

Subject: New Homes for Neighbourhoods – Development of New Homes on General Fund Land - Extract from the Proceedings of the Housing Committee held on 12 November 2014

Date of Meeting: 4 December 2014

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer: Name: **Caroline DeMarco** Tel: **29-1063**
E-mail: Caroline.demarco@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Policy & Resources Committee:

To receive the item referred from the Health & Wellbeing Board for approval:

Recommendation:

- (1) That the initial design and viability modelling be noted and that it be recommended to Policy & Resources Committee that they agree in principle that each of the following sites is appropriated to the Housing Revenue Account for the development of new housing, subject to Housing and Policy & Resources Committees agreeing a further report detailing the final feasibility and design and associated financial implications:
 - (i) Former library site, Whitehawk Road, Whitehawk, Brighton and
 - (ii) Wellsbourne site, Whitehawk Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.
- (2) That it is agreed that the Estate Regeneration team, in conjunction with the council's Sustainable Futures strategic construction partnership, undertake final feasibility studies, design and development of new housing on sites (i) and (ii).
- (3) That initial feasibility/viability studies, consultation, analysis and research to identify potential wider regeneration opportunities in the vicinity of site (i) be agreed.
- (4) That Policy & Resources is recommended to approve the transfer of a sum of £1.3M from the HRA to the General Fund for sites (i) and (ii) for best consideration for the land value (as detailed in paragraph 3.8-3.9) as and when the final scheme is approved by Policy & Resources.
- (5) That it is agreed that the Estate Regeneration team explore opportunities and options for the delivery of new housing on the car parking site at 7-9 Frederick Street with a view to seeking agreement to appropriate the land

for housing purposes if suitable housing development is subsequently agreed by Housing Committee and Policy & Resources Committee.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 12 NOVEMBER 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillor Randall (Chair) Councillor Phillips (Deputy Chair), Barnett, Daniel, Meadows, Kennedy, Mears, Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Rufus and Wilson (Group Spokesperson)

PART ONE

42 NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS - DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOMES ON GENERAL FUND LAND

- 42.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing which informed Members that the Estate Regeneration Team had continued to explore opportunities to build much needed new homes on council land and to commission initial feasibility and design studies for sites which have potential for council development. The report included the findings of two business case studies of potential development sites on General Fund land for the New Homes for Neighbourhoods Estates Regeneration Programme at the former library site, Whitehawk Road, and the Wellsbourne site, Whitehawk Road.
- 42.2 The report also discussed the possibility of delivering new housing on the car parking site at 7-9 Frederick Street, Brighton. The report was presented by the Housing Programme Manager.
- 42.3 The Housing Programme Manager reminded members that revised recommendations had been circulated before the meeting.
- 42.4 Councillor Mears referred to money being moved from the general fund a few years ago. The new library in Whitehawk had been financed from a grant but there had been a shortfall. Two pieces of land had been put up for sale. The old library site and the Greenhouse. £2.5m had been borrowed from the general fund. Councillor Mears referred to the financial implications and asked if the £1.3m (money needed to be paid to the general fund) was a contribution towards the money borrowed. If this was not the case, Councillor Mears asked what happened with regard to the money that had been borrowed and which needed to be repaid to the general fund.

- 42.5 Councillor Mears stated that she did not see any parking on the old library site and asked how this would be brought forward.
- 42.6 Councillor Mears was concerned about the financial implications. She stressed the need to understand the finances and what happened to clear the debt in the general fund.
- 42.7 The Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing replied that the General Fund had to achieve best consideration for the site. He would have to investigate the history of the site and advise Councillor Mears in due course.
- 42.8 The Housing Programme Manager referred to paragraph 3.8 in the report which reported that the total capital receipt from both sites was required to be in excess of £1m as this had been identified to help fund part of the construction of the co-location building in a report agreed by the former Cabinet on 14 January 2010. The money was forward funded from the education capital programme and needed to be repaid. Meanwhile, there would be car parking on the former library site. He would inform Councillor Mears of the exact figure following the meeting. There were a considerable number of spaces.
- 42.9 Councillor Meadows questioned whether planning were being too cautious about the design of the schemes. She stressed the severe need for housing and considered that the blocks at the former library site, and the Wellsbourne site, could have been a couple of stories higher.
- 42.10 Councillor Wilson referred to community engagement and consultation and asked if there had been feedback to date. The Housing Programme Manager replied that the general feeling was that people want to see housing on those sites. There was a desire for more affordable housing in the city.

42.11 **RESOLVED -**

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