phases B - E Acquisition & enabling	Total revised budget Phases A-E
	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's
Build & Infrastructure	5,666	6,371	0	6,371
Vacant possession	627	804	3,682	4,486
Planning, Decant, enabling costs & professional fees	257	828	1,759	2,587
Contingency	650	650	272	922
Total	7,200	8,652	5,713	14,365

- 6.3 The original Phase A budget request was based on high level estimates. The revised

costs, as identified in Confidential Appendix A, are the result of a more detailed Works cost provided by the Employers Agents, higher acquisition costs and clarity regarding professional fees and other on costs.

- 6.4 The supplementary budget relating to the Acquisition and Enabling costs for Phases B to E, are identified in Confidential Appendix B.
- 6.5 The revenue implications of the above have been included in the revised 30 year HRA business plan.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 Statutory Home loss and Disturbance payments will be made in line with legislative guidance and the North Taunton Woolaway Decant Policy. As properties are anticipated to be purchased under, or 'under the threat of' the exercise of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers there is scope for utilisation of the HMG guidance on compensation payments.
- 7.2 Whilst the Council intends to work closely with each household and seek agreement to achieve vacant possession in the event an acceptable agreement cannot be sought, the Council approved in February 2019 the principle to utilise Compulsory Purchase Powers should vacant possession not progress. The CPO will be delegated to Executive in the event this is required.
- 7.3 If vacant possession cannot be provided to a contractor by the long stop date in the build contract, the Council will be at risk of litigation for specific performance under the contract and this will potentially have associated financial implications.
- 7.4 Section 11 (6) of the Local Government Act 2003 relates to the Council's ability to retain and use Right to Buy receipts to fund affordable housing.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications**

- 8.1 New build homes will be constructed to Part L of the Building Regulations which will substantially improve the thermal performance of the dwellings compared to the existing dwellings. Some dwellings currently have EPC ratings as low as band E.
- 8.2 The external wall construction will be upgraded and windows replaced to the refurbished homes which will increase the insulation, upping their fabric energy efficiency and improving the environmental performance of the dwellings.
- 8.3 The new development has been designed to take advantage of biodiversity opportunities in the neighbourhood such as planting trees and creating a new public open space.
- 8.4 The Project has enabled the Council to embrace and design a new garden community to incorporate the Garden Town Principles and safeguard the natural environment, providing areas of planting and open space whilst ensuring residents have access to suitable homes and facilities.
- 8.5 More energy efficient central heating will be installed to both the refurbished and new build dwellings.
- 8.6 Energy efficient lighting can be installed in the refurbished and new build dwellings and

water saving sanitary ware such as aerating taps and dual flush water cisterns will reduce the water consumption.

- 8.7 Progressing the Reserved Matters for Phases B – E will provide the Council with a further opportunity to review the plans to consider the impact of climate change and explore modern methods of construction and further built environment energy efficiency initiatives. Phases B – E already include the provision of electric vehicle charging points.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

- 9.1 Through the design of the Project, tenants and residents will feel safe in the public realm and feelings of safety and security in the home due to the adoption of crime prevention measures in the new development.
- 9.2 Consultation with Police and other statutory authorities has already been undertaken as part of the planning application process. No implications arose thanks to the meticulous design and resident consultation that was undertaken to achieve planning permission.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was previously provided in February 2019.
- 10.2 The quality of the new housing being provided will help create and encourage better living environments for everyone. As a consequence, it is expected the health outcomes for the area will be improved as well as opportunities for reaching better educational outcomes for households.
- 10.3 The community space and open space will be accessible for all groups in the community reflecting the diversity of the local population, helping to bring people together and foster good relations between different groups.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

- 11.1 The resident consultation phase of the Project has delivered social value through providing the opportunity for residents to be actively involved in the scheme design process and provide valued and informed contributions.
- 11.2 Social Value forms part of the selection criteria for the procurement of Phase A main contractor, and for future phases.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 Any Project opportunities for partnership working with different organisations and agencies that enhance the benefits of the scheme will be explored as they arise. For example, NHS Talking Therapies have worked in partnership with us to provide a local presence for resident mental health and well-being. This has improved our tenant access to services, enabling them to receive support that they might not have otherwise accessed if not for the regeneration of the scheme.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 The Project as a whole has been designed to Nationally Described Space Standards to ensure properties are futureproofed and residents can benefit from some of the principles of lifetime homes and will contribute to the improve health and wellbeing of the residents.
- 13.2 Phase A includes a new community building to provide a focal point for local people to meet and enhance community spirit and interactions.

## 14 Asset Management Implications

- 14.1 The Housing (HRA) Asset Management Strategy 2016 reflects the challenges the Council faces and improving its focus on value for money for the Council and for our residents:
  - 14.1.1 **To promote sustainable local communities** through coordinated capital investment and housing management.
  - 14.1.2 **To work closely with residents** to ensure that their homes meet their needs and aspirations.
  - 14.1.3 **To invest in stock**, to achieve good quality and environmental standards and to ensure that all statutory obligations are met.
  - 14.1.4 **To ensure that stock secures and strengthens the financial viability** of the business plan and safeguards its long term future and the income stream it generates.
  - 14.1.5 **Deliver Value for Money** through targeting investment where it will have the best financial and social return.
  - 14.1.6 **To carry out options appraisals** on stock that does not meet the above criteria, exploring the widest range of alternative options to improve outcomes for residents and for our business plan.
  - 14.1.7 **To deliver investment programmes in an effective way**, achieving agreed quality and value for money.
- 14.2 Through the evaluation, the asset management model identified 4% of the total stock with an average Net Present Value which is negative. These were exclusively for the Council's Woolaway constructed properties, reflecting the anticipated need for major works to these properties in the medium term.
- 14.3 The HRA Asset Strategy 2016 recognised the Woolaway house type as the Council's lowest performing stock with a limited life expectancy and high future maintenance costs. Unless action is taken to address the structural defects, the properties will continue to deteriorate, increasing the problems of a poorly performing dwelling.
- 14.4 Providing new energy efficient, affordable homes with a range of property sizes will improve the living standards for residents to create a sustainable community of high quality homes. In addition, increasing the scheme density will generate greater income and make best use of the Council's assets.

## 15 Data Protection Implications

15.1 All personal data is held in accordance with GDPR regulations.

## 16 Consultation Implications

16.1 Community Engagement and supporting the residents affected by the scheme, have been at the forefront of the Project's ethos to regenerate the area.

16.2 Officers have held 1 to 1 interviews with residents achieving approximately 90% coverage. This is in addition to attending the Implementation Working Group monthly meetings to provide updates on the progression of the scheme. The Implementation Working Group comprises a group of local residents who are affected by the Project.

16.3 The Project office has been a very effective tool in breaking down barriers with the community and encouraging communication.

## 17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)

17.1 The North Taunton Woolaway Project report was presented to Shadow Scrutiny on the 4th February 2019 and Shadow Executive 11th February 2019. At each meeting the Project and the report recommendations have been supported unanimously.

### Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate)
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) **20<sup>th</sup> November 2019**
- **Full Council – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) **3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**

Reporting Frequency:  Once only  Ad-hoc  Quarterly

Twice-yearly  Annually

### List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> Phase A Forecast Costs Compared to Approved Budget
Appendix B	<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> Phases B – E Forecast Pre-Construction Acquisition and Enabling Costs

### Contact Officers

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