

SWT Tenants Strategic Group

Monday, 23rd November, 2020,
6.00 pm

**Somerset West
and Taunton**

[SWT VIRTUAL MEETING WEBCAST
LINK](#)

Members: Alex Akhigbemen (Chair), Jessie Bunn, Paul Cram,
Dennis Galpin, Kevin Hellier, Ivor Hussey, Corrine McMylor,
Livi Mongare, Francesca Smith and Janet Lloyd

Agenda

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| 1. Apologies | |
| 2. Notes from previous meeting | (Pages 5 - 14) |
| 3. Directorate Update Report - James Barrah, Simon Lewis,
Ian Candlish, Chris Brown and Shari Hallett | (Pages 15 - 20) |
| 4. Fees and Charges Briefing Note - Bryony Cole | (Pages 21 - 26) |
| 5. Development Report, Seaward Way - Chris Brown | (Pages 27 - 60) |
| 6. Development Report, Oxford Inn - Chris Brown | (Pages 61 - 90) |
| 7. Development Report, North Taunton - Chris Brown | (Pages 91 - 126) |
| 8. Tenant Strategic Group Election Revised Timeline -
Sharon Yarde | (Pages 127 - 128) |
| 9. STAR survey update - Sharon Yarde | (Pages 129 - 132) |



**JAMES HASSETT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 2 clear working days before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

The Governance and Democracy Case Manager will take the details of your question or speech and will distribute them to the Committee prior to the meeting. The Chair will then invite you to speak at the beginning of the meeting under the agenda item Public Question Time, but speaking is limited to three minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the group.

Please see below for Temporary Measures during Coronavirus Pandemic and the changes we are making to public participation:-

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SWT Tenants Strategic Group - 21 September 2020 held via Zoom Video Conference

Present: Alex Akhigbemen (Chair)

Jessie Bunn, Paul Cram, Kevin Hellier, Ivor Hussey, Livi Mongare and Councillor Francesca Smith

Officers: James Barrah (Director of Housing and Communities), Stephen Boland (Housing Specialist), Chris Brown (Assistant Director Development and Regeneration), Ian Candlish (Assistant Director Housing Property), Simon Lewis (Assistant Director Housing and Community Development), Shari Hallett (Housing Performance Manager), Tracey Meadows (Democracy and Governance), Louisa Hill (specialist), Amy Maggs (Housing) and Sharon Yarde (Housing)

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm)

7. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Janet Lloyd

8. Notes from previous meeting

Notes from the previous meeting on the 20 July 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

9. Directorate report - James Barrah, Chris Brown, Ian Candlish, Simon Lewis, Shari Hallett

Housing Directorate Report to Housing Strategic Board

The Director of Housing and Communities updated the group on Unitary Authority Stronger Somerset Business Case which proposed two new unitary Councils and a combined authority. The plan would streamline our local government structure with two new Unitaries for East and West, while creating a Combined Authority so more decisions can be made locally, not in Westminster.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Somerset County Council pushed ahead with their bid for a single Unitary for Somerset, while the District Councils were focused on supporting communities and businesses.

A white paper from Government which is called the Devolution White Paper would be the trigger for a consultation exercise and decision making paper that deals with changes to Local Democracy and how areas were represented. This would be taken as our bid being formally submitted and ratified and a consultation exercise undertaken by government of either bid.

The times scales for this were quite tight with the consultation process launched in the New Year, and a shadows authority would be set up in April 2021, this would run for 12 months with the new Council starting in April/May 2022. We need to bear in mind that these time scales could be subject to change.

Housing and Communities Teams update

The Assistant Director of Housing and Community Development updated the group that during the pandemic good feedback had been received from tenants regarding welfare checks and support by phone from staff members.

At the beginning of lockdown the letting of properties were suspended whilst the voids team concentrated on emergency accommodation for the homeless applicants due to the closure of commercial Bed and Breakfasts. The 17 properties in Pyrland Fields have now been successfully let.

Now that restriction rules had been relaxed, it is under consideration to open meeting halls from October by appointment only, more information on this will follow shortly.

Reported that we have been successful in securing Hinkley C funding to create the role of a Home Moves Plus Officer Full time for 2 years. This post will work within the Lettings team to work with tenants to encourage and facilitate moves for those currently under-occupying properties and allowing SWT to make best use of its stock for the benefit of all those on the Housing Register.

Somerset Independence Plus (SIP) has successfully recruited a Hospital Resettlement Coordinator. Working out of Musgrove Park Hospital and surrounding NHS Community Hospitals, the post will be responsible for assisting patients with a smooth discharge from hospital into their home setting. The post will be jointly managed by Health and Somerset Independence Plus. It is an 18 month post, funding will be from the Better Care Fund. SIP have also just launched a new service to tackle hoarding. Designed to assist clients who have extensive problems with clutter in their home. The Independent Living Officers' will centre their level of intervention based upon the clutter scale. Besides working with the client to clear the property, they will also put in place an agreed plan with the client to prevent hoarding in the future.

The Rent Recovery team continues to work to support our tenants through the effects of having a reduced income or in some cases redundancy due to COVID-19. They continue to embrace the "LEAN" approach to rent recovery and the rent arrears are showing the benefit of this approach. Face to Face appointments were now being taken in the DH.

In the last quarter we have been reviewing the existing ASB policy, with the team now working on processes to work alongside this. Although we had an increase in serious ASB cases during Covid this is now starting to slow down a little and the team have seen the number of new cases declining.

Comments made by group members included;

- Will the funding from Hinckley C just cover Somerset West and Taunton area or is it Council wide? *We also work closely with Magna in the West Somerset area, so this is about enabling moves between properties in the County and possibly wider afield. We are also looking at Home Swap which is a national scheme to see whether this is a better model for us moving forward.*

Development and Regeneration

The Assistant director- Development and Regeneration updated the group on housing strategy. Work was now progressing across partners across the County to adopt a health, care and housing memorandum of understanding as are discussions regarding the establishment of a Homelessness Reduction Board. Eco Flex scheme was now being adopted in SWT which provided access to fuel poor private households for energy saving measures such as insulation, fuel switch, etc.

A programme aimed at increasing affordable homes in the most difficult parts of the district through a community led approach is commencing with the recruitment of a part time specialist officer to work primarily in the Exmoor National Park with communities including Parish Councils. The Programme aimed to unlock rare development opportunities through community awareness and activity. Work was taking place with planning to understand the implications of the planning white paper on affordable housing supply in Somerset.

There are 309 HRA homes at various stages of delivery. Laxton Road (8 units) will be ready to let around Christmas followed by NTWP phase A homes (47) and zero carbon homes with five sites prioritised for early delivery (43 units). Plans are progressing well for other schemes at Seaward Way (53 units in the west of Somerset) and Oxford Inn (11 units in Taunton). Seaward Way has the benefit of an allocation of funds from the Hinckley Point C Housing Strategy. The Council is working with our contractor Engie to improve the low carbon qualities of the NTWP new homes and the refurbished homes. SWT is looking to improve the fabric of the homes over the tendered requirements and current building regulation requirements.

Comments made by group members included;

- What monitoring will be done on these new energy efficient houses to make sure that they are energy efficient without evidence? *I agree, you cannot prove this without evidence, but we are going through quite an extensive procurement process to determine that what we are told is true in reality. We also have a programme of data collection which will take place to ensure that what they state will be delivered has been delivered. At the procurement process we will be asking some very direct questions around the materials they use and their construction techniques. We also*

have expert energy advisors to help us probe the claims that are made by the company contractors. We then need to measure and monitor to prove what they say is correct. We will not appoint the company until we are confident that they can deliver what we need. Will all the new tenants have all their energy recorded and monitored? We will be using smart technology where we can, we also need to have discussions with the tenants on how they use the property as some low carbon homes it uses it differently to make significant energy savings. Part of our plan comprises of data collection and analysis. We will be using a pilot scheme called the LETI model to collect this data, it is a London Energy Transformation Initiative Model which is a very comprehensive model to benchmark proposals so it not only measures the occupational use and the suggested occupational use of power, it also measures the embodied carbon for materials which are used to transport to site and it also tries to measure the life needs of the material.

- *We are looking at 373 units as outline, what are the time scales for getting these units on the ground? Those units will be delivered over 7 years although they are front loaded. Laxton Road will be delivered this year, Seaward Way (if we get planning permission) will be delivered in 3 years with the low carbon being on site early next year. As they are modular constructions we hope to have the first ones available at the end of the summer next year and the others within the next 14 months of that date. North Taunton will be delivered in 4 phases of build which will be spread out over a number of years. The Oxford Inn will comprise of 11 units which will follow on from the zero carbon pilots. This project is well ahead of the 30 year programme announced by the Council.*

The Assistant Director-Housing Property updated the group on the briefing paper that was sent to the group.

Key points updated to the group;

- The Housing maintenance team;
- Void repairs;
- Property Safety Compliance;
- Additional resources with two new posts, Compliance Manager and a Landlord and Compliance Specialist;
- New Asbestos Management and Fire Safety policies and procedures;
- Fire Risk Assessments;
- Continuing with Gas Safety check;
- Undertaking a programme of Water Risk Assessments;
- Carrying out electrical checks to communal areas;

Comments made by group members included;

- How will the work be completed by Contractors before the next financial year? *Everyone is in the same boat, so everyone is pushing for a limited contractor resource, which is what puts the pressure on. The time frame is*

tight in this financial year as everyone wants to complete works which will have to roll on if not completed.

Update from the Housing Performance Manager – Shari Hallett

Reported that a new small team had been set up as part of the housing restructure to help in a number of areas. The team consisted of Shari Hallett, Sharon Yarde and Amy Maggs, two new team members will be recruited next month. The role of the team was to enhancing the experience of our customers and to manage some of the other activities that we need to do as a business, preparing the score card, managing the risk register and managing policies and procedures that have been approved and gone through the relevant channels and have being signed off.

Work will be undertaken to engage with our customers to improve our housing service which has started with the News Letter which has gone out to residents this week.

Comments made by group members included;

- Concerns that although the hub was open there were no face to face appointments available? *Visits to the hub are for business that cannot be done through other channels, this is done through the prioritisation of appointments;*
- Will arrears and maintenance figures still be worked on and given to the board? *Yes if you are looking on updates on arrears etc we will be bringing these to future meetings. There is no forward plan of business at present but I am happy for this to be driven by group members too as this is part of the two way process;*
- Concerns that calls to general enquiries were not being answered; *call times to Customer Services are very good so I am perplexed by this as there are plenty of resources there. If you can give us any indication of the date and time of the calls we will look into this and report back;*
- The proposed unitary arrangement, can you confirm that you are already formally working with Sedgemoor District Council? *We already have informal working partnerships in place with Sedgemoor District Council such as Building Control and the private sector housing partnership;*

Resolved that – the group recommended the report

10. **Tenant Strategic Board Election - Sharon Yarde**

As you are aware the last election for the Strategic Group was before the transformation of the joint councils of Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset District Council.

Our Terms of Reference state that elections should be held every 3 years, currently we are in breach of those terms. The next election for Group members will be held at the beginning of January 2021.

Information to tenants will be distributed at the beginning of November giving tenants 1 month to submit their application. The application form will include a personal statement from the applicant and a photo which will be returned to the Housing Performance team in a self-addressed envelope. The team then will check eligibility and contacts the tenants if they are not eligible.

The election statement will be sent to all tenants in January, it will include the details of everyone that is standing for election and a ballot paper with a self-addressed envelope.

Currently we are looking to use a third party for the ballot as our Electoral Services cannot perform this due to current canvassing for the Police elections in May. Once the results are in the team will advise the candidates of the results.

Dates and the time lines may change due to the unitary bid.

Comments from the group members included;

- I was under the impression from a previous meeting that if not enough people applied to join the group there was no need for an election, please can you clarify? *The terms of reference states that there should be an election every 3 years, as there has not been an election for a few years we are actually in breach of this. We hope that by sending out an information pack to all of our tenants informing them of the work that the group perform, we will get enough people to apply;*
- We can help with the elections by speaking to our neighbours and encouraging them to vote/stand for election to represent the tenants;

Resolved that – the group recommended the report

11. **Housing Policies and Tenants Strategic Board Policy comment - Shari Hallett**

Reported that two policies were being brought forward to the meeting for approval, these were, Allocations and the letting policies. Stated that four further policies would be brought to the group shortly and four to follow.

Agreement was sought with the group on the best way to share and seek approval and comments of these policies without having to wait for the next meeting. This could be in the way of a special meetings or agree to sign off a couple of policies once a fortnight via email.

Resolved that – the Policies were recommended and Officers to send out hard copies/emails of the Policies once a fortnight for group members to send their comments back to Officers;

12. **Allocation and Lettings Policy - Louisa Hill**

Update on the Lettings Policy attached with the agenda, key points stated were;

- SWT Housing Service will participate in the Homefinder Somerset Partnership, the partnership operates a countywide choice based lettings scheme which is administered by the Local Authorities of Somerset;
- Asylum seekers - SWT will assist in the rehousing of Asylum Seekers and persons from abroad, in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements. We will accept referrals from the Local Authority for Asylum seekers with “limited leave to remain” as well as the NASS scheme (National Asylum Support Scheme);
- Aids and adaptations - We will seek to allocate our housing stock in a way that ensures best use of the property, this will include where there are significant Aids and Adaptations, property size and also the local situation (ensuring adherence to Section 106 agreements. We will achieve this by effective use of adverts, using appropriate labelling and working with partners such as Housing Occupational Therapists;
- Policy - We will review our allocations and lettings performance and consult on this policy by seeking comments from customers, stakeholders and partners, as well as reviewing against good practice and regulatory and legal requirements;
- Portfolio sign off - To ensure fairness and transparency ,where we identify an applicant has a significant relationship either with SWT or an employee of SWT, we will ensure that any proposed let is reviewed with the Housing Portfolio Holder before the allocation is confirmed;
- Downsizing - We will seek assist our existing customers who need to downsize to a smaller property by supporting them through the application and lettings process and by provision of a Transfer Removal Grant, once the home move is completed;
- ASB - We will not usually make an allocation to an applicant where they or a member of their household has a recent history, (defined as the last 2 years) of ASB. We will take into account, the extent of the ASB, its impact on the local community at the time, the length of time since the activity occurred, but also what the applicant or household member has

done to change their behaviour and be better able to sustain a tenancy with SWT;

Comments from group members included;

- When you are allocating properties in the rural areas are you taking into consideration applications from people that already live there or want to come back to the village due to family living there? *This is about making the best use of our stock so there maybe people that are in the village that maybe in a lower band and in a lower need for housing and so we have to look even if it is outside of that village area people that are in more need for that type of accommodation and if they have expressed an interest to be in that village that is an appropriate let;*
- ASB – no mention of the impact on the victims of this anti-social behaviour; *this is not directly addressing the ASB. This is in a separate ASB policy document which will be brought to your attention. This is about the re-letting of properties specifically and for consideration of what may have happened in a previous tenancy and what they have done to address that behaviour and the impact of that behaviour;*

Resolved that – the group were happy to recommend the Policy

13. **Tenancy Policy – Housing Specialist, Stephen Boland**

Update on the Tenancy Policy attached with the agenda, key points stated were;

- We have been operating our current tenancy policy for the last 5 years with no major changes to the County wide policy since last reviewed. The Somerset policy sets up rules and conditions for tenancies and we have to make sure that our council fits within this County wide strategy;
- Tenancy policies for new tenancies – Introductory tenancy introduced in 2015 which is a starter tenancy with slightly less rights attached to it making sure that tenants get off to a good start with managing their tenancy well and conducting themselves in a tenant like manner. These tenancies have a 12 month duration which can be extended up to 18 months. This is an automatic roll on to a secure tenancy on successful completion of the introductory period. There are currently 214 introductory tenancies in progress at present with only a few being rolled over as they did not meet all the conditions. There have been very few evictions within this period;
- Secure tenancy agreement – This agreement is the best option for tenants and has more rights attached to it through legislation with the added option of Right to Buy. The policy gives us the option to apply to the courts for demoted tenancy which prevents nuisance and allows the secure tenancy to be demoted to a demotion tenancy, which the judge

sets out the period of demotion. If a tenant breaches this order, we go back to court and the tenant has less rights to defend those proceedings so if you have to go back to court the resolution means that tenants do not have to go back through a whole court process, it is a mandatory granting of possession. This is an option in our anti-social tool kit;

- Non secure tenancy agreement – these tenancies do not have the same security of tenure or rights as those set out in secure tenancies;
- Licences or forms of agreement – we offer licences or forms of agreement for example , where a decant property is made available to a secure tenant who has to move temporarily to have works carried out;
- Mutual exchange – a secure or assured tenant has the right to exchange their tenancy with another secure or assured tenant, subject to the written consent of his/her landlord;
- Tenancy succession - Existing SWT secure tenancies that commenced from the date of the introduction of this policy will only allow there to be one statutory right of succession to a spouse or civil partner or a member of the deceased tenant's family, limited to son or daughter only;
- Redevelopment or major works - Tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other major works will be granted a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation;

Comments from group members included;

- Please can you clarify the status of the person who is downsizing? *If you are an existing tenant and then you move to another one of our properties you will retain your security of tenure;*
- If you move from a Housing Association to a council property why do they not have an introductory tenancy as I feel they should do? *The process for mutual exchange is very thorough. If this is a mutual exchange we need to perform the necessary checks as a landlord to see if we want to accept them as tenant of ours. There a number of grounds for refusal of a mutual exchange, one being if their behaviour does not comply with our policies. Housing Associations work on the same policies;*

Resolved that – the group recommended the Policy.

(The Meeting ended at 7.45 pm)

Housing Directorate Report to Housing Tenants' Strategic Board

23rd November 2020

Director of Housing and Communities Introduction

Unitary Authority

As reported at the last meeting Somerset West and Taunton Council has given its support to the Stronger Somerset Business Case, which proposes two new unitary Councils and a combined authority. The Full Council met on Thursday 10 September to debate the proposal which was approved following its endorsement by the Scrutiny Committee. The proposal has also been supported at Full Council meetings at Mendip, Sedgemoor and South Somerset District Councils.

We have now received the formal invitation from the Government to submit a business case. This is currently being finalised for submission in December. We have produced and sent to all tenants and leaseholders a newsletter to inform everyone about this issue and to signpost to more information and the way in which tenants can comment on both the Stronger Somerset and the One Somerset proposals.

Brexit

Work is underway to prepare for Brexit, the main activity relates to the potential impact on our supply chain for building materials, we are working closely with our suppliers to understand their level of preparedness and contingency and to ensure we are aware of pressures as quickly as possible.

COVID-19

The team continue to adjust to the latest period of "lockdown" with reception at Deane House being closed again. However we continue to deliver most services, some remotely as we have been for some time, all following our risk assessments and relevant public health guidance. We have paused a few non-essential activities involving extensive time required in people's homes such as stock condition surveys and home energy assessments.

Housing Development and Regeneration Team

HRA New Homes

- Laxton Road Development competition date expected late December

- Zero Carbon Pilot – Procurement of modular contractor has formally started, planning pre-app discussions commenced with 39 units likely to be possible through the first five sites.
- New Low Carbon Employers Requirements (ER) have been developed to support all future developments
- NTWP – Final designs issued for phase A, PSCA to conclude in December with a fixed works cost and specification agreed for phase A. Next steps report with council for consideration in December
- Seaward way and Oxford Inn reports to be considered by members in December
- Canonsgrove option appraisal underway
- Up to four new market acquisitions for HRA to support Right to Buy 1:4:1 spend and provide new affordable council owned homes

Housing Property Team

Responsive and Void Repairs

- All responsive repairs (both emergency and non-emergency) are being undertaken, with measures in place to keep both residents and staff safe from COVID-19 whilst work is carried out.
- The backlog of non-emergency repairs following the previous lockdown is still being addressed and, whilst reducing, it is challenging to eliminate due to both difficulties in recruiting additional competent trade people and access problems.
- Void repairs are continuing, although again undertaking the required works to bring up to the Lettable Standard within agreed timescales whilst at the same time keeping staff safe from COVID-19 whilst work is carried out poses additional challenges.

Property Safety Compliance

Ongoing progress on property safety compliance includes:

- A review of all common areas for flat blocks being undertaken to validate existing safety actions.
- Recruitment to a new post within the Property Compliance team - a Mechanical and Electrical Manager.
- Asbestos management survey programme to flat blocks completed, and dwelling asbestos management surveys and re-inspections being undertaken.
- Procurement and commencement of an additional programme of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs).
- Continuing to undertake recommended remedial actions from previous FRAs, and maintenance inspections.
- Continuing with Gas Safety checks.
- Undertaking a programme of Water Risk assessments.
- Carrying out electrical checks to communal areas, and checks to dwellings procured and due to start shortly.
- New stairlift safety check and service contract procured and started.

Housing Asset Management

- Stock condition surveys due to recommence have been put on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions in the new lockdown period.
- Procurement of external resource to undertake additional energy surveys has been undertaken, but again this work has been put on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions in the new lockdown period.

Capital Programmes

- All capital programmes currently continuing during this lockdown period following government guidance. Measures in place to keep both residents, SWT staff and contractors safe from COVID-19 whilst work is carried out.
- Additional procurement for future capital programmes being undertaken.
- Existing external painting and replacement soffits and gutters contract completed.
- Kitchen, bathroom, window, insulation and door entry programmes on site.
- Heating programme to commence shortly.
- Condensed timeframe to complete all planned capital works programmes likely to be a challenge by end of March 2021.

Housing and Communities Teams

Extra Care Housing

- SWT has 2 Extra Care Housing sites. Both have an on-site care provider, Way Ahead Care, who are commissioned by SCC. SWT staff sit on the Extra Care Housing panel meetings, which consider all extra care housing applications. These meetings have continued to take place online. SWT has noticed that there is a higher level of need and care being referred for extra care housing, than previously and are monitoring the impact of this on the schemes.
- SWT staff have worked alongside Way Ahead Care throughout the pandemic, to ensure that all maintenance and gardening works can be safely undertaken and have continued to be available to meet with tenants, regarding any tenancy or neighbour concerns. The care teams have done a great job of keeping both sites COVID free, adapting the care and support they offer to tenants, to ensure all concerned are kept safe.

Sheltered Housing

- The Sheltered Housing Team have continued to be affected by long term staff sickness and reduced working hours. The remaining team have been working across the whole of sheltered housing, making welfare calls to tenants, updating their personal and health information and making home visits where necessary, to complete aids and adaptations assessments, tenancy sign ups, install Lifelines and support tenants who find using the phone challenging (due to hearing impairment, ASD etc).
- During any visits all staff wear PPE and are required to follow the relevant risk assessment guidance for these visits. Although tenants have appreciated the phone contact and visits, many remain very anxious and nervous about having

anyone in their home, due to concerns about COVID-19. Tenants have also reported concerns for cancelled hospital appointments and fears around attending hospital. Staff offer reassurance and remind tenants of the precautions hospitals are taking, in addition to the importance of having their health needs met.

- Many tenants have also continued to have less contact with family and friends. In some cases, this has left them feeling lonely and isolated. Where appropriate and helpful, we have encouraged the tenants to have regular welfare calls from Deane Helpline, which allows tenants to have regular calls and a check on their welfare and a brief chat. Deane Helpline report any concerns for a tenants welfare or health back to the team, and a member of staff calls the tenant, to find out more and complete relevant referrals etc. In many cases, this includes liaising with family members and next of kin, who have also been appreciative of the follow up we have provided.
- The team has continued to respond to crisis and emergencies, as they arise. There have been several tenants who have needed to be admitted to hospital and we have working with Adult Social Care and hospital staff, to ensure that their capacity is fully assessed and any additional needs identified. In some cases, tenants have been successfully returned home, with some aids and adaptations a care package of daily support, which allows them to maintain their independence.
- We have also had some cases where tenants' health and capacity has declined to the point where they are requiring ongoing support within a different type of housing setting, due to brain injury, dementia, confusion etc. We have worked alongside family members and other professionals to support referrals to more suitable housing and end their SWT tenancies. Staff have supported and advised family members during these processes, which is often a challenging and upsetting time for them.
- We had planned to have a partial reopening of the meeting halls within the sheltered schemes, for staff to be on-site for one day a week, to complete pre-arranged meetings with tenants and complete home visits. Unfortunately, the ongoing staffing constraints meant that we haven't had capacity to sustain this. We have reviewed this each month and will do so again after the current lock down. The meeting halls continue to have weekly health and safety checks, completed by the Facilities team.

Lettings

- Property advertising and lettings that were suspended at the beginning of the first lockdown have now resumed. Properties are now being advertised on Home Finder Somerset on the weekly cycles. For example in the week commencing 26th October we advertised 7 properties in the week commencing 9th November(this week) we have placed 12 adverts which equates to 16 properties including the New build flats in Laxton Road.
- The Lettings team are still working to COVID-19 risk assessments and procedures, ensuring they are in line with the SWT safe working practices. Verifications are carried out remotely, and viewings take place by the prospective tenant independently, in a COVID-19 compliant manner. Enabling the viewings not only to be able to take place but in the safest possible way for all concerned staff and tenants alike.
- The Home Moves plus officer (HMP) started on 2/11/2020. The officer has already commenced working with both internal and external partners to collect data on those SWT tenants that fall within the downsizing remit for the role. To

date there are a potential 64 cases that he will be working on in the coming weeks. Letters have already been sent to some of those tenants.

- Laxton Road Flats: The Lettings team have carried out a site visit with the project manager and the builders. There were some concerns over the potential delay with builders caused by one of their suppliers not being able to supply the doors. This has been overcome and no longer appears to be an issue. The flats were advertised on Home Finder Somerset (HFS) in the advertising cycle on 11/11/2020. This closes on 16/11/2020. A meeting has been arranged for the 18/11/2020 to carry out the shortlisting of those properties in line with the local lettings plan which has been agreed.

Income

- The Rent Recovery team are still working continually to help and support those tenants who are effected by a reduction in income due to COVID-19. Rent arrears have reduced to 586k (as of 06/11/20) which is a fantastic result for the team and show the hard work and dedication they have all committed through the pandemic
- The Team will soon be working on a Christmas Rent Campaign which will include sending text messages, providing information on paying rent on the website and also taking part in the Talking Café held by the Village Agents to promote priority payments over the Christmas period.
- We have recruited a second Debt and Benefit Officer who will be joining us in November, this will strengthen the support we can give to our tenants and will mean we can help a larger number of tenants quicker. We want to ensure that our tenants are claiming all the benefits they are entitled to and maximising their income.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Serious ASB/neighbour nuisance is still high on the team's agenda in particular we are currently dealing with a hate crime (racially aggravated) and a serious incident of harassment and intimidation. These cases will need to have enforcement action taken against them and this in turn is extremely work intensive.
- The lockdown again has caused minor nuisance cases coming to our attention; and we will utilise our COVID-19 nuisance letters from the last lockdown to try to deal with this. If these does not settle down then we will work with the Police to carry out joint visits and take any necessary action to get the perpetrators to amend their behaviour.
- Many of our low level complaints are about noise nuisance and we have been exploring a mobile noise app. We have researched with other registered housing providers who have been using the noise app successfully for some time and have had good success when cases have been presented into court. Our trial period will be coming to end in the next few weeks so we will be able to provide more details on whether we are going to be buying into this service.

Tenancy/Estate Team

- The team have now prepared schedules for re-introducing Estate Walkabouts, and block inspections and these have now been published on our website, We

have prepared a process and monitoring sheets and managers will work closely with officers to ensure that we have consistency in all areas across the borough. During a recent inspection of the area within North Taunton we have picked up that a number of pathways need to be made safe; moss to be cleared from some pathways; trees need cutting back from flats; new street signage is needed; pot holes in garage areas need to be repaired. Once the orders have been raised we will be providing feedback to residents of our findings.

- We will continue to work on completing Annual Tenancy Checks with an officer visiting households to assess the condition of the tenancy and property. Various addresses are now coming to our attention from estates walkabouts.
- Staff are also working on improving our sign up pack for new tenancies and we hope to be able to roll this out in the next couple of weeks.
- We have successfully recruited one member of staff; and her induction period has now ended and I am confident that she will be very successful in her role covering the Wellington patch. Sadly, on the start date the other person recruited declined the offer. We have still retained two temporary officers so we can still provide a full service in all areas.
- We are also going to introduce a rota system for the tenancy team. This system will ensure that someone is available to take any emergency calls as they happen and to work on our Firmstep cases as they come in. Firmstep is an area where we are behind in dealing with general enquiries. We are hoping that this will help us see an improvement in this area during November and December.

Housing Performance Team

- The Housing Performance Team has been created to drive service improvements in our customer experience and service delivery as well as oversee housing governance, risk and performance. Recruitment of the team is almost complete and six staff are now in post.
- Directorate performance and governance meetings are underway.
- Key pieces of work to be completed by Christmas are:
 - Christmas Newsletter to tenants and leaseholders
 - STAR survey council tenants and leaseholders. This is a comprehensive satisfaction survey completed every two years by an independent company. Results will be published in the new year.
 - 2019-20 Annual Report to tenants
 - Restarting meetings of our Tenants' Strategic Group and Tenants' Action Group.
 - Review of our complaints process including self-assessing our performance against the new Housing Ombudsman code.

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenants Strategic Group Meeting – 23rd November 2020

Title of Report - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Rents Setting and Service Fees and Charges 2021/22

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Francesca Smith

Report Author: Bryony Cole, Case Manager Lead – Income and Debt Recovery

1 Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the level at which Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) is proposing to set rents and service charges for its Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This will apply to those assets either already accounted for within the Council's HRA or to be added to it in the future.

2 Recommendations

2.1 For the Tenant Strategic Group to comment on the proposed rent setting levels and other fees and charges.

3 Background and Full details of the Report

3.1 Background

3.2 Some Council Fees and Charges will no longer be required to go to Full Council for approval under the new delegated powers contained within the Financial Procedure Rules adopted by SWT from April 2020. Instead the fees and charges for the HRA will be approved by the Section 151 Officer and this report is provided for information. The exception will be the setting of Dwelling Rents which will still be submitted for Full Council for approval.

3.3 It is proposed that all rents and fees will be increased by a CPI+1%, where CPI at Sept 2020 was 0.5%.

3.4 The Regulator of Social Housing issued a new Rent Standard for 2020 under the direction of the Government. This new Rent Standard will now apply to all social housing providers, whereas previously Local Authorities were excluded from such standards, although relevant Government Guidance and Direction applied.

3.5 The proposed Policy Statement recommends registered providers should endeavour to keep increases for service charges within the limit on rent changes, of CPI+1%, to help keep charges affordable.

3.6 On 26 February 2019 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed that increases to social housing rents will be limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for 5 years from 2020. This financial year will be the second year

applying the CPI plus 1% increase.

3.7 In February 2020 the Council approved a local Rent Setting Policy that covered the content and those elements proposed to be adopted by the Council contained within the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard 2020.

3.8 This included the recommendation that (a) social rents for existing tenancies will be reviewed annually and any increases will not exceed the limit of Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for 5 years from April 2020, and (b) to apply an additional one-off rent flexibility allowance to increase rents by 5% on general need and 10% on sheltered/supported housing. This would be applied to rents for new tenants only.

3.9 The September 2020 CPI figure is 0.5% as published by the Office for National Statistics in October 2020.

3.10 Dwelling Rental Income

3.11 In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard and the Councils Rent Setting Policy, the Dwelling Rent for 2021/22 for existing tenants will be an increase of CPI+1% to the average weekly rent, from £83.05 per week to £84.30 per week.

3.12 In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard and the Councils Rent Setting Policy, the Dwelling Rent for 2021/22 for **new tenants only** will be an increase of CPI+1% plus an additional 5% for general needs to the average weekly rent, from £87.21 per week to £88.52 per week.

3.13 In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard and the Councils Rent Setting Policy, the Dwelling Rent for 2021/22 for **new tenants only** will be an increase of CPI+1% plus an additional 10% for sheltered/supported and extra care dwelling rents to the average weekly rent, from £91.36 per week to £92.73 per week.

3.14 The Affordable rents will be increased by CPI+1% for 2021/22.

3.15 Service Charges and Non-Dwelling Rental Income

3.16 This incorporates income from non-dwelling rents (mainly garages but also shops, land access and meeting halls), charges for services and facilities, and contributions to HRA costs from leaseholders and council tenants.

3.17 Service Charges

3.18 Housing Service Charges are made to housing tenants for the services that they use. Service Charges are set locally each year and are in addition to the Social Rent Charges.

3.19 SWT are proposing to increase service charges by CPI+1% for 2021/22, as shown in tables 1 to 5 below, to ensure they remain affordable for the tenants.

Table 1: Service Charges

	Actual 2020/21	% Increase	Actual 2021/22
Service Charges (VAT not applicable) – Per week			
Communal Areas	£0.67	1.50%	£0.68

Grounds Maintenance	£1.95	1.50%	£1.98
Heating Charge (Broomfield House only)	£5.37	1.50%	£5.45
Laundry Charge (Broomfield House only)	£1.63	1.50%	£1.65
Combined Service Charges (VAT not applicable) – Per week			
Sheltered Housing	£12.28	1.50%	£12.46
Sheltered Piper Charge	£5.19	1.50%	£5.27
Extra Care Housing Service Charge	£23.05	1.50%	£23.40
Extra Care Piper Charge	£6.00	1.50%	£6.09

3.20 Charges to leaseholders will continue to be based on actual costs incurred.

3.21 Garages

3.22 The proposal is to increase garage rents by the same CPI + 1% figure so that they are in line with the Dwelling Rental and Service Charges increase for 2021/22. Please see table 2 below.

3.23 For council tenants the weekly rental will increase from £6.54 per week to £6.64 per week – an increase of £0.10 per week.

3.24 For private tenants and owner occupiers the weekly rental will increase from £12.00 (including VAT) per week to £12.18 per week – an increase of £0.18 per week.

Table 2: Garage Rents

	Actual 2020/21	% Increase	Actual 2021/22
Garage Rents – Per week			
Council Tenants (VAT not applicable)	£6.54	1.50%	£6.64
Private Tenants and Owner Occupiers (exc. VAT)	£10.00	1.50%	£10.15
Private Tenants and Owner Occupiers (inc. VAT)	£12.00	1.50%	£12.18

3.25 Meeting Halls

3.26 The fees levied for 2021/22 for meeting room hire will be increased by CPI+1% and then rounded to the nearest 10p as requested by tenants during feedback provided in 2017/18. Please see table 3 below.

Table 3: Hire Charges for Sheltered Scheme Meeting Halls (ex VAT)

	Actual 2020/21	% Increase	Actual 2021/22
First hour	£11.10	CPI+1%	£11.30
Each half hour thereafter	£5.60	CPI+1%	£5.70
6 hours plus	£66.20	CPI+1%	£67.20
Total charge for residents in a scheme and community organisations	£15.20	CPI+1%	£15.50

3.27 Guest Rooms

3.28 The fees levied for 2021/22 for meeting room hire will be increased by CPI+1% and then rounded to the nearest 50p as requested by tenants during feedback provided in 2017/18. Please see table 4 below. **Page 21**

Table 4: Hire Charges for Sheltered Scheme Guest Rooms (ex VAT)

Located at Taunfield, Middleway, Hope Corner Lane, Kilkenny and Lodge	Actual 2020/21	% Increase	Actual 2021/22
No. of nights per person -1st night per person per night	23.00	CPI+1%	23.50
No. of nights per person -2	33.00	CPI+1%	33.50
No. of nights per person -3	44.50	CPI+1%	45.50
No. of nights per person -4	55.50	CPI+1%	56.50
No. of nights per person -5	66.00	CPI+1%	67.00
No. of nights per person -6	78.00	CPI+1%	79.50
No. of nights per person -7	88.50	CPI+1%	90.00

3.29 Temporary Accommodation

3.30 The fee for temporary accommodation is broken down into two elements: the licence fee and the service charge.

3.31 The proposal for 2021/22 is to continue setting the temporary accommodation licence fee in line with the permitted Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, as done in previous years, and to increase services charges by CPI+1%. Please see table 5 below.

Table 5: Temporary Accommodation Daily Charges

Temporary Accommodation (rent per day, VAT not applicable)	Daily Licence Fee & Service Charge 2020/21	Daily Licence Fee 2021/22	Daily Service Charge 2021/22	Gross Charge Per Day 2021/22
Studio units	£13.83	£13.06	£0.78	£13.84
1 bedroom units	£13.83	£13.06	£0.78	£13.84
2 bedroom units	£17.35	£16.32	£1.05	£17.37
3 bedroom units	£20.58	£19.29	£1.31	£20.60
4 bedroom units	£26.77	£25.22	£1.57	£26.79

3.32 **Exceptions:** Charges for properties not on mains sewerage and shared ownership.

3.33 These properties charges for sewerage will be increased in line with the Wessex Water increases for 2021/22 once known. Wessex Water rates for sewerage standing charge per annum and poundage charges are used in the system calculation.

3.34 For 2020-21 these are £7.00 per annum for unmetered sewerage standing charge and £1.68 for the poundage charge payable per £ of rateable value of the property.

3.35 Wessex Water will publish their new charges in February 2021 (available from their website) for 2021/22.

3.36 Shared ownership rental charges will be in accordance with the lease agreement.

4 Links to Corporate Strategy

4.1 In accordance with the 30 year Housing Business Plan, it is proposed to increase Housing (non-rent) Fees and Charges by applying Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation as at September 2020 of 0.5% with the following exceptions:

- Water rates and non mains sewerage rates
- Temporary accommodation licence fee
- Shared ownership properties

5 Legal Implications (if any)

- 5.1 Through Section 2 Part 24 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by Local Government & Housing Act 1989) SWT are permitted to make the charges detailed above.

6 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment form has been completed and Housing Services will continue to provide a number of initiatives to enable service users to manage their finances and maximise their income (such as the Debt and Benefit drop in sessions at Moorland House held weekly, as well as access to Case Managers who are experienced at debt and benefit advice, as well as signposting to external agencies i.e. CA).

7 Scrutiny/Executive Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)

- 7.1 This report will not be going to Scrutiny or Executive as SWT Section 151 Officer has delegated power to determine Fees and Charges.

Democratic Path:

- Scrutiny / Audit Governance and Standards Committee – Yes for Dwelling rents only
- Executive – Yes for Dwelling rents only
- Full Council – Yes for Dwelling rents only

Reporting Frequency: Annually

Contact Officers

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Somerset West and Taunton Council

Scrutiny – 11th November 2020

Executive Committee – 18th November 2020

Full Council – 1st December 2020

Seaward Way, Minehead - New Build HRA Low Carbon Homes

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

Report Author: Wendy Lewis, Housing Development Manager Specialist

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Site is owned by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT), and currently has a planning consent for residential development. It adjoins a SWT scheme under construction for light commercial development of two industrial units.
- 1.2 It is proposed to develop the site as an exemplar scheme of 54 new homes for the Council to showcase an innovative approach to house building and its commitment to affordable housing throughout the district and addressing climate change.
- 1.3 The scheme will re-purpose an existing Council asset into much needed housing stock for our residents in the former West Somerset area, together with community benefit from high performing houses that are cost efficient to maintain. It will also result in the improved general appearance of the area and the gateway to Minehead.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations are as follows:
 - (a) Approve the development of 54 Affordable Homes built to very low carbon standards, subject to planning approval.
 - (b) To approve the supplementary budget as stated in confidential appendix A.
 - (c) To approve the transfer of land from the general fund to the housing revenue account for the use of social housing development and to delegate authority to the Section 151 officer to approve the final land transfer amount.
 - (d) Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer to determine the final funding profile for this scheme once the finalised design has received planning approval and tenders have been received.

- (e) Note the use of affordable rents for these new build HRA homes in line with the 2020 Rent Setting Policy. The affordable rents will be set to ensure scheme viability at between 60% and 80% of market rates.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 A risk assessment can be found at appendix B however the main schemes risks are:

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability x impact	Mitigation
Tendered construction costs are significantly higher than anticipated	9 (probability 3 x impact 3)	Initial appraisals have been carried out based traditional vs low carbon. Site constraints have been carefully examined. Full investigations will be carried out prior to commencing the procurement exercise.
Location of the scheme 23 miles from SWT HRA services, could make the scheme harder to manage and maintain.	4 (probability 2 x impact 2)	The Council has welfare facilities in Minehead and the housing and maintenance service would need to flex their delivery to accommodate the scheme which could include additional travel time and mileage.
Satisfactory planning permission is not obtained	8 (probability 2 x impact 4)	Planning consent exists for 40 units. Early advice has been sought from the planning team regarding the enlarged scheme. An experienced employers agent, energy consultant and architect are appointed
Unexpected site constraints are identified	6 (probability 3 x impact 2)	Our Engineer is advising on all site constraints. Many are also associated with the adjoining commercial site, where the Engineer is also instructed
Flood alleviation measures are insufficient on the site	5 (probability 1 x impact 5)	The scheme has been designed to recognise site constraints including seasonal water levels and changing climate weather patterns. The scheme includes maintaining the existing rhynes and attenuation pond and increasing the height of the land.
Highways adoption	12 (Probability 4 x impact 3)	The access road leading through the commercial site is in the process of adoption and this will need to be completed prior to adoption of the road for the residential development
Construction costs rise significantly at the procurement stage and during scheme delivery	6 (Probability 3 x impact 2)	Full site investigations will be carried out prior to entering into contract. All costs will be carefully assessed by our employer's agent.
Delay in project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar occurrence	12 (probability 3 x impact 4)	There are a range of ways in which covid could affect the scheme from site lockdown to supply chain interruption to workforce and material inflation. The scheme will review Covid risks on a daily basis.

- 4.1 The site is located to the east of Minehead town centre close to the A39 and Butlins holiday camp. The site adjoins Minehead Cricket Club and is accessed via a roundabout on to Luttrell Way from Seaward Way which also serves a new Premier Inn hotel, Brewers Fayre and the Minehead Community Hospital as well as adjoining the sports pitches for West Somerset College to the South West of the site. There is modern residential development to the East and open space to the North.
- 4.2 The site is rectangular in shape and slopes gently to the north. It is divided with approximately half being developed for commercial and the remaining land for residential development. The Residential site is a disused plot of open land. A footpath is located to the south of the site and a bus stop is available approximately 2 minutes' walk to the south with services into the town centre, Taunton, Porlock and Bridgwater.
- 4.3 The site is the first new housing development in the former West Somerset area since stock transfer to Magna Housing Association took place, and as such is outside of SWT's current housing stock area, however the quantum of properties being proposed will enable cost effective services to be provided to tenants.
- 4.4 The site has been considered for development by West Somerset District Council since 2007. The site was marketed on two occasions but there was a lack of interest from house builders due to the high level of abnormal costs. Magna Housing Association did however show an interest and terms were agreed to transfer the land to Magna. Following a public consultation, Magna obtained planning consent using their own house types.
- 4.5 The residential part of the site has the benefit of a full planning consent for 40 dwellings (ref: 3/21/18/020) which was submitted by Magna Housing Association and granted in October 2019, and a S106 entered into to secure the Travel Plan arrangements.
- 4.6 The site was due to be sold to Magna Housing Association under a previous agreement with West Somerset District Council. Earlier this year Magna withdrew their interest in developing the site and it was then added to the HRA programme to appraise for a 100% affordable housing scheme with low carbon criteria. Their original scheme did not meet their viability tests due to abnormal costs and their scheme being at lower density to our proposed scheme. The higher numbers spreads the abnormal costs over a greater number of homes, and notwithstanding additional costs due to the low carbon specification our assumptions show that the scheme will perform better.
- 4.7 A new planning application will be submitted to increase the density of the scheme to 54 homes for affordable rent and to use the learning from the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Project to deliver low carbon homes on this site.
- 4.8 Local consultation will be carried out prior to submitting the new planning application, as well as consultation with the Police regarding secure by design.
- 4.9 In October 2019 consent was also granted for the commercial part of the site for development of two industrial units (ref. 3/21/18/021). SWT is currently

developing the commercial site with works progressing well. The access road and services from this part of the site will connect into the residential land and capacity has been allowed for the 54 dwellings

- 4.10 As part of the Section 106 Agreement entered into by EDF for Hinkley Point C power station a fund to support housing delivery was set up. A bid was submitted to this fund and was approved in the sum of £470,000 by Full Council on 25th August 2020 (Appendix D Table 6 of the Hinkley Point C Housing Strategy Phase 3 - 2020- 2023).
- 4.11 A commuted sum of £58,204 was secured as a financial contribution in lieu of affordable housing at Ellicombe Meadow has been approved for use at Seaward Way and is included in the funding for this scheme.
- 4.12 The land is included in the SWT General Fund and will be transferred to the HRA for development, at an appropriate land value to be determined by a Valuer. SHAPE are advising on the legal provision to enable this.
- 4.13 The site size is 2.8 Acres (1.15 Ha) but only 2.1 Acres (0.85 Ha) can be developed due to rhynes (drainage ditches/canals) on two sides of the site. The site is in Flood Zone 3 and needs to be raised in height to avoid flooding. The soil to raise the land is being used from surplus on the commercial site. The foundations will be piled.
- 4.14 An attenuation “pond” is included to take any excessive flood waters from both the commercial and residential sites, this will generally contain an inch or two of water and only fill up when there is excessive rainfall, when full water is drained into the rhyne and then down to the sea. This pond is separated from the housing land by an acoustic fence, which is already constructed. Our Engineers will be following advice from the Environment Agency during the technical design stage.
- 4.15 The scheme has been modelled for 100% affordable rented units. The affordable rents give flexibility between 60-80% of open market rents according to viability. The modelling has been carried out assuming 80%. The cost estimate for the works cost has been calculated as far as possible with the information we have to date, and the total scheme cost current estimate is set out in Confidential Appendix A. Our Energy Advisor is advising on the specification for very low carbon criteria, which will be reflected in the pre-tender estimate when issued.
- 4.16 The scheme mix is based on the housing need for Minehead, and will be built to SWT adopted space standards, which are between 5% & 14% larger than many developer house types. The mix is:

1b2p Flat	17	31%
2b3p Flat	15	28%
2b4p Flat (wheelchair adapted)	1	2%
2b4p Chalet Bungalow (wheelchair adapted)	2	4%
2b4p House	10	18%
3b5p House	7	13%
4b7p House	2	4%

TOTAL	54	100%
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- 4.17 The current housing need for Minehead on Homefinder Somerset requiring rented accommodation is a total of 429 households. Of these 62% is for 1 beds, with 25% for 2 beds, 8% for 3 beds and 5% for 4 beds. The proposed mix reflects not only the existing need in the town but allows for different sized households across the development to encourage a diverse and sustainable community and allow socially supportive networks to develop on the site. The 1 bedroom units are clearly needed and will significantly increase the provision in Minehead. However this size of property tends to be a short term solution for many people as either their household size grows or their circumstances change and the mix of 2, 3, and 4 bedroom homes will enhance the stability of the community. There is no specific policy in the former West Somerset area for wheelchair accessible homes, however we are providing three properties which is greater than the SWT requirement (2 units) for developers for this size of scheme.
- 4.18 The HRA does not currently manage stock in the former West Somerset area, therefore there is an extra housing management and maintenance commitment required by the HRA. However the potential risks and costs associated with managing dispersed stock is mitigated in part as the development is of a good size and SWT does have offices close to the site.
- 4.19 The scheme aims to deliver 54 zero carbon affordable homes in occupation and low embodied carbon in their construction and maintenance. The London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) standards are being applied to achieve this. (See Appendix C).
- 4.20 Space for a play area is included in the scheme in a central location.
- 4.21 Once the scheme design and budget are finalised a planning application will be submitted, and competitive tenders for contractors invited.
- 4.22 When the planning application has been approved a new S106 will be required for the updated Travel Plan and Play requirements.
- 4.23 Indicative timescales are set out below. Key consultants have been appointed to support the viability work including Architect, Principal Designer, Employers Agent, Engineer and Energy/Carbon Consultant.

Planning Application	Winter 2020
Start on Site	Spring / Summer 2021
Build Completion	Spring / Summer 2023

5. Links to Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030. In relation to the councils development sites the councils Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan Framework Document states “The Council commits to ensuring that these sites are all low carbon and energy efficient, but also

exploring where we can make the most of technological and design innovations to develop specific exemplar schemes to showcase the art of the possible. These requirements will need to be carefully balanced against other demands and requirements placed on these sites to ensure they remain viable.

5.2 The Council's HRA Business Plan includes the development of 1000 new homes over 30 years, which is approx. 30 new homes per year over the period

5.3 The District has significant demand for affordable homes with a current target of 264 units per year. SWT new build through the HRA complements the affordable homes delivered through housing association partners and planning gain.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

6.1 Members are being asked to approve a capital budget to fund the delivery 54 new zero carbon homes to be let at an affordable rent on the Seaward Way Site, Minehead. This scheme will support the aspiration to deliver new homes into the community over the next 30 years as per the approved HRA 2020 Business Plan.

6.2 A thorough investment appraisal of this individual scheme has been undertaken using a viability appraisal tool as well as an internal budget impact assessment. A comparison to the original business plan assumptions has also been undertaken to assess the affordability and viability of this scheme overall and also in conjunction with the other schemes that are also being put forward for consideration. Appendix A provides a detailed narrative and outcome of this review.

6.3 The business plan is also being review on a continuing basis as new information comes to light (e.g. new inflation and borrowing rates) and further independent professional advice has been received to provide further assurance that these schemes collectively are deliverable and contribute positively to the overall 30 year business plan.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The land is currently vested in the General Fund and will be transferred to the HRA at the valuation figures. SHAPE are advising on the legal provision to enable this. (Ref: SW2020/0598)

7.2 Title searches have been carried out for the whole site area.

8 Climate and Sustainability Implications

8.1 The scheme will be constructed using the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) standard, with four key criteria:

- Carbon capture and energy use in the manufacture/construction of homes
- Fabric first / well insulated and air tight buildings with insulation nearly twice the thickness of the current standard.

- Renewable heat and energy
- Data collection and analysis
- Details of the LETI standard are illustrated in Appendix C.

- 8.2 There will be no gas on site.
- 8.3 There will be electric car charging points, one per property and shared points for the flats.
- 8.4 The location is well served with public transport.
- 8.5 A Travel Plan will be agreed and ample cycle storage provided.
- 8.6 Photovoltaic panels are proposed for the roof of the flats and houses.
- 8.7 We have employed an Energy/Carbon consultant to advise on how best to achieve very low carbon objectives, and the specification worked up for the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot will be used for this scheme.
- 8.8 The council has been exploring off-site manufacturing which meet the council's carbon neutral ambition. Of-site manufactured homes can be delivered quicker than traditional housing as the site preparation and build process can take place simultaneously. Officers believe that panelised construction methods are the most appropriate form of off-site manufacture for this scheme.
- 8.9 Minehead is outside the hydrological catchment of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site, and therefore there is no risk associated with phosphates and housing development in this area.

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)

- 9.1 There are no safeguarding or community implications.

10 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 The scheme has considered the districts housing needs. The homes will all be rented at affordable rent levels.
- 10.2 The blend of homes includes 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom family houses. There are also two 2 bedroom chalet style homes and a 2 bedroom ground flat that are wheelchair accessible.
- 10.3 An Equality Impact Assessment is being prepared to reflect the benefits of the HRA development programme.

11 Social Value Implications

- 11.1 The procurement process will consider the benefit contractors can contribute in terms of social value in particular local labour, use of local contractors and supply chain.
- 11.2 The LETI approach encourages the use of local material and labour to minimise carbon and energy used in the construction of homes.

12 Partnership Implications

- 12.1 Establishing very low carbon exemplar housing in the Minehead area will show commitment and leadership within SWTs affordable housing partnership.

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 13.1 Very low carbon homes which are well insulated, have good levels of airtightness and use ventilation systems are considered healthy homes. The construction methods remove the opportunity for condensation and damp. Fuel poverty is reduced where onsite renewable energy is incorporated and a fabric first approach is adopted.
- 13.2 Two of the homes will be wheelchair accessible on the ground floor to allow greater independent living.

14 Asset Management Implications

- 14.1 The scheme proposed to make use of vacant building land currently held by the Council.
- 14.2 The scheme will utilise Modern Methods of construction and zero carbon technologies which will introduce some new components and materials to the council which will need maintaining.

15 Data Protection Implications (if any)

- 15.1 No data protection considerations.

16 Consultation Implications (if any)

- 16.1 Not applicable

17 Unitary Authority Considerations

- 17.1 The report has reflected on the potential consequences of the impact of unitary authority status when considering its recommendations
- 17.2 The increased supply of affordable housing is a district priority and a Somerset wide priority. This is evidenced in the Somerset wide housing strategy and through the Somerset wide Homefinder Somerset Lettings system
- 17.3 The HRA business plan is a thirty year business plan approved in February and set out an ambition to build homes to increase the supply of affordable homes in the district and in the county. The HRA business plan is ring fenced

and therefore applies HRA rules and the councils HRA business plan discipline.

- 17.4 The four District authorities have different structures to manage their housing responsibilities including stock transfer organisations, ALMO and SWT has retained its stock. It is difficult and not possible at this moment to make assumptions of how a unitary authority(s) would manage its housing duties or the emphasis it would place on new development. We therefore consider the business plan is a relevant guide to support the council's decision making
- 17.5 All authorities within the unitary proposal are subject to the government climate change policies and targets including net carbon zero by 2050.
- 17.6 Seaward Way has had an existing planning approved development scheme in excess of 12 months.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – Yes**

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

List of Appendices

Appendix A	CONFIDENTIAL Finance/Resource Implications
Appendix B	Risk Register
Appendix C	LETI Analysis of Carbon reduction
Appendix D	Plans & Elevations of the proposed scheme and location plan
Appendix E	Current photos of the site and attenuation pond

Contact Officers

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Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)
Regulations 2000.

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Seaward Way Risk Register

RISK OR ISSUE DESCRIPTION	EXISTING CONTROL MEASURE	PROBILITY (1-5)	IMPACT (1-5)	RAG (Red 15-25, Amber 8-12, Green 1-6)	RESPONSE OR ACTION
Satisfactory planning permission is not obtained P 30 43	Planning consent exists for 40 units. Early advice has been sought from the planning team regarding the enlarged scheme. An experience employers agent, energy consultant and architect are appointed	2	4	8	Consultation with Planners has been very positive. They are recommending a reduction to parking standards due to the sustainable location of the site.
Unexpected site constraints are identified	Our Engineer is advising on all site constraints. Many are also associated with the adjoining commercial site, where the Engineer is also instructed	3	2	6	If found a viability review would take place considering any additional cost constraints.
Flood allevation measures are insufficient on the site	The schemes has been designed to recognise site constraints including seasonal water levels and changing climate weather patterns.	1	5	5	The scheme includes maintaining the existing rhynes and attenuation pond and increasing the height of the land.
Tendered construction costs are significantly higher than anticipated	Initial appraisals have been carried out based traditional vs low carbon. Site constraints have been carefully examined . Full investigations will be carried out prior to commencing the procurement exercise.	3	3	9	Close monitoring of the costs is being undertaken by our Employers Agent and Energy Advisors. The current projected figures are considered to be 'worst case' and include piled foundations and raising the ground levels for flood prevention (Flood Zone 3)

Construction costs rise significantly during the build period due to unforeseen site issues.	Full site investigations will be carried out prior to entering into contract. All costs will be carefully assessed by our employers agent.	3	2	6	The contract will be a JCT D&B contract, which will be reviewed by legal prior to signing to ensure a balanced allocation of risks.
The main contractor is unable to complete the works due to insolvency or other	Thorough examination of the contractor's financial position and capacity to undertake the work is examined as part of the procurement	2	3	6	Appropriate bonds and guarantees are requested
Location of the scheme 23 miles from SWT HRA services, could make the scheme harder to manage and maintain.	The Council has welfare facilities in Minehead and the housing and maintenance service would need to flex their delivery to accommodate the scheme which could include additional travel time and mileage.	2	2	4	The size of the scheme service allows multiple visits to be completed on one visit. Proactive management would reduce reactive service costs.
Stage 6 costs	A play area is proposed to be included in the site design. Travel plan costs are included in the budget.	2	2	4	Consultation with the Officers concerned to ensure that the play equipment meets the latest policy requirements
Highways adoption	The access road leading to the site will need to be adopted in advance of adoption proceeding for the residential development	4	3	12	Discussion with SCC Highways is ongoing to avoid delays. The contractors for the commercial scheme are progressing with the first part of the access road.
Delay in project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar occurrence	No current mitigation	3	4	12	Should this happen we will need to reassess at that point in time. However experience is that it could delay completion
Specification for low carbon criteria could increase costs.	The aim is to learn from the Zero Carbon pilot, delivering zero carbon in occupation and low carbon in construction. The scheme will have no gas. Electric car points will be provided. The scheme is being designed using the LETI principles. Assumptions on the specification are to achieve this and the costs are	3	2	6	An Energy/Carbon Consultant is appointed to advise on the best solutions to achieve the criteria. Competitive procurement will be used to achieve best value.

	included in the budget				
Valuation for rents and land value	A formal valuation is to be carried out by a RICS valuer. The land value is currently based on the sum Magna would have paid if they had gone ahead.	3	2	6	A valuer is instructed and once the report is received these figures can be firmed up.

RISK ASSESSMENT		
Probability	Impact	RAG
1. Insignificant	1. Insignificant	HIGH 15-25
2. Slight	2. Minor	MEDIUM 8-12
3. Feasible	3. Significant	LOW 1-6
4. Likely	4. Major	
5. Very Likely	5. Critical	

Seaward Way

Affordable housing : 50+ unit

Operational energy

Implement the following indicative design measures:

Fabric U-values (W/m ² .K)	Seaward Way Design Target
Walls	0.13 - 0.15
Floor	0.08 - 0.10
Roof	0.10 - 0.12
Exposed ceilings/floors	0.13 - 0.18
Windows	0.08
Doors	1.00

Efficiency measures

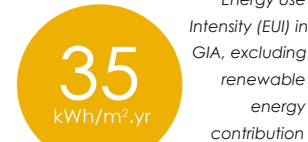
Air tightness
Thermal bridging
G-value of glass
MVHR

Window areas guide (% of wall area)

North	10-15%
East	10-15%
South	20-25%
West	10-15%

- Balance daylight and overheating
- Include external shading
- Include openable windows and cross ventilation

Reduce energy consumption to:



Energy Use Intensity (EUI) in GIA, excluding renewable energy contribution

Reduce space heating demand to:



Heating and hot water

Implement the following measures:

- Fuel**
Ensure heating and hot water generation is fossil fuel free
- Heating**
Maximum. 10w/m² peak heat loss (including ventilation)
- Hot water**
Maximum dead leg of 1 litre for hot water pipework.
Green' Euro Water Label should be used for hot water outlets (e.g.: certified 6 L/min shower head - not using flow restrictions).

Demand response

Implement the following measure to smooth energy demand and consumption

- Peak reduction**
Reduce heating and hot water peak energy demand
- Active demand response measures**
Install heating set point control and thermal storage
- Electricity generation and storage**
Consider battery storage
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging**
Electric vehicle turn down
- Behaviour change**
Incentives to reduce power consumption and peak grid constraints

Maximise renewables so that 100% of annual energy requirement is generated on-site
Form factor of 1.7 - 2.5

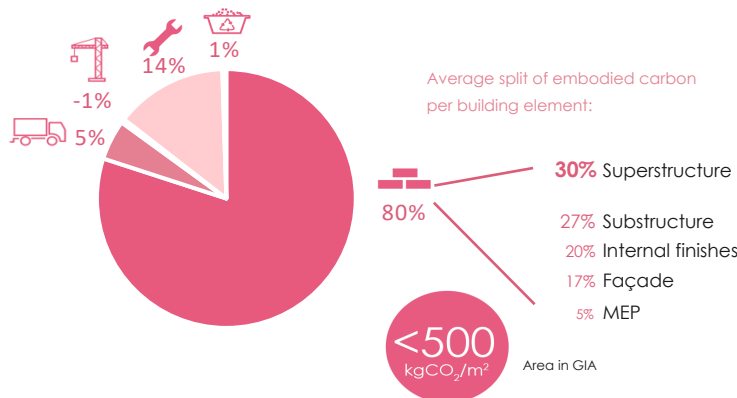
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Embodied carbon

Focus on reducing embodied carbon for the largest uses:

- Products/materials (A1-A3)
- Transport (A4)
- Construction (A5)
- Maintenance and replacements (B1-B5)
- End of life disposal (C1-C4)



Data disclosure

Meter and disclosure energy consumption as follows:

Metering

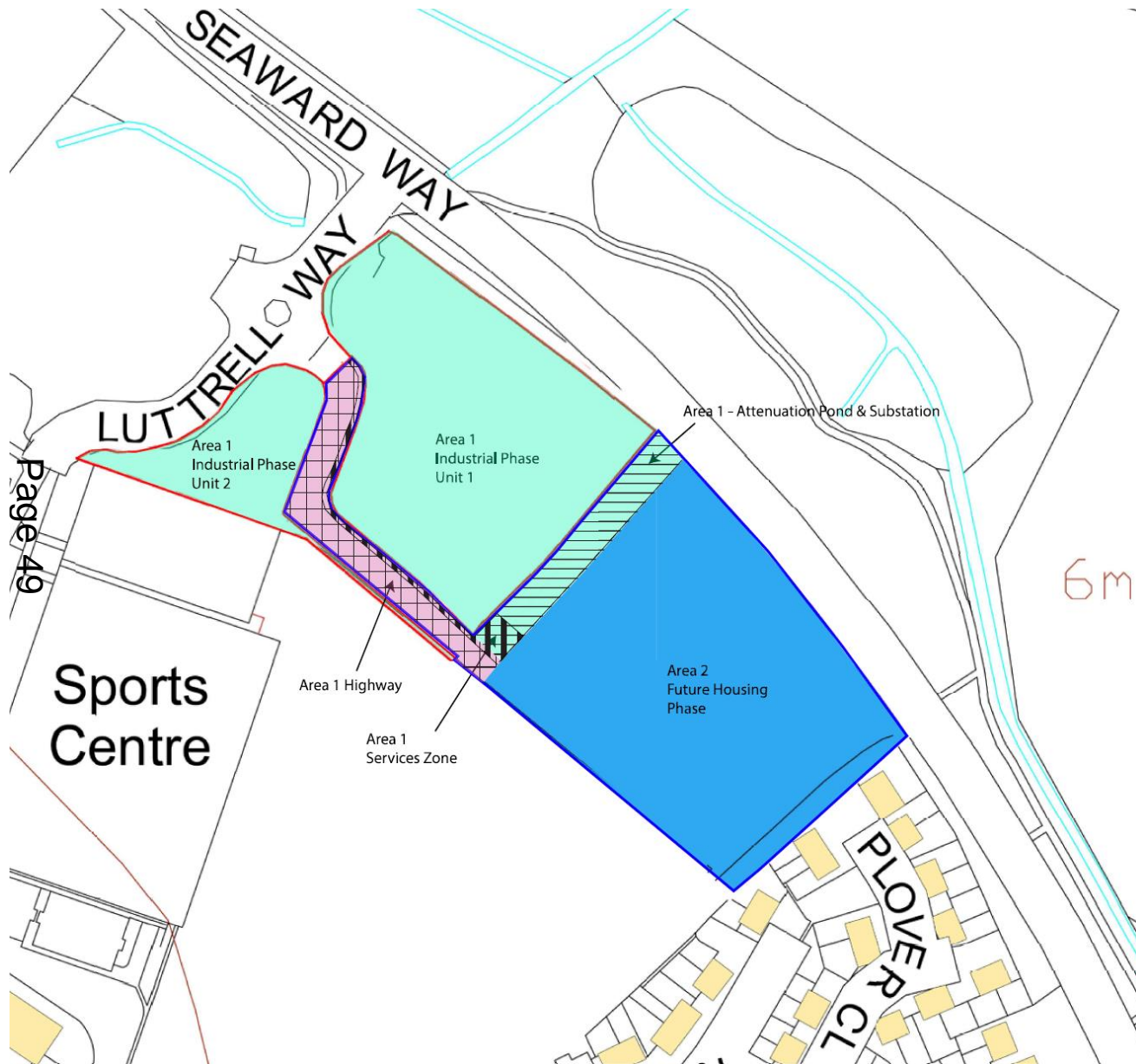
- Submeter renewables for energy generation
- Submeter electric vehicle charging
- Submeter heating fuel (e.g. heat pump consumption)
- Continuously monitor with a smart meter
- Consider monitoring internal temperatures
- For multiple properties include a data logger alongside the smart meter to make data sharing possible

123 Disclosure

- Collect annual building energy consumption and generation
- Aggregate average operational reporting e.g. by post code for anonymity or upstream meters
- Collect water consumption meter readings
- Upload five years of data to GIA and/or CaronBuzz online platform
- Consider uploading to Low Energy Building Database

Appendix D – Site Location and Plans of the proposal

Location Plan





Seaward Way Net-Zero Carbon Site Context-2

- 1. Pub / Restaurant
- 2. Minehead Community Hospital
- 3. West Somerset College
- 4. Tesco supermarket (petrol)
- 5. Lidl supermarket
- 6. Morrisons supermarket
- 7. McDonalds Takeaway
- 8. Minehead train station (West Somerset Railway not mainline service)
- 9. The Avenue shopping high-street
- 10. Enterprise park (employment)
- 11. Minehead Football Club
- 12. Veterinary Surgery
- 13. Fire & Rescue
- 14. Ambulance
- 15. West Somerset College Community Sports centre
- 16. Butlins Holiday camp
- 17. Minehead First School
- 18. Minehead Middle School
- 19. Pre-school & Nursery
- 20. Minehead Sewage treatment works
- 21. Dental Practice
- 22. Mallard Road bus stop (Services 11)
- 23. Hospital bus stop (Services 198, 10, 11)





Rev	Date	Initials
01	05.15.2020	

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APPENDIX E – Current site photos

Attenuation Pond (Swale) under construction



Raising the level of the site with spoil from the industrial land.



Looking East towards Plover Close



Looking North towards Seaward Way with Plover close on the right



Looking West towards industrial units



Site Entrance



Somerset West and Taunton Council

Scrutiny Committee – 11th November 2020

Executive Committee – 18th November 2020

Full Council – 1st December 2020

Oxford Inn New Build HRA Zero Carbon Homes, Taunton

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

Report Author: Shane Smith, Housing Development Manager Specialist

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report recommends the development of 11 new council HRA homes on the Oxford Inn site, Taunton.
- 1.2 The scheme will be built to the specifications being developed as part of the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot approved by members in July 2020 which is now at procurement and planning pre application stage
- 1.3 This site in the Halcon and Lane area of Taunton is owned by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) and falls under the HRA and was formerly operated as a public house,
- 1.4 The scheme will demolish the existing buildings and new homes will be built broadly on the existing footprint. The development will result in the improvement of the appearance of this prominent corner site and deliver very energy efficient housing with low energy bills for the residents in line with the benefits envisage of the Council's Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations are as follows:
 - (a) Support the use of the vacant SWT public house for new zero carbon affordable homes.
 - (b) Approve the demolition of the Oxford Inn
 - (c) Approve the development of 11 affordable homes built to standards emerging from the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot, subject to planning approval.

- (d) Allocate a total budget and borrowing requirement in line with confidential Appendix A.
- (e) Delegate authority to the Section 151 officer to determine the final funding profile for this scheme once the finalised design has received planning approval and tenders have been received.
- (f) Note the use of affordable rents for these new build HRA homes in line with the 2020 Rent Setting Policy. The affordable rents will be set to ensure scheme viability at between 60% and 80% of market rates.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 A risk assessment can be found at appendix B however the main schemes risks are:

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability x impact	Mitigation
Insufficient market interest to engage in the tender process.	8 (probability 1 x impact 4)	To mitigate this scheme is being included within larger procurement opportunities being carried out by the HRA.
Satisfactory planning permission is not obtained	10 (probability 2 x impact 5)	Early advice has been sought from the planning team regarding proposals and designs have been altered to incorporate this advice. Planning permission will need to consider the change of use (from A4 to C3). The dwelling has been vacant for some time and the current covid situation is likely to have reduced the viability of the current vacant public house. An assessment of the developments phosphates impact is being commissioned to support the planning application.
Unexpected site constraints are identified	8 (probability 2 x impact 4)	Engineers and geotechnical consultants are being appointed to undertake the relevant surveys and investigations prior to entering into a build contract. The scheme will broadly use the same footprint of the exiting public house and therefore services are likely to be present and in suitable locations.
The blend of house types and sizes may change	2 (probability 2 x impact 1)	The final blend will be agreed through the planning process. The current blend is 9 x 1b flats and 2 x 2b houses. The final blend will be agreed through the planning process but the current mix has been included in the costs
Construction costs rise significantly at the procurement stage and during schemes deliver	4 (probability 1 x impact 4)	To mitigate this scheme is being included within larger procurement opportunities being carried out by the HRA and schemes costs will be known in advance of appointment. Consultants will be engaged in advance of procurement to minimise unexpected additional costs. The schemes will benefit from the learning and procurement of the Zero

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability x impact	Mitigation
		Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot. There is flexibility in the start date of the scheme as the HRA has front loaded its new homes delivery programme and the schemes start date can be flexible to ensure procurement efficiencies and subsidy can be maximised.
Delay in project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar occurrence	12 (probability 3 x impact 4)	There are a range of ways in which covid could affect the scheme from site lockdown to supply chain interruption to workforce and material inflation. The scheme will review covid risks on a daily basis.

4.0 Background and full details of the report

- 4.1 The Oxford Inn scheme would build eleven (11) new council zero carbon affordable homes and be an additional phase within SWT Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot approved July 2020
- 4.2 The scheme will apply lessons learnt from the Councils zero carbon pilot and its procurement process.

The proposed development site

- 4.3 The site is located approximately 1 mile to the east of Taunton town centre within the Halcon and Lane ward. The site sits on the corner of Roman Road and Outer Circle.
- 4.4 The site is currently occupied by a vacant public house (The Oxford Inn) which has a history of poor performance for the leaseholders as a business and for the Council as landlord. This poor performance has led to neglect and the building is in a poor state of repair.
- 4.5 In examining options for the future of the property SWT have considered:
- The financial viability of refurbishing the existing building for continued use as a PH.
 - The cultural / community value of the building being retained as a PH.
 - The financial and practical viability of refurbishing the existing building as housing.
 - The financial viability of redeveloping the site for affordable housing.
 - The financial viability of providing a community facility as part of a new build development.
- 4.6 The options appraisal reached the following conclusions;
- That the Oxford Inn has limited value as a community facility
 - That the loss of the Oxford Inn as a public house would have a negligible effect on local access to similar community facilities.
 - That renovating the Oxford Inn and continuing to operate the property as a public house is significantly unviable and in no way sustainable.

- That renovating the existing building and converting to residential is not financially viable and would result in poor quality accommodation.
- That redeveloping the site for affordable low carbon housing is viable.
- That the development of a community facility as part of the development is not viable and need for this facility has not been demonstrated.

- 4.7 An architect was appointed to explore feasibility and capacity designs for the site. A number of options were explored and presented to the planning team in order to seek pre-application advice. This advice indicated preference for a scheme of 11 homes (9 flats and 2 houses)
- 4.8 Local consultation will be carried out prior to submitting the new planning application.
- 4.9 The scheme has been modelled for 100% affordable rented units. The affordable rents give flexibility between 60-80% of open market rents according to viability.

Building zero carbon homes

- 4.10 The Council in July 2020 approved the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot which brought together the Council's ambition to build 1000 new homes over 30 years and its declaration of a climate change emergency in 2019.
- 4.11 The pilot, at the time of this report being written, has created site capacity drawings, incorporated low energy requirements within the Council's Employers Requirements, commenced pre planning discussions, commenced a procurement process which has led to two modern methods of construction organisations (MMC) being chosen for final consideration, created an assessment criteria against the London Energy transformation initiative (LETI) which will allow new council homes to be benchmarked for their low carbon qualities.
- 4.12 The Oxford Inn development will benefit from the learning and procurement processes already in place.
- 4.13 The scheme aims to deliver 11 zero carbon affordable homes in occupation and low embodied carbon in their construction and maintenance. The London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) standards are being applied to achieve this. (See Appendix C).
- 4.14 To understand the performance of homes ongoing data collection and analysis is required. One of the aims of the pilot is to incorporate a rigorous data collection regime which will allow the carbon and energy performance to be measured and therefore allow the Council to evidence carbon and cost benefits. Ensuring the Council is able to evidence carbon and fuel benefits will increase the opportunity for customers and development partners to support and adopt a higher standard.
- 4.15 The scheme mix is based on the housing need for Taunton and is influenced by site constraints and feedback from the planning team as a result of pre-application enquiries. The new homes will be built to SWT adopted space standards, which are between 5% & 14% larger than many developer house types. The mix is:
- 9 x 1 bedroom flats
 - 2 x 2 bedroom houses

- 4.16 The current housing need for Taunton on Homefinder Somerset requiring rented accommodation is a total of 2305 households. Of these 54% is for 1 beds, with 29% for 2 beds, 13% for 3 beds and 3% for 4 beds. The 1 and 2 bedroom homes are clearly needed and the development will help to meet this demand in Taunton. While it would have been ideal to also include a 3 or 4 bedroom home in this development the small size of the site makes this unviable
- 4.17 The HRA manages a significant number of homes in the immediate area, therefore there is little in the way of extra housing management and maintenance commitment required by the HRA.
- 4.18 Indicative timescales are set out below. The start on site date will be agreed with the Director of Housing and Communities, Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Section 151 Officer to ensure financial commitments are closely aligned with HRA considerations. Key consultants have been appointed to support the viability work including Architect, Principal Designer, Employers Agent, Engineer and Energy/Carbon Consultant.

Planning Application	Spring 2021
Start on Site	Spring 2022
Build Completion	Spring 2023

What benefits will the Council gain as a result of the development of the Oxford Inn?

- 4.19 The Council will benefit from:
- Eleven (11) new zero carbon council owned and managed homes which are close to Passivhaus standard (high quality low carbon homes)
 - Eleven (11) HRA affordable rented homes with on-site renewable heating and energy (no gas)
 - Neighbourhoods where SWT's Garden Town and Design Guide and checklist have been applied
 - Better use of council assets and the removal of a blighted site
 - An additional show home opportunity in the district to encourage SWT residents and partners to understand at first hand zero carbon development.

Phosphates and housing development within the hydrological catchment of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site

- 4.20 This scheme falls within the water catchment area of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site. A significant issue has arisen in relation to the consideration required by the planning authority if the schemes will give rise to additional phosphates within the catchment.
- 4.21 This schemes is within the water catchment area and advice is being sought from the planning authority on the steps the developer (SWT) must take to gain planning approval. It appears likely that there will be a need to establish through expert opinion if the scheme will give rise to additional phosphates within the area and therefore some study will need to take place possibly through the undertaking a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

- 4.22 The assessment will establish if the development will give rise to additional phosphates and if so propose a compensation strategy as part of the scheme to offset the increase so as to avoid either permanent, or temporary increases in phosphate loads to the designated site. The requirement will be for the development to be phosphate neutral.
- 4.23 The ultimate risks to the scheme of not resolving this matter to the satisfaction of the planning authority is for the scheme to fail to gain planning permission. The requirement for additional studies and mitigation will add expense and time to the scheme, potentially challenging the scheme viability or require the scheme to compromise on design quality or outcomes.
- 4.24 It is understood that SWT is working as planning authority and competent authority to make arrangements for strategic compensation. This strategic solution may allow developers including SWT to manage any compensation efficiently.

5 Links to Corporate Strategy

In 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030. In relation to the Councils development sites the Councils Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan Framework Document states “The Council commits to ensuring that these sites are all low carbon and energy efficient, but also exploring where we can make the most of technological and design innovations to develop specific exemplar schemes to showcase the art of the possible. These requirements will need to be carefully balanced against other demands and requirements placed on these sites to ensure they remain viable.

The Council’s HRA Business Plan includes the development of 1000 new homes by 2049, which is approx. 30 new homes per year over the period

- 5.3 The District has significant demand for affordable homes with a current target of 264 units per year. SWT new build through the HRA complements the affordable homes delivered through housing association partners and planning gain.

Unitary Authority Considerations.

- 5.4 The report has reflected on the potential consequences of the impact of unitary authority status when considering its recommendations. The following statements provide comfort that the recommendations of the report are appropriate:
- The increased supply of affordable housing is a district priority and a Somerset wide priority. This is evidenced in the Somerset wide housing strategy and through the demand recorded through the Homefinder Somerset lettings system
 - The HRA business plan is a thirty year business plan approved in February and set out an ambition to build homes to increase the supply of affordable homes in the district and in the county. The HRA business plan is ring fenced and therefore applies HRA rules and the Councils HRA business plan discipline.
 - The four District authorities have different structures to manage their housing responsibilities including stock transfer organisations, ALMO and SWT has retained its stock. It is difficult not possible at this moment to make

assumptions of how a unitary authority(s) would manage its housing duties or the emphasis it would place on new development. We therefore consider the business plan is a relevant guide to support the Council's decision making

- All authorities within the unitary proposal are subject to the government climate change policies and targets including net carbon zero by 2050.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 Members are being asked to approve a capital budget to fund the delivery 11 new zero carbon homes to be let at an affordable rent on the Oxford Inn Site, Taunton. This scheme will support the aspiration to deliver new homes into the community over the next 30 years as per the approved HRA 2020 Business Plan.
- 6.2 A thorough investment appraisal of this individual scheme has been undertaken using a viability appraisal tool as well as an internal budget impact assessment. A comparison to the original business plan assumptions has also been undertaken to assess the affordability and viability of this scheme overall and also in conjunction with the other schemes that are also being put forward for consideration. Appendix A provides a detailed narrative and outcome of this review.
- 6.3 The business plan is also being review on a continuing basis as new information comes to light (e.g. new inflation and borrowing rates) and further independent professional advice has been received to provide further assurance that these schemes collectively are deliverable and contribute positively to the overall 30 year business plan.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 A Report on Title has been obtained from SHAPE legal services and this has identified no significant issues.

8 Climate and Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 The scheme will be constructed using the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) standard, with four key criteria:
- Carbon capture and energy use in the manufacture/construction of homes
 - Fabric first / well insulated and air tight buildings with insulation nearly twice the thickness of the current standard.
 - Renewable heat and energy
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Details of the LETI standard are illustrated in Appendix C.
- 8.2 There will be no gas on site.
- 8.3 There will be electric car charging points which will include "active" fully equipped points and "passive" points where infrastructure will be provided to enable easy installation of charging equipment in the future.

- 8.4 The location is well served with public transport.
- 8.5 A Travel Plan will be agreed and ample cycle storage provided.
- 8.6 Photovoltaic panels are proposed for the roof of the flats and houses.
- 8.7 We have employed an Energy/Carbon consultant to advise on how best to achieve very low carbon objectives, and the specification worked up for the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot will be used for this scheme.

9. Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)

- 9.1 There are no safeguarding or community implications.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 The scheme has considered the districts housing needs. The homes will all be rented at affordable rent levels. An equality impact assessment for the Councils new build aspirations is being prepared.

11 Social Value Implications

- 11.1 The procurement process will consider the benefit contractors can contribute in terms of social value in particular local labour, use of local contractors and supply chain.
- 11.2 The LETI approach encourages the use of local material and labour to minimise carbon and energy used in the construction of homes.

12. Partnership Implications

- 12.1 Establishing very low carbon exemplar housing in the Taunton area will show commitment and leadership within SWTs affordable housing partnership

13. Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 13.1 Very low carbon homes which are well insulated, have good levels of airtightness and use ventilation systems are considered healthy homes. The construction methods remove the opportunity for condensation and damp. Fuel poverty is reduced where onsite renewable energy is incorporated and a fabric first approach is adopted.

14. Asset Management Implications

- 14.1 The scheme proposes to make use of vacant, poor performing property currently owned by the Council.

15. Data Protection Implications (if any)

15.1 No data protection considerations.

16. Consultation Implications (if any)

16.1 Consultation will take place with the community and neighbouring property prior to planning permission being submitted.

Scrutiny/Executive Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)

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

Democratic Path:

- Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes
- Cabinet/Executive – Yes
- Full Council – Yes

Reporting Frequency: Once only Ad-hoc Quarterly

Twice-yearly Annually

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Appendix B	Risk Register
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Appendix E	Photographs of site

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RISK OR ISSUE DESCRIPTION	EXISTING CONTROL MEASURE	PROBABILITY (1-5)	IMPACT (1-5)	RAG (Red 15-25, Amber 8-12, Green 1-6)	RESPONSE OR ACTION
<p>Page 5 Satisfactory planning permission is not obtained</p>	<p>Early advice has been sought from the planning team regarding proposals and designs have been altered to incorporate this advice. Planning permission will need to consider the change of use (from A4 to C3) . The dwelling has been vacant for some time and the current Covid situation is likely to have reduced the viability of the current vacant public house. The scheme is within the water catchment area of the comerset levels and will require an additional assessment and if necessary compensation in relation to phosphates</p>	2	5	10	<p>Consultantion with Planners has been very positive in regard to the chosen design. While planning have advised of the risk in regard to the change of use they have advised that the likelihood that an objection will be made is low and the evidence we have gathered in support of the change of use is strong. An assessment for phosphate impact is being commissioned.</p>
<p>Unexpected site constraints are identified</p>	<p>Engineers and geotechnical consultants are being appointed to undertake the relevant surveys and investigations prior to entering nto a build contract. The scheme will broadly use the same footprint of the exiting public house and therefore</p>	2	4	8	<p>If found a viability review would take place considering any additional cost constraints.</p>

	services are likely to be present and in suitable locations.				
Insufficient market interest to engage in the tender process.	To mitigate this scheme is being included within larger procurement opportunities being carried out by the HRA.	2	4	8	Early engagement has been taking place with suppliers to assess interest .
<p>Page 76</p> <p>Construction costs rise significantly during the procurement stage and during the schemes delivery</p>	To mitigate this scheme is being included within larger procurement opportunities being carried out by the HRA and schemes costs will be known in advance of appointment. Consultants will be engaged in advance of procurement to minimise unexpected additional costs. The schemes will benefit from the learning and procurement of the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes Pilot. There is flexibility in the start date of the scheme as the HRA has front loaded its new homes delivery programme and the schemes start date can be flexible to ensure procurement efficiencies and subsidy can be maximised. Full site investigations will be carried out prior to entering into contract. All costs will be carefully assessed by our employers agent.	1	4	4	The contract will be a JCT D&B contract, which will be reviewed by legal prior to signing to ensure a balanced allocation of risks. Costs will be continually monitored by the Employers Agent
The main contractor is unable to complete the works due to insolvency or other	Thorough examination of the contractor's financial position and capacity to undertake the work is examined as part of the procurement	2	3	6	Appropriate bonds and guarantees are requested

<p>Delay in project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar occurrence</p>	<p>No current mitigation</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>There are a range of ways in which covid could affect the scheme from site lockdown to supply chain interruption to workforce and material inflation. The scheme will review Covid risks on a daily basis.</p>
<p>Page 77 Specification for low carbon criteria could increase costs.</p>	<p>The aim is to learn from the Zero Carbon pilot, delivering zero carbon in occupation and low carbon in construction. The scheme will have no gas. Electric car points will be provided. The scheme is being designed using the LETI principles. Assumptions on the specification are to achieve this and the costs are included in the budget</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>An Energy/Carbon Consultant is appointed to advise on the best solutions to achieve the criteria. Competitive procurement will be used to achieve best value.</p>
<p>Valuation for rents and land value</p>	<p>A formal valuation is to be carried out by a RICS valuer. Values in the current appraisal have been obtained from comparable properties in Taunton currently and recently on the market.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>A valuer is instructed and once the report is received these figures can be firmed up.</p>
<p>The development can use right to buy receipts money to fund 30% of the capital costs</p>	<p>Finance are aware of the financial implications</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Finance have approved this report and the RtB funding.</p>

<p>The blend of house types and sizes may change</p>	<p>The final blend will be agreed through the planning process. The current blend is 9 x 1b flats and 2 x 2b houses. The final blend will be agreed through the planning process but the current mix has been included in the costs</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Early engagement with planning – positive feedback on the current mix has been received via pre-app enquiries.</p>
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RISK ASSESSMENT		
Probability	Impact	RAG
1. Insignificant	1. Insignificant	HIGH 15-25
2. Slight	2. Minor	MEDIUM 8-12
3. Feasible	3. Significant	LOW 1-6
4. Likely	4. Major	
5. Very Likely	5. Critical	

Small scale housing

Operational energy

Implement the following indicative design measures:

Fabric U-values (W/m².K)

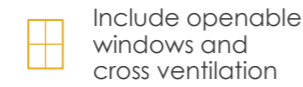
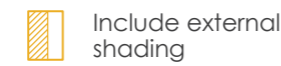
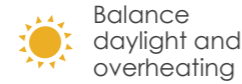
Walls	0.13 - 0.15
Floor	0.08 - 0.10
Roof	0.10 - 0.12
Exposed ceilings/floors	0.13 - 0.18
Windows	0.80 (triple glazing)
Doors	1.00

Efficiency measures

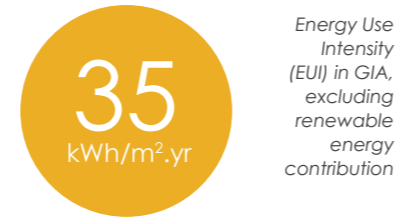
Air tightness	<1 (m ³ /h. m ² @50Pa)
Thermal bridging	0.04 (y-value)
G-value of glass	0.6 - 0.5
MVHR	90% (efficiency) ≤2m (duct length from unit to external wall)

Window areas guide (% of wall area)

North	10-15%
East	10-15%
South	20-25%
West	10-15%



Reduce energy consumption to:



Maximise renewables so that 100% of annual energy requirement is generated on-site

Form factor of 1.7 - 2.5

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Heating and hot water

Implement the following measures:

Fuel
Ensure heating and hot water generation is fossil fuel free

Heating
Maximum 10 W/m² peak heat loss (including ventilation)

Hot water
Maximum dead leg of 1 litre for hot water pipework
'Green' Euro Water Label should be used for hot water outlets (e.g.: certified 6 L/min shower head – not using flow restrictors).

Demand response

Implement the following measures to smooth energy demand and consumption:

Peak reduction
Reduce heating and hot water peak energy demand

Active demand response measures
Install heating set point control and thermal storage

Electricity generation and storage
Consider battery storage

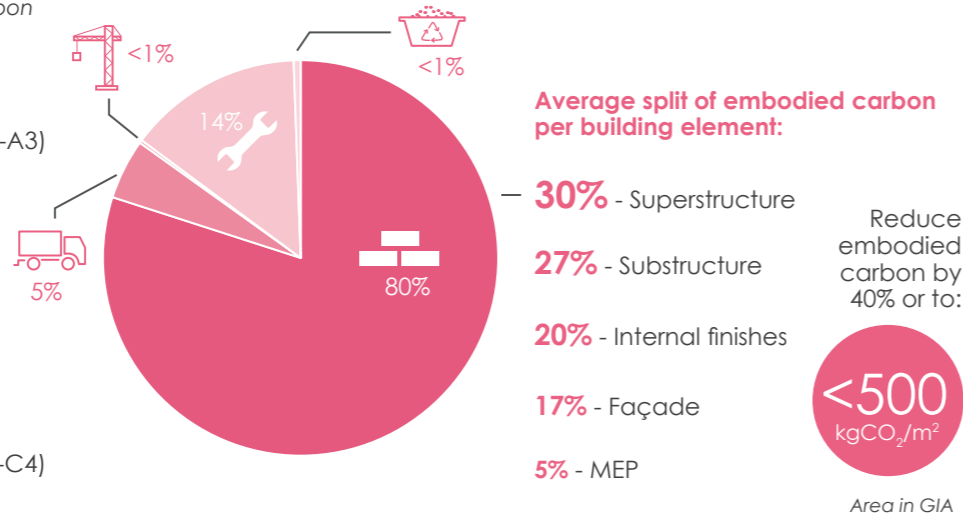
Electric vehicle (EV) charging
Electric vehicle turn down

Behaviour change
Incentives to reduce power consumption and peak grid constraints.

Embodied carbon

Focus on reducing embodied carbon for the largest uses:

- Products/materials (A1-A3)
- Transport (A4)
- Construction (A5)
- Maintenance and replacements (B1-B5)
- End of life disposal (C1-C4)



Data disclosure

Meter and disclose energy consumption as follows:

Metering

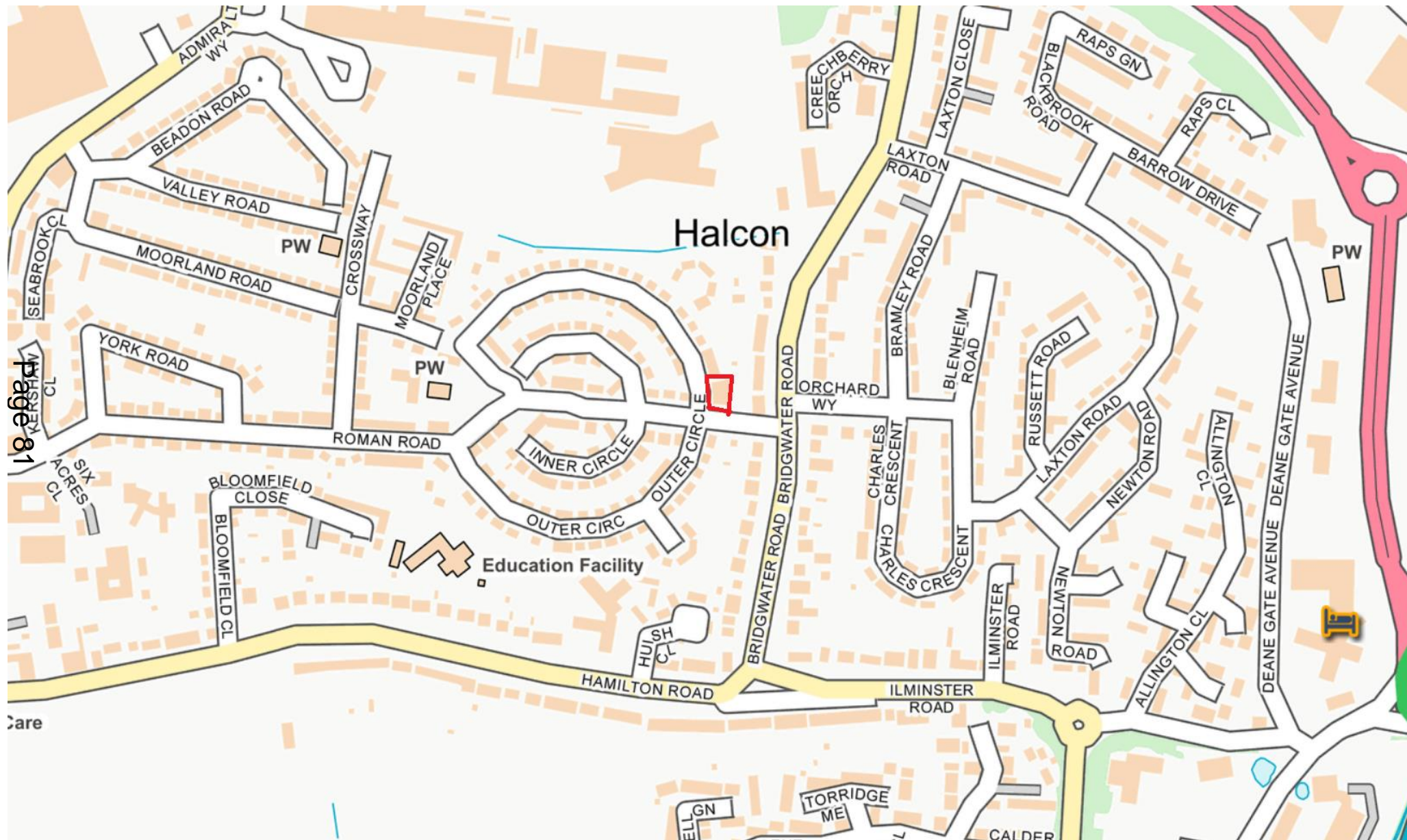
1. Submeter renewables for energy generation
2. Submeter electric vehicle charging
3. Submeter heating fuel (e.g. heat pump consumption)
4. Continuously monitor with a smart meter
5. Consider monitoring internal temperatures
6. For multiple properties include a data logger alongside the smart meter to make data sharing possible.

123 Disclosure

1. Collect annual building energy consumption and generation
2. Aggregate average operational reporting e.g. by post code for anonymity or upstream meters
3. Collect water consumption meter readings
4. Upload five years of data to GLA and/or CarbonBuzz online platform
5. Consider uploading to Low Energy Building Database.

Appendix D – Site Location and Plans of the proposal

Location Plan



Aerial photograph



Proposed development: Capacity Plan



2 x 2B3P Semi-D houses
9 x 1B2P Flats

11 x Dwellings
8 x Parking spaces

APPENDIX E – Current site photos

Looking north along Roman Road



Looking west towards Outer Circle



Looking East towards Roman Road



Poor condition flat roofs



Roof leak / collapsing ceilings



Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenants Strategic Group

SWT Executive Committee – 18th November 2020

Full Council – 1st December 2020

North Taunton Woolaway Project

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Francesca Smith

**Report Author: Jane Windebank – Development Manager, Development and
Regeneration**

Chris Brown – Assistant Director, Development and Regeneration

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The North Taunton Woolaway Project (the Project) is the flagship regeneration project of the SWT's housing development programme and tackles some of the Council's worst performing homes in one of the most socially deprived areas in our County.
- 1.2. The Report recommends the approval of funding for all future phases of the Project as set out in Appendix A. The budget for Phase A and Enabling Works for Phases B-E totalling £14.5m was approved in February 2019. This included the purchase of twenty-two (22) owner occupied properties and decanting fifty-five (55) tenanted properties.
- 1.3. The Project has seen the demolition of 26 homes in Phase A and will start building 47 new homes with the first of these properties completed by August 2021 and Phase A is estimated to complete by September 2022.
- 1.4. To ensure a smooth transition between all future phases and to quicken the pace of regeneration, permission is being sought to approve the budget to fund the regeneration of the remaining Phases B–E.
- 1.5. The Project will deliver two hundred and twenty-nine (229) new Council homes and comprehensively refurbish twenty-seven (27) Council homes over an eight and a half (8.5) year period rather than the original ten (10) to twelve (12) year period. The Project will also provide a community facility/project office in Phase A which can be converted into 2 homes should a sustainable business plan not be achieved at the end of the Project. This would increase the number of new homes to 229.
- 1.6. The 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 identify the funding and assist the progression of the remaining Phases (B–E) in a timely manner and provide certainty and security to the North Taunton Woolaway Project tenants.

2 Recommendations

2.1 (N/A for Strategic Tenants Group)

The Executive recommends to Full Council:

- 2.2 To allocate a total scheme budget and borrowing requirement for Phases B-E and the conclusion of the regeneration scheme as set out in confidential Appendix A.
- 2.3 Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer to determine the final funding profile for each future phase once the finalised designs have been received for Phases B-E and any relevant planning approval and contract costs have been received.
- 2.4 To approval the decant of tenants within Phases B which will allow Gold band status in the Homefinder Somerset allocations system for tenants in this Phase and allow those who wish to move outside the regeneration area sufficient priority to move home.
- 2.5 Delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing authority to approve future decanting and demolition for future phases.
- 2.6 All new build properties (Phase A-D) will be set at affordable rents in line with the 2020 Rent Setting Policy. The affordable rents will be set to ensure scheme viability at between 60% and 80% of market rates. However, all NTWP SWT secure tenants who lived within the NTWP (Phases A-D) at February 2019, when the Council made its decision to regenerate the neighbourhood, will have their rents capped at the equivalent social rent if being rehoused in the new NTWP development. These rents will remain with the tenant as long as they retain their tenancy. No current NTWP SWT tenant will be required to pay above the equivalent social rent and service charge for their home in line with the Council Shadow Full Council approval to allow existing SWT tenants to remain on a social rent level.

3 Risk Assessment

3.1 A risk assessment can be found at Confidential Appendix B however the main schemes risks are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Main Scheme Risks

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability impact	Mitigation
Construction costs rise significantly at the procurement stage and during schemes deliver.	10 (probability 2 x impact 5)	Full site investigations will be carried out prior to entering into contract. All costs will be carefully assessed by our Employer's Agent. PCSA process adopted to understand costs pre-works, material being reviewed due to supply chain disruption/Covid.
Not securing vacant possession of the site – purchasing remaining	5 (probability 1 x impact 5)	Enabling budget approved to purchase the remaining private homes within Phases B–D. 10/19 have already been purchased

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability impact	Mitigation
private homes.	impact 5)	and a further 3 are currently in negotiations. CPO powers could be considered.
Not securing vacant possession of the SWT tenanted properties.	5 (probability 1 x impact 5)	Tenants are being decanted in phases giving 12 – 18 months to decant each phase when tenants will be Gold banded on Homefinder Somerset and Taunton homes ring fenced for NTWP tenants. New builds in earlier phases will be allocated to existing NTWP tenants, decant homes available in later phases and as a last resort, Notice of Seeking Possession could be considered.
Party Wall claims for refurbished SWT homes or boundaries adjoining home owners' properties.	12 (probability 3 x impact 4)	Areas within the development are being identified by the Architect and Contractor which may be subject to Party Wall Act. Party Wall Surveyor being employed to provide advice, assistance and conduct negotiations where required for any compensation due.
Failure to gain Reserved Matters planning consent.	10 (probability 2 x impact 5)	Outline planning permission already granted, weekly meeting with planning consultants for resolution of design matters. Customer engagement through working groups, open public events planned and communication through newsletters and Facebook. Monthly monitoring of programme and budget. The development falls within the Somerset levels water catchment area and therefore an assessment of the impact of phosphates will be carried out and if required compensatory measures.
Highways adoption.	12 (probability 3 x impact 4)	The access road leading to the site will need to be adopted in advance of adoption proceeding for the residential development.
Reputational damage to SWT.	8 (probability 2 x impact 4)	Significant customer engagement and communication, customers engaged in the design process, working groups being set up to engage more customers and in particular seeking to bring additional benefit to the neighbourhood, NTWP team

Risk	Score out of 25 based on probability impact	Mitigation
		meetings occur daily and close working with consultants and ENGIE. The Project is being considered as one continuous project and the dialogue with consultants and ENGIE aim to reinforce the smooth transition between phases expected (subject to suitable performance).
Delay in Project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar occurrence.	12 (probability 3 x impact 4)	There are a range of ways in which Covid could affect the scheme from site lockdown to supply chain interruption to workforce and material inflation. The scheme will review Covid risks on a daily basis.

4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 The Shadow Full Council in February 2019, approved the redevelopment of the North Taunton Woolaway Project area following the Structural Engineering report carried out in 2013 and the Report Addendum dated 2016.
- 4.2 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 2:

Table 2: Tenure of North Taunton Woolaway Project Area

	In SWT Ownership	In private ownership	Total
Existing Woolaway Homes in the NTWP	167	45	212
Units to be Demolish	140	22	162
Units to be comprehensively refurbished	27	0	27
New SWT homes to be built	227*	0	227*
Net Increase of affordable SWT homes	87*	0	87*

**the scheme will build a community facility/project office in Phase A which will be converted into 2 homes should a sustainable business plan not be achieved at the end of the NTWP. This would increase the number of new homes to 229 and the net increase to 89.*

- 4.5 Detailed planning permission for Phase A and outline planning permission for Phases B–E was approved by the Planning Committee in March 2019. Phase A will deliver 47 new social rented homes and a community facility. The outline planning permission for Phases B–E will deliver up to 180 new build Council homes and refurbish 27 existing Woolaway Council homes. The indicative scheme will provide a net increase of 87 affordable Council homes.
- 4.6 The new homes will be built to Nationally Described Space Standards and Housing Quality Indicator layout standards. The homes have been designed predominately to Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 with nine (9) anticipated as wheelchair adapted homes at Category 3.
- 4.7 The range of property sizes offered by the Project will help to address existing overcrowding and under occupation which has been identified through the one to one interviews with tenants.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 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

4.10 Table 3: Indicative Housing Mix for the North Taunton Woolaway Project

Phase	SWT New Build	Private Homes	Sub Total
A			
1 bed	17		
2 bed	14		
3 bed	11		
4 bed	5		47
B			
1 bed	4		
2 bed	17		
3 bed	8		
4 bed	2		31
C			
1 bed	10		
2 bed	19		
3 bed	38		
4 bed	12		
5 bed	1		80
D			
1 bed	1		
2 bed	14		

3 bed	35		
4 bed	17		
5 bed	2		69
E			
2 bed	21	15	
3 bed	6	8	
4 bed			50
TOTALS	237	23	277

4.11 The funding of the regeneration of the North Taunton Woolaway Project is in the region of £45 million and was noted by the Shadow Full Council in February 2019. This was based on a number of assumptions and indicative costs. These assumptions include:

4.11.1 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 (the Phasing Plan is attached and marked Appendix C);

4.11.2 Estimate for Price Inflation and other market factors such as construction costs, rental income, interest rates, rise in house prices etc.

4.11.3 Costs of indicative designs subject to planning approval;

4.11.4 No allowance for contamination or remediation works;

4.11.5 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.

4.11.6 Existing NTWP tenants would receive a like for like which included the right to be rehoused in a new home at social rent and to be entitled to a property of the same bed size as they occupied when the decision to regenerate the estate was made.

4.12 The supplementary budget for Phase A was increased from £7.2 to £8.7 million by Council on 3 December 2019.

4.13 A further supplementary budget of £5.7 million for the enabling fees for Phases B–E of the Project was also approved on 3 December 2019 to purchase the remaining private homes and commence the enable works and Reserved Matters planning. This was based on a number of assumptions and indicative costs which are explained in 1.2 above.

4.14 The mix of homes is indicative at this stage for Phases B-D and is currently being reviewed prior to submitting the Reserved Matters applications in the Spring 2021. Work is also being carried out to agree an uplift in the low carbon quality of the homes. An uplift above building regulations has been agreed for Phase A and additional uplifts for Phases B-E are being refined.

4.15 (para not relevant to Strategic Tenants Board)

4.16 **Regeneration Benefits**

4.17 The regeneration of North Taunton Woolaway Project area brings more than just new homes but supports the growth within the local economy and offers health, environmental and employment opportunities. The Project offers the Council the opportunity to maximise the social investment for the benefit of the community now and in the future.

4.18 SWT will work in partnership with the appointed Contractor, ENGIE, to facilitate a number of working and information forums to ensure active community participation and deliver:-

- Promotion of various career opportunities in construction with local schools and colleges and undertake Health & Safety talks.
- Mock interviews and career events for local colleges.
- Local employment opportunities and provide new training and development opportunities for residents, customising our approach to the communities bespoke requirements.
- Training Programmes both Accredited and Non-Accredited such as Fire Marshall training, Emergency First Aid, Mentoring, Energy Efficiency Training, DIY skills day, Silver Surfer training and Smart Phone Training.
- Training commitment for the Unemployed such as the Kick Start Program, Safety Training, Employability skills, work experience and mock interviews.
- Inspiring the next generation of construction workers, ENGIE are proud that 7% of their workforce is made up on Trainees, Apprentices and Graduates which is above the national average of 5%. SWT and ENGIE will be developing a Targeted Training and Recruitment Plan (TTRP) which will be reviewed at the monthly performance reviews.

4.19 For Phase A the TTRP will provide:-

- Trainee/Apprenticeship opportunities
- Work Experience placements
- New Employment opportunities with targeted recruitment
- Employability Workshops/Training
- School/College curriculum-based site visits/workshops
- Commitment to local labour
- Supporting local initiatives – fundraising, refurbishing community facilities, promotion of healthy living and link with local groups to identify initiatives.
- Promoting the use of local facilities to ENGIE’s construction workforce to use local cafes, shops, venues for consultation events etc.
- 1 – 2 days of Job Shadowing opportunities across the whole range of occupations within ENGIE’s workforce.

4.20 For Phases B – E:

- ENGIE was named Wales ‘Most Community Focused Contractor’ in both 2015 and 2018 by the Chartered Institute of Housing for its work ‘Beyond Bricks & Mortar’ specifically in supporting people, places and communities through its regeneration activities and delivering tangible community benefits to leave a long term positive impact. We will be working with ENGIE to develop a Targeted Training and Recruitment Plan for Phases B–E with similar phased targets as set out in 4.18 above.

- In addition to the TTRP, the Project will deliver additional regeneration benefits such as supporting local charities, a variety of community and school engagement ranging from school assemblies, investigate the provision of a handy man service for decanting tenants through ENGIE's supply chain, home energy advice including an advice booklet, safety talks and volunteering opportunities through the GIFT day (Get Involved Find Time) – this can be on a local community or charity project.

4.20 NTWP Update and Achievement

- 4.21 All Phase A tenants (19) and owner occupiers (3) were successfully decanted and now live in their new forever home off the Project Area or await the completion of their new home within the Project area.
- 4.22 In total the Council have decanted eighty-one (81) out of the one hundred and sixty-two (162) tenants. Of these tenants, seventy-seven (77) tenants have moved to their forever home off the Project Area. This is a higher number of tenants choosing to move away from the Project Area than originally anticipated.
- 4.23 To date, 13 of the 22 private homes within the Project Area have now been purchased and negotiations are on-going for a further 3 properties.
- 4.24 All Phase A properties have been demolished and the site has been levelled and fenced.
- 4.25 The demolition contractor, L A Moore had their Considerate Constructors Scheme audit on 13th August 2020 and the auditor was impressed with the state of the site, the works and the continued communication with the community from the Council and awarded a score of 44/50 with scores of 8 or 9 in each of the five categories indicating 'excellent' or 'exceptional' performance.
- 4.26 During the demolition all of the windows and timber removed from the site has been recycled and 98% of the construction and demolition waste has been diverted from landfill and the crushed hard-core will be re-used by the new development.
- 4.27 Twenty-seven (27) vacant homes in Phases C-E have received void works and have been used for non-complex homeless families. The use of the properties for homeless families has been particularly beneficial to the families and Council during the Covid lockdown period. The properties will continue to be used for temporary lettings via a licence until they are required for demolition or for those tenants in Phase E whose homes are being refurbished. This approach has also reduced the rent loss for these homes as their phase awaits development.
- 4.28 ENGIE has been appointed the main contractor for Phase A and subject to performance against set Key Performance Indicators, will also deliver later phases within the Project.
- 4.29 The Council and ENGIE have agreed the works costs for Phase A through the use of a Pre-Contract Services Agreement (PCSA) and the PCSA is also supporting the detailed planning Reserved Matters application.
- 4.30 Various surveys and investigations are currently being completed to inform the Reserved Matters submissions and the architect is currently preparing the draft

drawings in readiness for review by the Implementation Working Group and public consultation in Spring 2021.

- 4.31 The Implementation Working Group (IWG) which is a resident group, continues to meet monthly with the Council to review the progress of the Project and provide feedback to the Project Team to help shape the way the Project is delivered and maximising the positive impact upon the community and promote community initiatives.
- 4.32 The Project was awarded Commended by the Royal Town Planning Institute under the category 'Excellence in Other Planning Work (Community Involvement Schemes)' in November 2019.
- 4.33 The Project has been shortlisted in the Michelmores Award for 'Masterplanning for the Future' award. The winners will be announced on 12th November 2020.
- 4.34 During the Covid 19 lockdown, Ivor Goodsites worksheets were shared via the NTWP Facebook page to tenants and local schools for children to learn about site safety by completing fun quizzes.
- 4.35 The Project is currently in five phases, A–E and delegation to the Director of Housing and Communities and the Portfolio Holder for Housing is requested to ensure timely decanting of Phases E, C and D. Table 4 (4.37) is an indicative timeline for the five phases, however once the sequence of refurbishment is known Phase E will be sub divided into smaller phases to allow timely decanting in line with the required refurbishment sequence. Phases C and D could also be sub divided if it would support residents with greater clarity of when their home will be required and greater opportunity to find a home of their choice through Homefinder Somerset. Please note as early phases are built out it will be easier for tenants in later phases to move only once to a new home within the scheme.
- 4.36 The refurbishment of Phase E will run along-side phases A-C which will help create some time efficiencies. A number of owner occupiers in Phase E have invested in the structure of their home but for others there is an opportunity to consider investing in their homes and adopt the Council's specification. For low income households access is available to the Wessex Resolutions CIC Loan and the Council is being asked to consider a top up equity grant for low income households who can either only afford a small loan or not afford a loan.

4.37 Table 4: Indicative Timeline by Phases

Phase	Number of units	Date Decanting Priority	of Start on site (inc demolition)	Estimated Practical completion
A	47	Complete	February 2020 – Hoarding March – June 2020 surveys, inspections, disconnections and stripping out July 2020 -	Summer 2022

			demolition	
B	31	December 2020	January 2022	October 2023
C	80	October 2021 (potential sub phases)	November 2022	September 2025
D	56	January 2024	February 2025	November 2027
E	27	Phased Comprehensive Refurbishment	September 2021	*November 2025

**Refurbishment could run into Phase D timeline depending on the number of owner occupiers who wish to participate.*

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 2020-2050 objectives:
- 5.4 **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.
- 5.5 **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.
- 5.6 **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.
- 5.7 **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.
- 5.8 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:-
- 5.8.1 Existing SWT residents within the scheme will be given the opportunity to remain on a social rent level

- 5.8.2 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.
- 5.8.3 The Project is underpinned by the SWT development aspirations and provide new, high quality and energy efficient homes.
- 5.8.4 The new development compliments The Vision for Taunton as a Garden Town, specifically the themes:
- 5.8.5 Growing our town greener – quality of the environment. The scheme incorporates green spaces and play spaces and provides more street trees.
- 5.8.6 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.

5.9 Unitary Authority Considerations

- 5.10 The Report has reflected on the potential consequences of the impact of unitary authority status when considering its recommendations. The following statements provide comfort that the recommendations of the Report are appropriate:
- The increased supply of affordable housing is a district priority and a Somerset wide priority. This is evidenced in the Somerset wide Housing Strategy and through the demand recorded through the Somerset wide Homefinder Somerset lettings system.
 - The HRA Business Plan is a thirty (30) year Business Plan approved in February and set out an ambition to build homes to increase the supply of affordable homes in the district and in the county. The HRA Business Plan is ring fenced and therefore applies HRA rules and the Council's HRA Business Plan discipline.
 - The four District authorities have different structures to manage their housing responsibilities including stock transfer organisations, ALMO and SWT has retained its stock. It is difficult at this moment to make assumptions of how a unitary authority(s) would manage its housing duties or the emphasis it would place on new development. We therefore consider the Business Plan is a relevant guide to support the Council's decision making.
 - All authorities within the unitary proposal are subject to the government climate change policies and targets including net carbon zero by 2050.

6. Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 Members are being asked to approve the capital budget for the remaining costs to complete the delivery of 227 new homes built to low carbon standards in excess of building regulations, a community facility and costs associated with regeneration activity such as resident engagement, decanting, site clearance, security and customer support. This scheme will support the aspiration to deliver new homes into the community over the next 30 years as per the approved HRA 2020 Business Plan.

- 6.2 This is a very complex regeneration scheme requiring substantial investment to rebuild some of the Council's worst performing Woolway homes in one of the most socially deprived areas in our County.
- 6.3 In order to assess the affordability and viability of the NTWP scheme as a whole, a number of key variables have had to be considered and assumptions made based on information available at this point in time. Appendix A provides a detailed narrative and outcome of the thorough investment appraisal undertaken.
- 6.4 The business plan is also being review on a continuing basis as new information comes to light (e.g. new inflation and borrowing rates) and further independent professional advice has been received to provide further assurance that the schemes currently being proposed, collectively are deliverable and contribute positively to the overall 30 year business plan.
- 6.5 All new build properties (Phase A-D) will be set at affordable rents in line with the 2020 Rent Setting Policy. The affordable rents will be set to ensure scheme viability at between 60% and 80% of market rates. However, all NTWP SWT secure tenants who lived within the NTWP (Phases A-D) at February 2019, when the Council made its decision to regenerate the neighbourhood, will have their rents capped at the equivalent social rent if being rehoused in the new NTWP development. These rents will remain with the tenant as long as they retain their tenancy. No current NTWP SWT tenant will be required to pay above the equivalent social rent and service charge for their home in line with the like for like offer made to tenants by the Council.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Statutory Home Loss and Disturbance Payments will be made in line with legislative guidance and the North Taunton Woolway 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 Phosphates and housing development within the hydrological catchment of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site - This scheme falls within the water catchment area of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site. A significant issue has arisen in relation to the consideration required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as to whether schemes will give rise to additional phosphates within the catchment.
- 8.8 The NTWP scheme is within the water catchment area and advice is being sought from the LPA as to the steps the developer (SWT) must take to gain planning approval. It appears likely that there will be a need to establish, through expert opinion, if the scheme will give rise to additional phosphates within the area and therefore some studies will need to take place possibly through the undertaking of a Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 8.9 The assessment will establish if the development will give rise to additional phosphates and, if so, propose a compensation strategy as part of the scheme to offset the increase so as to avoid either permanent or temporary increases in phosphate loads to the designated site. The requirement will be for the development to be phosphate neutral.
- 8.10 The ultimate risks to the scheme of not resolving this matter to the satisfaction of the LPA is for the scheme to fail to gain planning permission. The requirement for additional studies and mitigation will add expense and time to the scheme, potentially challenging the scheme viability or require the scheme to compromise on design quality or outcomes. It is understood that SWT is working as LPA and competent authority to make arrangements for strategic compensation. This strategic solution may allow developers including SWT to manage any compensation efficiently
- 8.8 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.

- 9.1 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. An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment is also being prepared to clarify the benefits of the councils HRA new build programme.
- 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 The Design Working Group comprised of a group of local residents with no development experience, the Design Group process provided the individuals with the necessary skills to comment and critique the scheme designs and house types in an informed manner. This has led to a deeper appreciation of the environment they live in.
- 11.3 A volunteer from the Implementation Working Group accompanied the Project Team during inspections of the refurbished void properties to be used as temporary decant homes and received Health & Safety training.
- 11.4 A volunteer from the Implementation Working Group was included in the Moderation Panel for the selection of the preferred Contractor for the Project.
- 11.5 LA Moore as part of the social value element of their demolition contract decorated the exterior of the Priorswood Community Centre after the property was damaged by fire.
- 11.6 Social Value formed part of the selection criteria for the procurement of Phase A main contractor and for future phases. Details of the minimum social value benefits to be delivered by this Project are set out in Section 4.16, these initiatives will be regularly reviewed and where possible, exceeded.
- 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 and MIND 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 future-proofed 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.

13.3 The Reserved Matters submission for Phases B–E will include the provision of public open space for community use. Options for this space will form part of the consultation process to assess the aspirations and community need for this space.

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 Woolway 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 and Data Protection Act requirement.

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. Further Working Groups to discuss subject specific matters such as Works and Low Carbon, Communication, Environment and Green Space, Employment and Training and Community Facility have been set up to encourage wider public participation to ensure the community can influence the outcomes.
- 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 Report is being reviewed by Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2020.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – Yes**

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

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	CONFIDENTIAL Finance
Appendix B	NTWP Risk Register
Appendix C	NTWP Phase Plan
Appendix D	CONFIDENTIAL Purchase of private dwelling

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Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)
Regulations 2000.

Document is Restricted

RISK OR ISSUE DESCRIPTION	EXISTING CONTROL MEASURE	PROBILITY (1-5)	IMPACT (1-5)	RAG (Red 13-25, Amber 8-12, Green 1-7)	RESPONSE OR ACTION
<p>Construction costs rise significantly at the procurement stage and during schemes delivery</p> <p>Page 117</p>	<p>Engie, the contractor, have been appointed and provided initial costings against the Council's requirements. Contractor appointed for Phase A and, subject to performance, will continue to later phases within costs agreed by stage benefitting from a clear understanding of the baseline costs. Site constraints have been carefully examined and full investigations carried out. The Council use a Pre-Contract Service Agreement to understand costs by phase prior to the Council committing to works. Engie are working with SWT to provide clear costs including sub-contractors. The Council appoint Employers Agents to help understand costs and risks.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Full site investigations will be carried out prior to entering into contract. All costs will be carefully assessed by our Employer's Agent. PCSA process adopted to understand costs pre works, material being reviewed due to supply chain disruption/Covid.</p>

<p>Not securing vacant possession of the site – purchasing remaining private homes.</p>	<p>Enabling budget approved to purchase the remaining private homes within Phases B – D. 10/19 have already been purchased and a further 3 are currently in negotiations.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Council has CPO powers to secure the purchase of these properties and any risks will be highlighted early in the development programme to minimise the impact on the Project.</p>
<p>Not securing vacant possession of the SWT tenanted properties.</p> <p>Page 118</p>	<p>Tenants are being decanted in phases giving 12 – 18 months to decant each phase when tenants will be Gold banded on Homefinder Somerset and Taunton homes ring-fenced for NTWP tenants. New builds in earlier phases will be allocated to existing NTWP tenants, decant homes available in later phases and as a last resort.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Decant Policy sets out requirements for tenants to bid for new homes either on NTWP or elsewhere and bids can be placed on behalf of tenants to suitable properties. If required, SWT can pursue a Notice of Seeking Possession.</p>
<p>Failure to gain Reserved Matters planning consent.</p>	<p>Outline planning permission already granted, weekly meeting with planning consultants for resolution of design matters. Customer engagement through working groups, open public events planned and communication through newsletters and Facebook. Monthly monitoring of programme and budget.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Initial discussions with Planners have been very positive and the majority of the house designs are already approved for Phase A and the principles for Phases B – E are agreed as submitted with the outline Planning Application. The scheme falls within the Somerset levels water catchment area and therefore the development is commissioning a phosphates impact study. The scheme will need to compensate for any potential increase.</p>

Highways adoption	<p>The access road leading to the site will need to be adopted in advance of adoption proceeding for the residential development.</p> <p>Discussions with SCC Highways are ongoing as part of the Reserved Matters submission and S106 requirements.</p>	4	3	12	S106 requires Off Street Parking specification to be approved by SCC prior to occupation of 40% of the development
<p>Reputational damage to SWT</p> <p>Page 119</p>	Significant investment in staff resources and on site facility, comprehensive engagement and communication strategies, engagement of specialist consultants	2	4	8	Significant customer engagement and communication, customers engaged in the design process, working groups being set up to engage more customers and in particular seeking to bring additional benefit to the neighbourhood, NTWP team meetings occur daily and close working with consultants and ENGIE. The Project is being considered as one continuous project and the dialogue with consultants and ENGIE aim to reinforce the smooth transition between phases expected (subject to suitable performance).
Delay in project progress at any stage resulting from a further COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, or similar	There are a range of ways in which Covid could affect the scheme from site lockdown to supply chain interruption to workforce and	3	4	12	The scheme will review Covid risks on a daily basis.

occurrence	material inflation. .				
Loss of community support	Retaining community support would magnify the risks associated with project delivery and successful regeneration outcomes.	1	5	5	The NTWP working closely with residents and the tenants' Implementation Working Group. It is engaging customers through working groups and significant communication including fact sheets, newsletters and daily Facebook updates. The project has amended proposals through the consultation process. Local members are engaged through monthly meetings and opportunities to participate on working groups
Unexpected site constraints are identified	Full Report of Title has been completed by legal to identify ownership of land.	3	2	6	If found a viability review would take place considering any additional cost constraints.
Party Wall Matters. Party Wall claims for refurbished SWT homes or boundaries adjoining home owners' properties.	Areas within the development are being identified by the Architect and Contractor which may be subject to Party Wall Act.	3	4	12	Party Wall Surveyor being employed to provide advice, assistance and conduct negotiations where required for any compensation due
BREXIT	The councils procurement processes ensure contract deliverables and contract prices are understood	2	5	10	Continuous dialogue with suppliers and contractors to understand market changes.






The main contractor is unable to complete the works due to insolvency or other	Thorough examination of the contractor's financial position and capacity to undertake the work is examined as part of the procurement	2	3	6	Appropriate bonds and guarantees are requested as part of the contract process.
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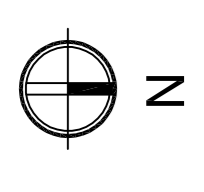
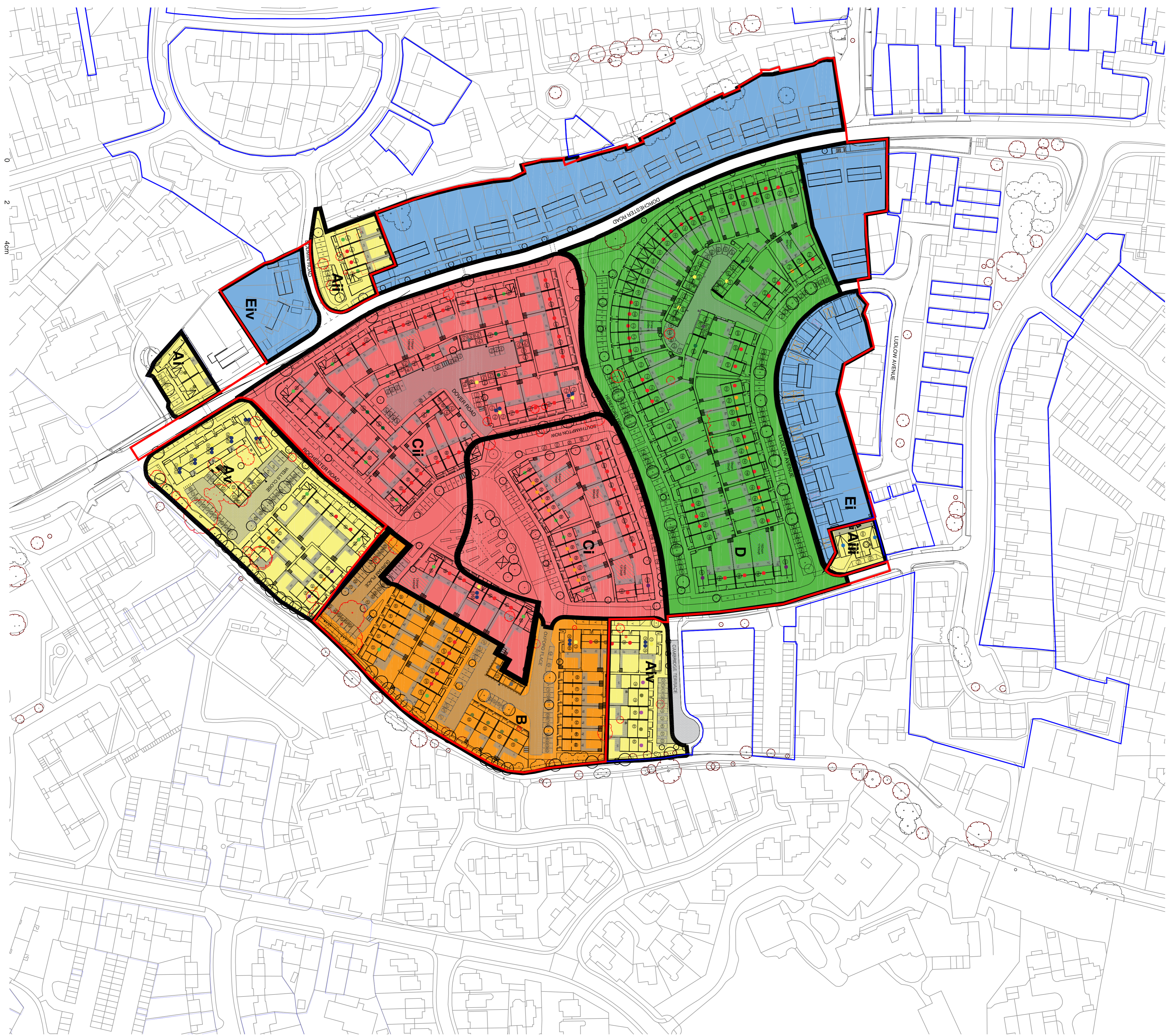
RISK ASSESSMENT		
Probability	Impact	RAG
1. Insignificant	1. Insignificant	HIGH 13-25
2 Slight	2. Minor	MEDIUM 8-12
3 Feasible	3. Significant	LOW 1- 7
4 Likely	4. Major	
5 Very Likely	5. Critical	

121

Total	New Homes
8	1B Flats over Garages
2	1B Bungalow
22	1B Flat
14	2B Flat
8	2B Bungalow
9	2B Chalet
32	2B House
86	3B House
6	3B Chalet
36	4B House
3	5B House
226	New Homes Sub-Total
50	Existing Homes
276	Grand Total

 Potential Refuse Collection Point

-  Phase A
-  Phase B
-  Phase C
-  Phase D
-  Phase E



Responsibility is not accepted for errors made by others in scaling from this drawing. Contractors must check all dimensions on site. Discrepancies must be reported immediately to the architect before proceeding. This drawing is copyright ©2018 Nash Partnership. All rights reserved.

Rev.	Date	Notes	Rev.
A	18.11.18	Draw Application Issue	LM
B	18.11.18	Final Issue	LM
C	12.12.18	Planning Issue	LM
D	06.03.19	Highways Update	LM
E	01.06.20	Planning Name Update	LM

CDM Regulations
xxx

Drawing Scale 1:1000 @ A1
0 50 100m

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PLANNING

Job Number	Drawing Number	Revision
17025	L011	E

Project
North Taunton Woolway Project

Title
Illustrative Phase Plan

Drawn by
LM

Project Manager
AT

Scale
1:1000 @ A1

Date created
06.11.18

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenant’s Strategic Group Meeting – 23rd November 2020

Tenant’s Strategic Group Election Update –*Please note for information purposes only*

Report Author: Sharon Yarde, Housing Customer Experience Lead

Background

The Terms of Reference for the Tenant’s Strategic Group state that elections should be held every 3 years. Therefore, an election is due. In the previous meeting I gave a timeline for the election as taking place in January 2021. This timeline has changed and has now been scheduled so that the newly elected members can start in April 2021.

Project Timeline

Letter,Information pack & application form sent to tenants	11th January 2021
Completed application forms to be returned	8th February 2021 (1 month)
Housing Performance Team to check eligibility of applicants	11/01 until 08/02/2021
If 10 or less applications, the election will not go ahead	
Candidate statement & ballot paper sent to all tenants	1st March 2021
Election open for voting	01/03 until 30/03/2021
Election closes	30 th March 2021
Election to be held on 31st March 2021	
Results announced	1 st April 2021

Current update

Currently we are looking to use a third party for the ballot as our Electoral Services cannot perform this due to canvassing for the elections in May.

I have contacted Acuity, Civica and LFF Research for quotations.

Dates and the time lines may be subject to change.

Recommendations

To keep Tenant Strategic Group members up to date with progress at the next meeting in January 2021.

Going Forward

Open for questions from the group during the meeting on 23rd November 2021

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

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

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Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenant's Strategic Group Meeting – 23rd November 2020

STAR Update –*Please note for information purposes only*

Report Author: Sharon Yarde, Housing Customer Experience Lead

Background

The Star (survey of tenants and residents) is done every 2 years and it is a reputable way of gathering information on Customer satisfaction. We decided to complete STAR prior to Christmas 2020 in order to understand customer priorities and ensure that any unitary consultation can take place from January 2021 onwards without causing any consultation fatigue.

Housemark fully endorse the STAR survey and recommend Acuity as a provider of this survey. Several quotes were obtained, Acuity were very competitive, they had also completed our last and previous surveys and therefore we commissioned them to do the STAR survey on our behalf.

The decision to engage in a telephone survey this year for our general needs, supported housing and extra care tenants was based on the following reasons:

- Telephone surveys are the most popular method with social landlords, around 75% now use this method of communication.
- Results are more representative as quotas are set to ensure they match % of population by say age and area (instead of just the reliable retired responding).
- Removes bias found in postal survey (for example over response from highly satisfied older people).
- Ability to probe where dissatisfaction is found and capture the information in the Voice of the tenant, a more informative response.
- More reliable results which is better for making and informing service reviews.
- Do not have to “disturb” as many residents – i.e. only call 509 rather than mail out to around 2000 residents.
- Customer recovery – if a telecaller speaks to a resident who they think needs a call back they let us know so that it can be dealt with personally and in a timely manner.
- Covid friendly - beneficial, should a lockdown occur as tenants will not be required to go to a post box and will not need to worry about receiving post.
- More interactive, engagement with the tenants.
- In the moment feedback rather than pre-considered answers.

We decided to consult our Leaseholders by paper questionnaire because many of our leaseholders sublet their properties and therefore we may not have their accurate contact information.

Project Timeline

Set up meeting (virtual)	September / Early October
Contract & Project Brief, draft questionnaire / question set	9 October
Question set confirmed	16 October
Promotion of survey to residents	Sept / October
3Data file provided by	23 October
Telephone survey (2 weeks) / Postal survey (4 weeks)	26 October – 30 November
Data editing and processing, data validation and coding	By 4 December
Top line results available	7 December
Draft report	18 December
Final report	December / January

Current update

The project is running to schedule, the paper survey was sent to Leaseholders on Friday 30th October 2020 and we have already received some completed replies.

The telephone questionnaire commenced on 10th November 2020 and both surveys will run until the end of the month.

Website and Facebook page are updated with STAR information and housing directorate made aware of the survey in case of residents being concerned.

Top line results and final report will be reported within the Housing Directorate and Tenant's Strategic Group at the next meeting.

We will take learning from the findings of the report and act upon them.

We will publish the report response on the website.

Recommendations

To note the information above relating to the STAR survey.

Going Forward

Open for questions from the group during the meeting on 23rd November 2021

Democratic Path: N/a for information only

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

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

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