

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Shadow Executive – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019

### North Taunton Woolaway Project

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Terry Beale

Report Author: Jo Humble – Lead Specialist Place

#### 1 Recommendations Proposed to be put before Shadow Council

- 1.1 The Council approves the project and the progression of the scheme. Council delegates the decisions to progress matters for the scheme to be determined by the Head of Commercial, Investment and Change in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
- 1.2 The Council approves the proposed funding of the scheme 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.
- 1.3 The Council approves a supplementary budget of £7,200,000 within the HRA Capital Programme for Phase A of the North Taunton Woolaway Project.
- 1.4 Approval is granted to serve Initial and Final Demolition Notices, and for the demolition of properties to enable site clearance to facilitate new development for the whole scheme.
- 1.5 The Council approves the principle to utilise Compulsory Purchase Powers using section 17 of the Housing Act 1985, should Vacant Possession not progress to acquire properties under the regeneration initiative detailed in this report, and to delegate such decision making to the Executive.

#### 2. Corporate Context

- 2.1 The key drivers for the North Taunton Woolway project are in response to the strategic objectives agreed in the updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2016-2046:
  - **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.

- **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.
  - **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 to cater for their changing needs and aspirations over time.
  - **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.
- 2.2 The HRA Revenue budget and 30 Year Business Plan has been updated to reflect the additional income and expenditure arising from this investment. The HRA Business Plan was further supported through the adoption in July 2017 of a new Asset Strategy and a new Development Strategy
- 2.3 Just over 22% of Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) stock is of non-traditional construction housing property types. This includes homes that are built with prefabricated reinforced concrete (PRC) panels or other methods such as steel frames.
- 2.4 Most of TDBC non-traditional construction types have been brought up to licensed repair standards and require no significant additional costs in future compared with properties for traditional construction. The exception is the properties of Woolaway construction.
- 2.5 As part of the development of the Asset Management Strategy the financial performance of the TDBC stock was evaluated, based on 30 year income and expenditure associated with the assets, alongside other non-financial measures of broader neighbourhood sustainability.
- 2.6 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 properties of Woolaway construction, reflecting the anticipated need for major works to these properties in the medium term.
- 2.7 The North Taunton Woolaway project is providing a prudent and proactive approach to address the stock condition issues of TDBC poorest performing assets.
- 2.8 The Development strategy focused on two keys areas of activity:-
- Opportunity led development that may include TDBC land and wider market opportunities such as rural exception schemes.

- Strategic, asset management led developments that addresses the non-traditional or poor performing stock within TBBC's portfolio.

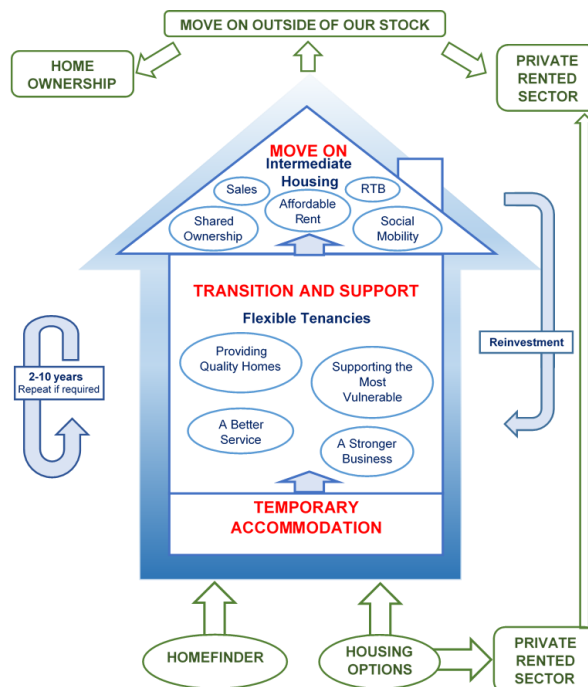
2.9 The Woolaway project fits into the second key area. This strategic focus, combined with learning from previous Council regeneration schemes at Creechbarrow Road and Rockwell Green, have informed the North Taunton Woolaway project's ethos and principles. Engaging and listening to our residents has been a fundamental driver with clear project principles established at project initiation.

2.10 The key project principles include :-

- Existing TDBC Residents within the scheme area will be given the opportunity to remain on a social rent level.
- Existing TDBC Residents within the scheme will be supported to downsize through the scheme design but retain the right to return to the equivalent size property within the new scheme.

2.11 The HRA business plan provides for funding for 15 new homes per annum, which this North Taunton Woolaway project will contribute to. The scheme proposal is underpinned by the TDBC development aspirations and provides additional new, high quality homes.

2.12 The emerging scheme supports the Council's Housing Vision set out in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2016-2046. The following diagram is extracted from the Business Plan and represents the more dynamic service TDBC intends to offer to help people access accommodation that meets their needs at a particular point in their lives.



- 2.13 Within social housing TDBC intends to help people develop stable lives and life skills and then if appropriate, look to help them move into home ownership over time as and when this meets their needs and aspirations. This in turn allows others to begin their social housing journey by freeing up valuable social housing.
- 2.14 Through this scheme TDBC will seek to provide a small supply of alternative housing products. Details of a shared equity arrangement is being developed to offer an alternative low cost homeownership choice. This will complement the Shared Ownership offer which is being piloted at the Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green Development.
- 2.15 Following Taunton's success in becoming a Garden Town the scheme has been an opportunity to embrace Taunton's Garden Town principles and develop a new garden community with the design safeguarding the natural environment, providing areas of planting and open space, and ensuring that people have access to suitable housing and facilities.

### 3 Risk Assessment

- 3.1 A risk and issues register which has been produced for this scheme is shown in **Appendix A**. The primary risks associated with the scheme both directly and indirectly are the following;

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Insufficient funds for the project	Continue to professionally verify cost estimates. Refresh HRA business plan in line with cost estimates. Explore and secure external funding options
Construction Cost estimate is below Tender prices received following contractor procurement	Value engineering exercise would be undertaken with revised phasing and design to an affordable level or revision of the HRA Business Plan capacity would be undertaken.
Changes in Councils responsibilities and income through changes implemented from Central Government.	Continue to monitor legislative changes from Central Government. The scheme will be delivered in a phased basis and would incorporate any future changes in the Councils responsibilities, meaning each phase is manageable within resources.

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

### **4.1 Background**

- 4.1.1 Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) owns a variety of non-traditional construction housing property types across the Borough. A Structural Engineering report was carried out in 2013. The report highlighted through testing that the Woolaway units were showing signs of deterioration. This type of non-traditional unit was Designated Defective under the Housing Defect Act 1984. This did not mean that the Woolaway units were unsafe, it prevented any more of the houses being built.
- 4.1.2 In response to the report findings, TDBC undertook a regeneration scheme in Rockwell Green, Wellington. This scheme involved land assembly through the acquisition of a public house and a redundant toilet block in addition to the demolition of 10 Woolaway homes. The scheme is nearing completion and will deliver 26 new affordable homes.
- 4.1.3 TDBC undertook a further assessment during the demolition of the Woolaway units at Rockwell Green. This confirmed the units were in a worse condition than identified in the 2013 report. These findings have accelerated activity in seeking solutions to address the quality of Woolaway housing elsewhere in the Council's stock.
- 4.1.4 TDBC has approximately 240 Woolaway properties across the Borough with the main concentration being in Pyrland and Rowbarton Ward. In February 2017 TDBC had the opportunity to bid for funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) designed to accelerate Estate Regeneration planning.
- 4.1.5 TDBC were awarded sufficient funding to enable the creation of a Master Planning Team to include expertise in Architecture, Community Consultation, Engineering and Cost Consultancy to support the Development Team in progressing the North Taunton Woolaway Project.
- 4.1.6 The aims of the project are to engage with the community living in the Woolaway properties in the North Taunton area and to work with the community to bring forward a phased regeneration scheme.

### **4.2 Community Engagement**

- 4.2.1 The project aims to be an exemplar project for Estate Regeneration and reflect the aspirations of the Garden Town. Community Engagement and supporting the residents affected by the scheme, have been at the forefront of the projects ethos to regenerate the area providing high quality, energy efficient properties as well as creating a sustainable and healthy living environment that fosters independent living within a strong and thriving community.

- 4.2.2 TDBC established a community hub in a vacant property within the heart of the affected area, where officers are available for residents to 'drop in' should they have any questions or concerns.
- 4.2.3 TDBC Officers worked with residents through individual appointments in their homes, achieving approximately 90% coverage. This is in addition to hosting four public consultations during the past year to obtain views and comments from those affected by the project. The information gathered has influenced the design of the scheme and specific house types.
- 4.2.4 A Residents Design Group was established to help the Master Planning Team capture the local knowledge and develop a scheme which addresses the wider issues affecting the estate and residents. The Group has provided invaluable community representation for the Master planning team to work with.
- 4.2.5 The Design Group consists of 20 residents with a range of housing and lifestyle requirements and a mix of home owners and Taunton Deane tenants. Ten Resident Design Group meetings have taken place between October 2017 and October 2018. These have been followed up by meetings with individual Design Group members at the community hub.
- 4.2.6 The Pyrland and Rowbarton Ward Councillors, Tenant Services Management Board and Tenants Forum have received briefings and updates during the resident consultation phase. The project principles were presented to Members through a Members Briefing in June 2018 and at Strategic Forum in September 2018.

### **4.3 Scheme Proposal**

- 4.3.1 The existing site comprises of 212 Woolaway homes of which Taunton Deane retain ownership of 167.
- 4.3.2 Following an extensive 12 month resident consultation and a range of detailed site investigations, an Outline planning application and Phase A detailed planning application were submitted in December 2018.
- 4.3.3 The scheme Masterplan currently show five phases, A to E. To continue momentum for this development, this Council paper makes a specific request for funding for Phase A.
- 4.3.4 The indicative outline planning application indicates a broad scheme to provide 226 new build homes and refurbish 27 existing TDBC homes through a phased approach. As a result of the indicative scheme there will be a net increase of 86 new TDBC homes with 149 additional bed spaces.

	<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
Total Proposed	226	27	253
Net Increase in TDBC stock			86
Existing bed spaces			964
Proposed bed spaces			1113

Note: \* There are 23 homes in private ownership within the scheme area which are excluded from planned works. However the Council will be supportive if those private owners wish to undertake their own refurbishment.

- 4.3.5 Subject to planning approval, a tender process would then begin to select the range of professionals, including a build contractor to progress the scheme development with an anticipation to start physical works during our financial year 2020/21.
- 4.3.6 Owing to the complexities and size of the scheme the build period can only be estimated at this time and will range around a 10 year programme. However this will be reviewed as each Phase progresses, seeking opportunity to accelerate and overlap phases where possible.
- 4.3.7 The mix of homes is indicative at this stage and will be reviewed prior to submitting Reserved Matters for subsequent phases. The intention is to undertake the project in five phases, to support the decant requirements of existing residents and enable each phase to be assessed against changes in housing need, affordability and mitigate future unknown changes which may affect the scheme proposal and financing.
- 4.3.8 Each phase will consider the required mix to support the returning decants and provide a range of housing tenures, including affordable rent and a range of options to support residents who aspire to home ownership.

4.3.9 The indicative mix of homes for the whole scheme is:-

<b>Dwelling Type</b>	<b>Occupancy</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>
1B Bungalow	2 persons	2
1B Flat	2 persons	30
2B Flat	3 persons	14
2B Bungalow	3 persons	8
2B House	4 persons	42
3B House	5 persons	94
4B House	6 persons	33
5B House	7 persons	3
Refurb 2B House	3 persons	20
Refurb 3B House	4 persons	7
Community Facility		

4.3.10 From the indicative whole scheme mix, the intended mix for Phase A is:

<b>Dwelling Type</b>	<b>Occupancy</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>
1B Flat over Garage	2 persons	1
1B Bungalow	2 persons	2
1B Flat	2 persons	12
2B Flat over Garage	3 persons	1
2B Flat	3 persons	4
2B Bungalow	4 persons	4
2B House	4 persons	2
3B House	5 persons	5
3B Chalet	6 persons	4
4B House	6 persons	4
Community Facility		

4.3.11 Through the consultation a strong request for a community facility was identified and incorporated into the scheme design, within Phase A. In the event that the community facility is no longer required the facility will be designed to enable conversion to 2 x 2 bed flats. A detailed business case for the operation and revenue funding for a community centre will be developed working with the community through the scheme implementation project plan.

4.3.12 The homes will be built to Nationally Described Space Standards and Housing Quality Indicator layout standards. The homes will be designed predominantly to Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 with nine anticipated as wheelchair adapted homes at Category 3.

4.3.13 Three design options were developed which considered different levels of refurbishment and new build. A scoring mechanism was established with the Design Group, the external consultant team and TDBC Project Board to score the different options and agree the preferred approach. Each group independently scored option 3 the highest. This option was shown to the whole community at a



consultation event on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

- 4.3.14 The scheme has been evaluated by the Design Review Panel prior to submission of the planning application. The Panel considered the design process and community consultation process undertaken to date as extremely rigorous and is considered outstanding, in terms of process the Panel were extremely supportive.
- 4.3.15 The Panel welcomed the presentation of previous design iterations that demonstrated the strategic approach and rationale behind the design decisions taken. The Panel considered that, based on the brief and design parameters set, that the design has the potential to be exceptional.
- 4.3.16 The relatively minor recommendations received from the Design Review Panel are being reviewed and incorporated within the scheme design as appropriate.
- 4.3.17 TDBC Officers continue to work closely with affected residents on a one to one basis. The intention is for the current TDBC residents whose homes are subject to demolition to be given the opportunity to return to a new property at a social rent level.
- 4.3.18 The range of property sizes will help to address existing overcrowding and under occupation which have been identified through the community. In line with the key project principles, residents will be supported to downsize through the design of the proposed scheme but retain the right to return to the equivalent size property within the new scheme.
- 4.3.19 Residents within the refurbished area will return to their newly refurbished home unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- 4.3.20 Existing Homeowners within the redevelopment area are in discussion with TDBC officers regarding their personal options and the reasonable offers made by the Council.
- 4.3.21 Statutory Home loss and Disturbance payments will be made in line with legislative guidance.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 The scheme supports the Council's Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 – Key Theme 1 – People. The project will facilitate an increase in the availability of affordable homes for local people to both buy and rent. It will develop a range of additional housing types suitable in particular for single person households and elderly people.
- 5.2 The scheme also supports the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2016 – 2046 objectives by providing quality homes and supports the Housing Vision to broaden the housing offer to cater for residents housing needs and aspirations.

## 6 Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 The total cost of the whole North Taunton Woolaway project as presented in this report is estimated to be in the region of £45m. This is based on a number of assumptions and indicative costs.
- 6.2 The scheme remains subject to planning consent being granted. It is worth noting from the outset, that for a proposed scheme of such duration (up to 10 years) there is an obvious risk that costs can potentially change quite significantly e.g. for price inflation and other market factors. Estimates for price inflation have been included in the estimate, and will need to be carefully monitored at each phase of planning and delivery.
- 6.3 The current proposal is to fund the scheme as detailed in Table 1 below, which has been modelled on the basis of delivering the scheme over a 10-year period.

**Table 1: Proposed Funding Profile for the North Taunton Woolaway project**

	<b>£(000s)</b>
Total Estimated Cost	45,000
Funded by:	
Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts	3,468
Major Repairs Reserve	8,953
External Borrowing	32,579

- 6.4 A number of factors may ultimately influence the funding plan, for example: changes in cost; changes to the proposed build design/mix; and changes to the refurbishment timetable.
- 6.5 It is therefore proposed that the Council agrees to the funding allocations in principle, and delegates' 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.
- 6.6 The indicative scheme would allow funding from Right to Buy receipts of up to £3.468m to support the increase in dwelling numbers. This is in line with the current Right to Buy policy. If this scheme does not go ahead, and no alternative eligible investment of RTB receipts is made, this would place significant risk on having to hand over these RTB receipts to central Government plus an additional penalty fee of bank base rate plus 4%.
- 6.7 From the overall funding outlined, Phase A is estimated to require a budget of £7.2m. This sum includes a significant contingency sum and may be rolled forward towards subsequent phases if not required.

6.8 Table 2 below details the breakdown of the proposed funding.

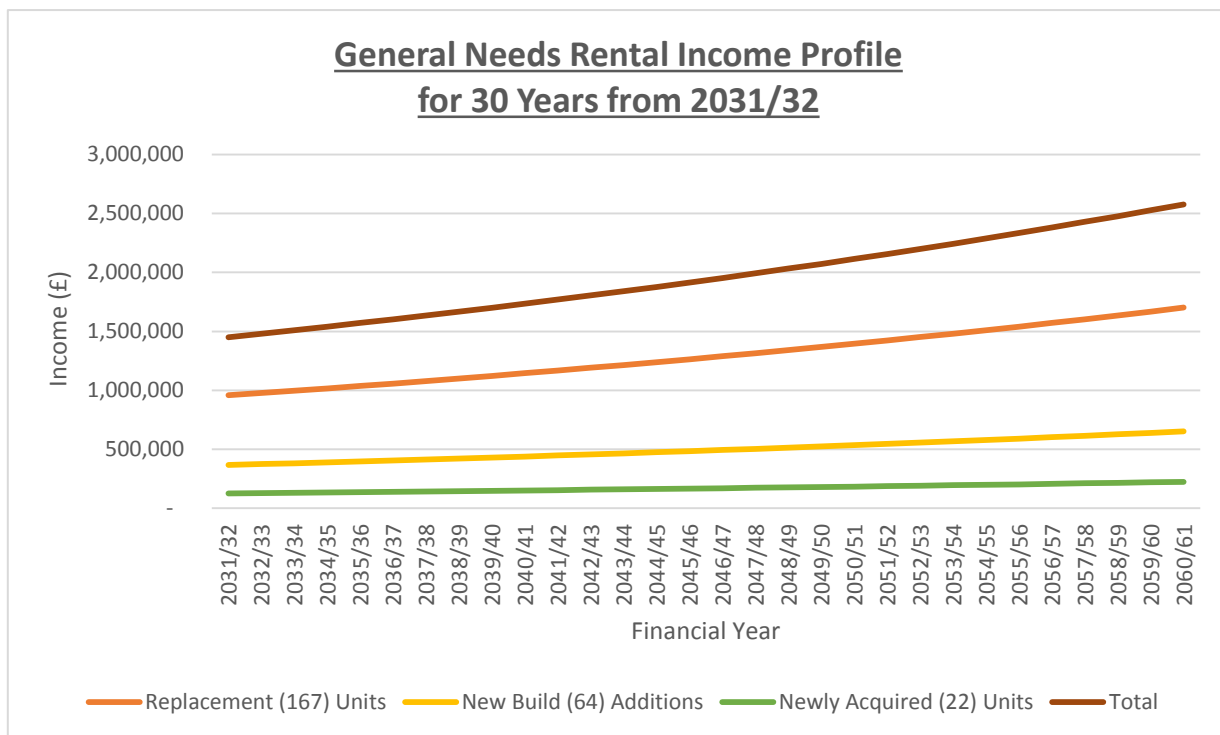
**Table 2: Proposed Funding Profile for Phase A**

	<b>£(000s)</b>
Total Estimated Cost	7,200
Funded by:	
Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts	534
Major Repairs Reserve	0
External Borrowing	6,666

- 6.9 Phase A is predominately social rented properties, providing new homes to existing residents within the regeneration area and includes the Community Centre. Both these factors result in the Phase A scheme requiring more subsidy than future phases which may include a broader range of tenure and income generation.
- 6.10 The Council is required to maintain the Major Repairs Reserve, which controls the application of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA). The MRA is restricted to being applied to new capital investment in HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the MRA has yet to be applied at the year-end.
- 6.11 The 30 year Business Plan includes the use of the Major Repairs Reserve to fund the Woolaway replacement. The overall Major Repairs investment/maintenance programme will be re-phased to ensure the affordability of this scheme.
- 6.12 The HRA borrowing cap position has changed in October 2018, in that the original HRA capital debt cap of £115m imposed by government has now been removed. This provides greater freedom to the Council to borrow to fund further investment in viable and affordable social housing development. However it is worth noting that this scheme does enable us to remain within the original debt cap based on the current estimates.
- 6.13 The borrowing will ultimately be executed through external borrowing such as taking out a loan from Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) or another financial institution.
- 6.14 The eventual financing arrangements will be handled through the Council's treasury operations, in line with the Treasury Management Strategy and Policies. Arlingclose, the Council's treasury advisors, will be consulted on appropriate borrowing arrangements to deliver the optimum financing of the scheme.
- 6.15 The financial appraisal and business case has assumed a borrowing rate of 2.99% for financial modelling purposes. This is based on the external rate of borrowing over 50 years which is the maximum loan term available from the PWLB.

- 6.16 At the time of preparing this report the rate available to the Council is lower than 2.99%, building some contingency on the financing cost estimates in the financial model. Financing rates will be closely monitored and arrangements made to secure the most beneficial borrowing rate at the appropriate times.
- 6.17 The cost of the repayment of the principle borrowing can be, and will be, funded within the Business Plan, alongside historical debt repayment. The financial modelling assumes that each phase of additional borrowing for this scheme will be repaid in full over a 50 year period. The Council can borrow at fixed rates, which will provide some certainty for financial planning and manage interest rate risk.
- 6.18 The cost of the repayment of the associated interest costs have been included in the financial modelling for the HRA and are shown as affordable without impacting on HRA reserves. However as the financing arrangements will flow from the phasing of works there is a risk that the cost of borrowing undertaken in future years will vary from business model assumptions.
- 6.19 On completion of the project, from 2031/32 onwards, the estimated income generated by this project over the following 30 years is anticipated to be a total of £58.9 m, of which £38.9m relates to the 167 units remaining rentable, £14.9m to the 64 additional units, and £5.1m to the 22 newly acquired units from private owners, as shown in table 3 below:

**Table 3: Projected income**



- 6.20 Of the additional 86 units, this income of £20m would need to be offset by the additional maintenance costs of £5.2m and would leave net income of £14.8m from the whole project over 30 years from 2031/32. This additional income would provide a positive contribution to the overall business plan, helping to offset housing stock management overheads as well as offset any underperforming properties.
- 6.21 The project to date has received £270,375 of external funding through MHCLG Estate Regeneration Funding and £54,270 through Garden Town funding. This has covered a large proportion of the Resident Consultation phase of the project. Opportunities to secure additional external funding are being explored. In the event additional funding is secured the funding requirement for TDBC will be adjusted as appropriate.
- 6.22 It is reasonable to conclude that, based on what we know now and the reasonable assumptions made, the investment in the North Taunton Woolaway Project is affordable over the long term, as the properties should have a useful life well in excess of 50 years if maintained as planned.
- 6.23 The HRA Revenue Budget and 30 Year Business Plan has been updated (**see Appendix B**) to reflect the additional income and expenditure arising from this investment. A number of assumptions and high level estimates have been made that will need to be reviewed and the Business Plan updated accordingly, as the project progresses through each of the phases of the overall scheme and where more detailed information becomes available.
- 6.24 Whilst reviewing the affordability of Phase A (total phase cost of £7.2m), we have considered the affordability of the whole scheme (£45m) in its entirety, as well as ensuring that other schemes elsewhere can be delivered financially.
- 6.25 The overall scheme, once completed, will maintain and bring online additional units to the housing stock and the generation of £58.9m rental income over 30 years.
- 6.26 There may also be the opportunity of capital receipts depending on the development to offer alternative low cost homeownership choice through a shared equity arrangement. The outcome will be dependent on the details of the scheme and subsequent take-up. This impact of this alternative option will need to be modelled into the Business Plan.
- 6.27 The repayment of the principle borrowing and associated interest costs, and the new income streams and associated maintenance costs will need to be built into the Business Plan as it is extended over the next 50 years accordingly.
- 6.28 National and Local housing policy can influence the position (regardless of this proposal) and usual management of resources and risks will be applied.

## **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The decanting of tenants in the Woolaway houses will require due process to be followed pursuant to the Housing Act 1985 (as amended), including (but not limited to) the publication of a demolition notice under the Act.
- 7.2 Statutory Homeloss and Disturbance payments will be made in line with legislative guidance. 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.
- 7.3 The Council is requested also to approve the issue and service of Demolition Notices under the Housing Act 1985.
- 7.4 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 approves 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.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications**

- 8.1 New build homes will be constructed to Part L of the Building Regulations which will improve the thermal performance of the dwelling compared to the existing dwelling.
- 8.2 The thermal fabric of the refurbished homes will be improved by upgrading the external wall construction and increasing the insulation. Replacing the windows will also improve the environmental performance of the refurbished dwellings.
- 8.3 More energy efficient central heating will be installed to both the refurbished and newbuild dwellings.
- 8.4 Energy efficient lighting can be installed in the refurbished and new build dwellings and water saving taps will reduce the water consumption.
- 8.5 Externally we aim to increase the Biodiversity opportunities in the neighbourhood. This will include the planting of street trees and creating a new public open space. The project will demonstrate Garden Town Principles.

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

- 9.1 The Crime Prevention Design Advisor was consulted in the development of the Masterplan. Housing has been positioned along streets to provide overlooking of pedestrians.
- 9.2 The former open space at the rear of the flats that was not overlooked presented a security risk and has been removed and replaced by a central overlooked green space.

- 9.3 Courtyard parking has been provided in two locations, but this mixed with dwellings to ensure that the areas can be observed by residents.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken. Copy attached in **Appendix C**.
- 10.2 The new housing will offer a range of tenure and will be affordable to families of different sizes, older people and disabled people.
- 10.3 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.
- 10.4 Tenants and residents will feel safe in the public realm and feelings of safety and security in the home will improve for all due to the adoption of crime prevention measures in the new development. Compliance with such crime prevention measures have been proven to reduce the opportunity for crime and fear of crime.
- 10.5 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 Working with a group of residents with no development experience, the Design Group experience has provided the individuals with the necessary skills to comment and critique the scheme design and house types in an informed manner. This has led to a deeper appreciation of the environment they live in.
- 11.3 Social Value will be part of the selection criteria when undertaking the procurement process during the delivery phase.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 Any project opportunities for partnership working with different organisations and agencies that enhance the benefits of the scheme would be explored as they arise, particularly with a focus on the Garden Town status.

### **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 Many of the existing dwellings have slopes and steps to the front door. The outline application will review the finished floor levels of the proposed dwellings to comply with Building Regulations Part M.
- 13.2 Nationally Described Space Standard guidance specifies storage provision, floor to ceiling heights, and minimum room widths. These features go some way to futureproofing properties, allowing residents' scope to benefit from some of the principles of lifetime homes.
- 13.3 The improved space standards including the provision of a ground floor WC will contribute to the improve health and wellbeing of the residents.
- 13.4 A wider range of house types will be re-provided. This will provide greater opportunities for families to live in the neighbourhood as their children grow.
- 13.5 Ten bungalows are proposed which will assist elderly and disabled residents to live in the neighbourhood. Seventeen chalets are proposed which are family homes with a ground floor bedroom and open plan living space to accommodate families with specific access requirements. The ground floor bedroom provides an opportunity for residents to continue to live independently by allowing greater privacy and dignity for individuals wishing to be cared for at home and supported by the local community.
- 13.6 Existing routes have been maintained and improved including permeable pedestrian connections to Lyngford Lane to promote walking and cycling, an opportunity for exercise and links to local facilities.
- 13.7 The location of the North Taunton Woolaway Project allows residents to access existing services and local facilities such as Priorswood Shops and Lyngford Park, as well as a regular bus service.
- 13.8 Community facilities provide a focal point for local people to get together facilitating and enhancing community spirit and interactions.

### **14 Asset Management Implications**

- 14.1 TDBC as a provider of social housing, is faced with a stock of older houses and they continue to need a large programme of investment to keep them up to date. With changing tastes and preferences, accommodation that is no longer suitable or acceptable to tenants will need to be replaced.
- 14.2 Dwellings, such as Woolaways, which are 'Designated Defective' under the Housing Act 1984. Unless action is taken to address the structural defects, the properties will continue to deteriorate increasing the problems of a poor environment and an unsustainable community.



- 14.3 Providing the properties with modern, energy efficient, affordable homes will vastly improve the living standards for residents with a balanced range of tenures and property sizes to provide a sustainable community of high quality homes. In addition, increasing the scheme density will generate greater income.
- 14.4 From an Asset Management perspective, being proactive by taking a commercial approach to the long term investment needs of the housing stock, is widely acknowledged as being good practice and making 'best use of assets'.
- 14.5 The HRA Asset Strategy 2016 recognised the Woolaway house type as TDBC's lowest performing stock with a limited life expectancy and high future maintenance costs.

## 15 Data Protection Implications

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

## 16 Consultation Implications

- 16.1 An extensive resident consultation has been undertaken over the previous 12 months, providing a detailed understanding and demographic profile of the existing community, and its potential future needs has been created. This information has been captured through the Equality Impact Assessment.
- 16.2 The consultation included four public consultation events, the opportunity for home visits from the project team alongside the project team being based in an office hub to provide a 'drop in' facility for the residents.
- 16.3 The scheme proposals have evolved in consultation with a project Design Group. The Design Group consists of 20 residents with a range of housing and lifestyle requirements and a mix of home owners and Taunton Deane Tenants.

## 17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)

*(To be included usually in reports which are submitted for consideration by the Executive / Cabinet or Full Council.)*

### Democratic Path:

- **Shadow Scrutiny**– Scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019
- **Shadow Executive** – Scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019
- **Shadow Full Council** – Scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019

Reporting Frequency:  **Once only**       **Ad-hoc**     **Quarterly**  
 **Twice-yearly**       **Annually**

## List of Appendices

Appendix A	Risk Register
Appendix B	HRA Business Plan extract
Appendix C	Equality Impact Assessment

## Contact Officers

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