GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

**Date:** **Thursday, 10 June 2021**
**Time:** **18:30**
**Venue:** **Assembly Room**
**Address:** **Town Hall, Hall Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 2QF**

**AGENDA**

**Open to Public and Press**

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

You have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be discussed if it relates to something on your Register of Interests form. You must declare the interest and leave the room while the matter is dealt with.
You have a Personal Interest in a matter to be discussed if it affects

- your well being or financial position
- that of your family or close friends
- that of a club or society in which you have a management role
- that of another public body of which you are a member to a greater extent than others in your ward.

You must declare a personal interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

Whenever you declare an interest you must say why the interest arises, so that it can be included in the minutes.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **3** | **MINUTES** | **4 - 10** |

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **4** | **FORWARD PLAN** | **11 - 12** |

The Committee is asked to receive and consider the Forward Plan.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **5** | **HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE** | **13 - 22** |

Report attached.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **6** | **COUNCIL ADAPTATION POLICY** | **23 - 46** |

Report attached.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **7** | **COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND** | **47 - 51** |

Report attached.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **8** | **COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS - COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT** | **52 - 63** |

Report attached.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **9** | **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21** | **64 - 70** |

Report attached.

## 10 COUNCIL HOMES PROGRAMME 71 - 76

Report attached.

## 11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To consider any other business as may be determined by the Chairman of the meeting as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

## 12 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

In the event of the Committee wishing to exclude the public from the meeting, the following resolution will be moved:-

"That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act."

## 13 CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX -COUNCIL HOME PROGRAMME

Details

GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

## Minutes

Thursday, 04 March 2021 at 17:30

PRESENT:-

Councillor Grant (in the Chair); Councillors Cameron, Candon, Flaxman-Taylor, Galer, Hacon, D Hammond, Martin, Talbot, Smith-Clare, Wainwright & Williamson.

Councillor Jeal attended as an observer only).

Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mrs N Turner (Housing Director), Mrs S Robinson (Early Help Hub Manager), Ms H Notcutt (Community Development Manager), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager), Mr M Severn (IT Support), Mr D Wiles (Communication & Media Manager) & Mrs C Webb (Executive Services Officer).

Mrs C Cullins (CEO, Norfolk Community Foundation).

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

## 3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2021 were confirmed by assent.

With regard to minute number 7, Councillor Martin requested an update. The Strategic Director reported that officers were working on Councillor Martin's request and the information would be available next week.

## 4 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan.

Councillor Wainwright asked if there was a timescale for the Sheltered Housing Services Review to come to Committee. The Housing Director would confirm the expected date of the report as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee receive and note the Forward Plan.

## 5 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS' PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Director & Early Help Hub Manager.

The Strategic Director reported that in November 2020, the Government (MHCLG) had launched a £23 million Community Champions Programme working in partnership with NHS England. The programme invited LA's and

voluntary organisations to apply to work with PHE to provide targeted support for people most at risk from Covid-19.

The Strategic Director reported that the Council had applied and been successful with its proposal for a series of local interventions. This will assist access to public facing pandemic communications, including vaccine advice and information to boost local vaccination take-up amongst local residents.

The Strategic Director provided Members with an overview of the interventions which would be implemented working closely with Norfolk Public health, NCC, Norfolk & Waveney CCG at place level and the Great Yarmouth/Norfolk Villagers & Gorleston/Southern Parishes Primary Care Networks.

Councillor Wainwright asked if any interventions were planned around the lesser take-up of the Covid19 vaccination in the BAME and over 60's age group in the Borough. The Strategic Director confirmed that an intervention to help increase in the take-up of vaccines was planned.

Councillor Williamson referred to paragraph 3.5 on page 14 of the report and that it was a sad reflection on today's society having to formalise the provision of foodbanks across the Borough.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee endorse the proposals for a Community Champions' programme in the Borough of Great Yarmouth.

## 6 REVIEW OF VCSE GRANTS 2020/21 & PROPOSED GREAT YARMOUTH COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND

The Committee received & considered the report from the Strategic Director & Community Development Manager.

The Community Development Manager provided feedback on the current community grants delivery commissioned to run until 30 August 2021 and reported the proposal to transition to a Community Investment Fund model in partnership with the Norfolk Community Foundation.

Councillor Wainwright asked if any modelling had been undertaken to ascertain what effect the cut of £50k of funding had had on the charities concerned.

Claire Cullins, CEO, Norfolk Community Foundation, gave a high level presentation to the Committee detailing the new community grants scheme, with funding contribution of £50k from GYBC for 2021/22, as part of the Great Yarmouth Community Investment Fund which would be administered by the Norfolk Community Foundation. This would operate on line with the priorities set out in the Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy.

Councillor Martin thanked Claire for her informative presentation which had alleviated several of her concerns but she was saddened that local Members would not have a say in how local charities were funded to meet the needs of local residents.

Councillor Wainwright reported that he agreed with Councillor martin but was comforted that the Committee would receive a six monthly updates and an annual report from the Norfolk Community Foundation.

Councillor Smith-Clare reported that it was imperative that the Council looked at the bigger picture especially how this new way of funding would impact the youth of the Borough. Councillor Smith-Clare requested data on the youth unemployment figures for Great Yarmouth, the percentage of 18-24 year olds currently without 5 GCSE's including Maths & English, the career framework put in place for this age group and what number of apprenticeships were available to them at this time. The Strategic Director reported that the Council had recently commissioned a piece of work which would encompass these questions and she would report back to the Committee when the work had been completed.

Councillor Williamson was concerned that £50k of funding would be sufficient to kickstart this new fund and requested that further background information be given to the Committee as to how much funding was awarded to the Council, where it came from and where it went.

Councillor D Hammond asked if grants were awarded for individuals as well as groups. Claire Cullins reported that the majority of funding was awarded to groups but individual funding for carers had been awarded. Councillor Martin asked if the criteria for grant support for carers could be circulated to all members.

Councillor Hacon expressed her disappointment that Members would no longer be required to sit on the Grants Panel and award funding to well-deserving local charities which, in her view, was a great shame.

Councillor Wainwright asked if the NCF provided assistance in applying for grants as the forms could be quite complicated and time-consuming to complete. Claire Cullens reported that the NCF could assist with this process and work through applications over the telephone and sometimes the application only consisted of a much-simpler expression of interest application.

The Committee agreed to approve that Firstmove Furnishaid keep its grant as allocated, in order to deliver the outcomes originally intended, ideally before 30 August 2021 or as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked Claire for her informative presentation and for the good work her and her NCF team were undertaking for the residents of Norfolk.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee agree to:-

(a) Note the achievements of the commissioned VCSE organisations in supporting local
communities during the pandemic and provide advice regarding the one underspent grant
allocation,
(b) Cease the current community grant scheme on 30 August 2021,
(c) Establish the Great Yarmouth Community Investment Fund through the formation of a
strategic partnership with the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) from 1 April 2021,
(d) Provide a funding contribution of £50,000 from 2021/22 for a new community grants
scheme as part of the Great Yarmouth Community Investment Fund to be administered by
the NCF in line with the priorities set within the Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy and
detailed in the criteria of this report at para 3.5,
(e) Delegates authority to the Strategic Director to sign a formal Funding Agreement with the
Norfolk Community Foundation; and
(f) Receive future six-month updates and annual reports on the work of the Great Yarmouth
Community Investment Fund as set out in the terms of the Agreement with the Norfolk
Community Foundation.
(g) Approve that Firstmove Furnishaid to keep its grant as allocated in order to deliver the outcomes originally intended, ideally before 30 August 2021 or as soon as possible.

## 7 LOCALITY STRATEGY

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Director & Community Development Manager.

The Strategic Director provided the Committee with an overview of the process leading up to the development of the Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy which had been produced in collaboration with Great Yarmouth's Locality Board statutory partners and VCSE agencies.

Councillor Wainwright welcomed this excellent report and the proposed Action Plan & Milestones which would enable Members to track and evaluate the success of the strategy. The Strategic Director reported that progress would be reported to committee bi-annually.

Councillor Smith-Clare referred to page 49 of the report and requested that more up-to-date data be used as the data provided was two years old at the time of writing the report. The Strategic Director reported that new data would come forward as a result of the Census 2021.

Councillor Williamson reported that this would be a mammoth task but suggested that up-to-date data could be sourced from Cambridge Health Authority.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee:-

(i) Review and agree the Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy; and

(ii) Request officers, in conjunction with partner organisations, to develop a suite of outcome based Action Plans and to provide a six monthly update on those actions to the Committee.

## 8 DEVELOPMENT STANDARD - ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing director.

The Housing Director gave an overview of the process to produce a Development Standard which would apply to new homes built or acquired to become part of the Council's housing stock. The Housing Director sought five Members from the Committee to form part of a Task & Finish group which would develop the new standard.

Councillor Wainwright reported that his group representatives would be Councillors Martin & Williamson. The Chairman reported that he would e-mail his group representatives to the Housing Director after the meeting.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note he report and nominate five members to participate in the Development Standard Task & Finish Group.

## 9 SOCIAL HOUSING WHITE PAPER

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing Director.

The Housing Director reported that the White paper provided an overview of The Charter for Social Housing and set out a new compliance and performance framework to respond to the requirements of the Charter.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the areas of focus of the Social Housing White Paper and the role of the Committee in monitoring compliance and the performance of the Council's landlord functions.

## 10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the meeting.

The meeting ended at: 19:30

| | URN | Matter for Decision | Report by | Pre Agenda Meeting (PAM) | Housing & Neighbourhoods | Policy & Resources | Council |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | GYN Board Minutes | Head of Property and Assset Management | | | | |
| 2 | 20-201 | Housing Strategy Update | Director of Housing | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 3 | 20-202 | Community Housing Fund Update | Director of Housing | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 4 | 21-081 | Council Homes Programme | Director of Housing | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 5 | 21-053 | Council Adaptation Policy | Director of Housing | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 6 | 21-106 | Community Champions Programme – Food Project | Strategic Director | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 7 | | Annual Performance Report | Housing Transformation Manager | 03/06/21 | 10/06/21 | | |
| 8 | 21-036 | Social Housing White Paper Position Statement | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |
| 9 | 21-038 | Resident Engagement Strategy | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |
| 10 | 21-043 | Sheltered Housing Services Review | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |
| 11 | 20-199 | Empty Homes Policy | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |
| 12 | 20-200 | Temp Accommodation Strategy Update | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |
| 13 | 21-034 | Council Housing Compliance & Performance | Director of Housing | TBC | TBC | | |

**URN:** 20-201

**Subject:** Progress on the delivery of the Housing Strategy 2018-23

**Report to** ELT – 19th May 2021

Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee, 10th June 2021

**Report by:** Christine Spooner - Housing Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer

**SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**This report provides an update on the progress against the delivery of the Housing Strategy approved in 2018.**

**RECOMMENDTION:**

**That Committee:**

1. **Note the progress to date and request a further report in 12 months.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

1.1 Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee approved the strategic aims of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council Housing Strategy in January 2018. The Strategy has four priorities:

- *New homes: ensuring there are enough good quality new homes*

  New houses have a key role to play in both the regeneration and growth of the borough, meeting the needs of local people and improving quality of life. The strategy identifies the role of the Council to support housing delivery of all tenures to meet identified needs in a timely way.

- *Our homes: improving the quality and use of the Council's housing stock*

  The Council owns and manages 5787 homes. 959 of these are sheltered dwellings. Priority areas are to ensure homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, completing work to identify viable options to regenerate the Middlegate estate and reviewing the approach to tenant engagement.

- *Decent homes: providing a good mix of decent homes across all tenures*

  In 2018, 62% of homes were owner occupied, 20% private rented and 18% socially rented. Priority areas are addressing poor housing conditions and fuel

poverty in private sector homes. The high number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) is another priority as well as reducing the number of long-term empty homes.

- *Healthy homes: meeting the needs of vulnerable households*

  The Council has a responsibility to protect, advise and support some of the most vulnerable people in the local community and recognises that having a home plays a significant role in ensuring people can lead a healthy life. Priority areas include strengthening partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure early intervention and effective use of resources and responding to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

1.2 The Housing Strategy is supported by a Housing Strategy Action Plan which contains a number of strategic objectives designed to deliver against the four priorities of the Housing Strategy. Progress in the delivery of each of the four priorities is monitored through a series of measures.

1.3 A progress report was delivered to Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee in March 2019 based on performance against the measures at Q3 2018/19. The intention is to deliver annual updates; however, no update was given in 2020 because of Covid-19.

## 2. Progress

2.1 The pandemic has, of course, presented unprecedented challenges over the last year. However, progress has continued to be made against the measures and the Housing Strategy priorities.

2.2 The progress report provided in March 2019 detailed performance on the Housing Strategy measures at quarter 3; this update provides information on progress at the end of quarter 4. Full information on the performance of these measures for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 are shown at Appendix 1.

Some key measures of delivery against the Housing Strategy to date are shown in the table below:

| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NEW HOMES** | | | |
| New homes built | 202 | 327 | 368[1] |
| Affordable homes built | 24 | 17 | 55 |
| Affordable homes built as percentage of all new homes | 11.88% | 5.20% | 14.95% |
| Homes built by Council | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Homes acquired by Council's use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts | 7 | 18[2] | 13 |
| Starts on site for new build housing units | 315 | 442 | 133 |
| **OUR HOMES** | | | |
| GYBC homes not meeting the Government's Decent Homes Standard | 1403 | 1002 | 314 |
| Percentage of GYBC housing stock not meeting the Government's Decent Homes Standard | 24.26% | 17.38% | 5.43% |
| Days to complete minor voids | 9.21 | 11.3 | 15.89 |
| Percentage of Tenants satisfied with the repairs service they receive | 97.73% | 97.20% | 92.40% |
| People in the allocations pool who have been assessed | 420 | 769 | 533 |
| STAR Survey, percentage of tenants satisfied with overall service provided by the Council | No survey | 83% | No survey |
| **DECENT HOMES** | | | |
| Licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation | 70 | 64 | 67 |

1 Provisional figure, to be confirmed end June

2 Includes two homes for use as Temporary Accommodation; includes one also included in total number of affordable new homes and affordable new homes provided under S106 figures.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants and completion of works | 145 | 111 | 43 |
| **HEALTHY HOMES** | | | |
| Homelessness decisions | 65 | 64 | 40 |
| Homelessness prevention duties accepted | 541 | 536 | 286 |
| Homelessness relief duties accepted | 413 | 393 | 416 |
| Annual Rough Sleeper Estimate | 10 | 21 | 18 |

2.3 Further commentary on the Housing Strategy priority areas is provided below:

- The number of new homes built per year has increased and there is a strong future position in relation to the '5-year supply'.
- Housing Delivery: 915 homes were delivered between 2017-2020, equating to 104% against housing need/requirement as set out in the Housing Delivery Test.
- Housing Supply: 2797 homes are expected to be completed over the next 5 years, equating to an oversupply of 655 against needs/requirement.
- House prices in the borough have risen by 7.5% over the past year, with detached properties seeing a 10.42% rise, semi-detached 6.93%, terraced 7.40% and flats 7.43.[3] Nationally, average property prices have risen by 7.6% overall, though percentage increases across the different architypes are significantly higher than in Great Yarmouth.[4]
- The number of GYBC properties not meeting the Government's Decent Homes standard has reduced over the past 3 years.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic there has been a reduction in the percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs service they have received.
- Despite being impacted by Covid-19 the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants and completion of works has continued, albeit at a reduced rate.
- The Council has continued to support hospital discharge through the District Direct and Be at Home services throughout the pandemic.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has influenced the total number of homelessness decisions, preventions and relief since its implementation in 2018.
- Covid-19 has had a significant impact the past year, with a ban on Evictions and people tending to 'stay put'. The eviction ban ends on 1 June 2021.
- The Covid-19 pandemic and the Government's 'Everyone in' initiative has driven forward work in preventing single people arriving on, returning to or remaining on the street.

[3] https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/great-yarmouth/
[4] https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/england/

Note: More detailed information on the Council's performance as a landlord will be included in the Council Home Compliance and Performance Position Statement report which will be considered by Committee in July.

2.4 In reviewing the status of each action within the Housing Strategy Action Plan the following categories were used to assess whether actions are on track or slipping:

**Complete**; this includes the following:

- A2 - Timely publication of monitoring information, e.g. Annual Planning Monitoring Report; Annual 5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement; Brownfield Register. (These documents will however be subject to ongoing review).
- A3 - Continue research to clarify where there are opportunities for GYBC to accelerate housing delivery. To include joint work with other Norfolk authorities following on from the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework
- F1 - Prepare supplementary planning documents, development briefs and/or planning briefs, etc., to build on the Town Centre Masterplan etc.to help promote the developability of Conge, Waterfront, etc, and extend the range of sites ready for development.
- L1 – HRA Business Plan - Needs to include consideration of the council's future role in affordable housing development through the HRA. (This will be kept under review).

**In progress; this includes the following:**

- B1 - Prioritise completion of Local Plan Part 2 to provide appropriate housing land allocations, and more positive development management policies, to help facilitate sufficient housing development of appropriate types and locations.
- D1 - Communications Plan to be developed to promote home ownership options in GY, at the same time as research into different options and their affordability.
- I2 - Complete the review of Council's commercial assets and property portfolio to develop a clear strategy for maximising the use of the council's land and assets to deliver new housing.
- K1 - Programme of capital works to the Council's housing stock agreed.
- M2 - Undertake review of repairs to ensure effective value for money is balanced with tenants taking greater responsibility for their homes.
- R1 -Improve the approach to how the council engages with its tenants (and leaseholders) to understand their needs and issues with a specific focus on introduction of new engagement mechanisms. Use tenant and leaseholder engagement to drive continuous improvement.
- X1 - Progress the actions set out in the Preventing Homelessness Strategy Action Plan ensuring that service is accessible with a range of housing options to meet an individual's housing and support needs.
- X2 - Strengthen partnership working opportunities with statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure early intervention and the effective use of resources now and in the future.

**Further action needed**; this relates to actions where progress has been unable to be made and includes those cases where circumstances outside the control of the Council has prevented work on an action starting.

- C1 - Reinvigorate the Developers Forum to improve our understanding of Developer's individual and collective perspectives whilst, conveying the message that GY is a supportive environment for good development by local, regional and national developers.
- L2 Use the Council's Company - Equinox Enterprises to actively intervene in the rental housing market.
- N1 - Monitoring Void Performance. Develop and maintain robust set of PI's. Compare performance with other landlords via House Mark (cost and timescale).
- X3 - Build on the Housing First Model working with rough sleepers to ensure individuals rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping are able to get their life back on track.

Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19 work in delivering against the priorities there has been continued progress on the majority of actions, albeit in some instances at a slower pace

## 3 Key challenges for 21/22

Key challenges for 21/22 are to recover the position in relation to elements of the Housing Strategy which have been particularly impacted by Covid-19 with a particular focus on:

- Increasing housing delivery of all tenures to meet housing need and demand
- Ensuring high quality homes of all tenures
- Reducing homelessness and Rough Sleeping.

## 4 Financial Implications

There are none associated with the report. The financial implications of each action within the Housing Strategy Action Plan are assessed on a case by case basis by the responsible lead officer for each action. The financial implications will be managed through continued regular monitoring of the Housing Revenue Account, the Housing Capital Programme budget and the funds available through the use of Right to Buy Receipts.

## 5 Risk Implications

The Housing Strategy is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that any risks are managed.

## 6 Conclusions

Despite Covid-19 progress has been made in the implementation of the Housing Strategy across its four priorities of the Housing Strategy. Whilst the pandemic has had considerable negative impact on some actions and slowed progress in their delivery it has acted as a catalyst for new initiatives and approaches in reducing rough sleeping and tackling homelessness.

## 7 Background papers

Housing Strategy 2018-2023
Appendix 1: Housing Strategy Measures 2018-21

Appendix 2: Housing Strategy Action Plan Summary

| **Area for consideration Comment** | **Comment** |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation | Via ELT |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation | Via ELT |
| Existing Council Policies See background papers | Corporate Plan<br>Housing Strategy |
| Financial Implications Within existing budgets | Covered in Report |
| Legal Implications (including human rights) | n/a |
| Risk Implications | Covered in Report |
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment | Focus of Housing Strategy will improve equality as a result of actions to improve housing condition and supply. |
| Crime & Disorder | As above |
| Every Child Matters | As above |

**Appendix 1**

# Housing Strategy Measures 2018-21

| MEASURE | Outturn Q4 2018/19 | Outturn (to Q4 2019/20 | Outturn (to Q4 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **New Homes** | | | |
| Total number of new homes built per year | 202 | 327 | 368 * |
| Total number of affordable new homes built per year (a) in total (b) as a percentage of total housing built per year and (c) provided under Section 106 Agreements. | a) 24<br>b) 11.88%<br>c) 17 | a) 17<br>b) 5.20%<br>c) 17 | a) 55<br>b) 14.95<br>c) 47 |
| Homes acquired by the Council's use of RTB receipts | 7 | 18 ** | 13 |
| Number of starts on site for new build housing units | 315 | 442 | 133 |
| Total number of new homes the council has built. | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Number of S106 Agreements completed. | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| Number of planning permissions (units) with extant permissions (those not yet complete) | 2984 | 2893 | Data not yet available |
| **Our Homes** | | | |
| Number of properties not meeting the Government's 'decent homes' standard | 1403 | 1002 | 314 |
| Percentage of tenants who are satisfied with the repairs service they receive | 97.73% | 97.20% | 92.40% |
| Percentage and number of responsive repairs which are completed 'right first time' | 15189 of 16454<br><br>92.3% | 13583 of 14636<br><br>92.81% | 11472 of 12294<br><br>93.31% |
| Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of their new home. | 86.82% | tbc | tbc |
| Average number of days to complete minor voids ready to re-let | 9.21 | 11.3 | 15.89 |

**Appendix 1**

# Housing Strategy Measures 2018-21

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of people in the Allocations Pool | 860 (440 unscored, 420 scored) | 943 (174 unscored, 769 scored) | 754 (221 unscored, 533 scored) |
| Average cost of day to day repairs. | £121.48 | £126.93 | Not yet available |
| Overall tenant's satisfaction – results of Annual Survey or equivalent. | No survey | 83% | No survey |
| **Decent Homes** | | | |
| The number of empty homes brought back into use this year | 525 | 495 | Data not yet available |
| Number of licensed houses in multiple occupation in the borough | 70 | 64 | 67 |
| Number of Disabled Facilities grants approved | 145 | 111 | 43 |
| Average time taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities grant. | 249 days | 289 days | 363 |
| Number of enforcement prosecutions. | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Healthy Homes** | | | |
| Number of additional bed days attributed to delayed discharge from Hospital. | 685 | 1174 | 904 |
| Rough sleepers annual estimate | 10 | 21 | 18 |
| Total number of homelessness decisions (s193 duty) | 65 | 64 | 40 |
| Homelessness relief duties accepted | 413 | 393 | 416 |
| Homelessness prevention duties accepted | 541 | 536 | 286 |
| accommodation (see note 4) | 85 | 146 | 102 |
| The average length of stay in temporary accommodation | N/A | 277.7 | 248 |
| Additional Measures | | | |
| No of Allocations (GYBC & HA) | 328 Q3 & Q4 only | 515 | 616 |
| No of repairs to GYBC stock | 16,454 | 14,636 | 12,294 |

**Appendix 1**

# Housing Strategy Measures 2018-21

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No of planned kitchens replaced | 295 | 315 | 337 |
| No of planned bathrooms replaced | 197 | 235 | 270 |
| No of boilers replaced | 208 | 459 | 414 |
| No of rewires undertaken (full rewires) | 38 | 72 | 34 |
| Voids completed | 337 | 337 (all)<br>178 (standards) | 379 (all)<br>256 (standards) |
| Major voids completed | 118 | 159 | 123 |
| NHS bed days saved atributable to I'm Going Home alarms | 308 | 188 | 61 |
| NHS bed days saved attributable to Healthy Homes Service | 377 | 127 | 155 |

Notes:
Note 1: Original Data for 2017/18 showed 728 non Decent Homes, but figure is refreshed annually as each year, the age of components in the stock can trigger other dwellings becoming non decent.
Note 2: Since October 18 all HMOs with 5 plus persons must be licensed, whatever their size.
Note 3: This reflects the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 from April 2018.

Note 4: The number of placements into temporary accommodation reflects the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter.

NB: Housing Strategy Measures data has been collected since end Q3 2018-19

* Provisional figure

**URN:** **21-053**

**Subject:** **Revised Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants 2021**

**Report to:** **Executive Leadership Team: 19th May 2021**

**Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee: 10th June 2021**

**Report by** **Vicky George: Independent Living Service Manager**

**SUBJECT MATTER**

**This report outlines the revisions to the current Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants.**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Committee:**

1. **Approve the Adaptation Policy for Council Tenants.**

## 1. Introduction / Background

1.1 Under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 the Council has a duty to consider housing conditions in its area and have regard to the needs of the chronically sick and disabled persons. This includes the provision or adaptation of existing accommodation for its own disabled tenants.

1.2 The purpose of the Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants is to set out the Council's approach to the provision of aids and adaptations for its tenants who are eligible to receive them and how they will be delivered. The policy aims to help tenants and their immediate household, who are disabled or suffer long-term ill health to love independently in their home. The Council is committed to facilitating the provision of aids and adaptations to properties and will endeavour to deal with requests for assistance quickly and sensitively as possible.

1.3 The current policy, which was revised in November 2019 following a report to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee has been reviewed again and the recommended amendments and additions are set out in the following section.

## 2. Summary of Key Policy Amendments

2.1 <u>Section 7.2 Reasonable and Practicable and Section 7.3 Landlords Permission</u>

The previous iteration of the policy dealt with permissions for major adaptation works as part of the determination on whether the works are reasonable and practicable as defined in Section 24(3)(b) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Recent case law has identified that Council's need to be clear on the basis on which they are refusing works and determining whether works are reasonable and practicable as this can only have regard to the age and condition of the dwelling. For example works may be deemed not reasonable and practicable where the structural characteristics of the dwelling render certain types of adaptation inappropriate, or where a feasibility of carrying out certain adaptations identifies issues that may limit or increase difficulty of access, such as narrow halls, stairways and passages. Section 7.2 Reasonable and Practicable has therefore been amended and the decision process for the landlord has been moved into the new

Section 7.3 to bring greater clarity to the decision process where major adaptation works are being proposed. This makes it clearer that there are circumstances whereby the Council as landlord may refuse consent for adaptations. A step by step guide to the adaptation process has been included in appendix 1 of the policy.

2.2 Section 8 Cost of Adaptations

The cost of adaptations to the Council's own housing stock is met from its Housing Revenue Account and is subject to budget availability. This section has been amended to set the upper cost limit in line with the maximum award for Disabled Facilities Grant, which is currently £30,000 per individual with an assessed need. The policy reaffirms the position relating to the discretion of the Housing Director to increase the individual award of £30,000 to a sole applicant to a maximum of £50,000 in exceptional circumstances. The policy also includes a cap on the total amount that can be spent adapting a property to meet the needs of a household where there is more than one person with an assessed need. This is at the discretion of the Housing Director and is as follows:

- Two applicants with assessed needs for adaptations the total amount that can be awarded is £60,000.
- Three or more applicants with assessed needs for adaptations the total amount that can be awarded is capped at £80,000.

Where the cost of the adaption works exceed £30,000 the applicable cap identified above will apply to the property and for the lifetime of the tenancy, including succession or where a new tenancy is formed, for example the creation of a joint tenancy, which relates to the household that were resident at the time of the adaptation works being completed.

Capping the cost at £80,000 provides the Council greater scope to undertake works for households with multiple assessed needs who may otherwise wait a significant amount of time for rehousing to more suitable accommodation that is adapted or can be adapted to meet their needs. It also creates an adapted property that is an asset in the Council's property portfolio. In setting the cap at £80,000 the Council is mindful that the cost being met by the Housing Revenue Account, therefore where investment greater than £80,000 is needed to adapt a property it would be prudent and more cost-effective to identify an alternative property that can be adapted to meet the households needs. Cases where major adaptations are being proposed will be considered individually and all options will be explored including moving to more suitable accommodation.

2.3 Section 9.1 Adaptations to Void Properties

This is a new section that establishes the Councils approach to adapting void properties, which balances the needs of the disabled tenant and their household with the efficient allocation of properties to maximise rental income. The Council's approach includes ensuring void adapted properties are allocated to those who need an adapted property and providing adaptations in a timely manner once the tenancy has commenced

2.4 Section 9.2 Adaptations and Acquisitions

This is a new section that includes the Councils approach to adapting properties it acquires using retained receipts. There is a new appendix in section 9 that sets out points that will be considered when acquiring a property to adapt for wheelchair use.

**3. Financial Implications**

3.1 As previously identified the cost of adaptations to the Councils own stock is met by the Housing Revenue Account. The budget for 2021/22 is £578,582.

In June 2018 Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee set the limit for works at £30,000 in line with Disabled Facilities Grants and gave discretion to the Head of Housing to increase that to £50,000 in exceptional circumstances. Prior this there was not a financial limit and cases were considered individually. Since June 2018 the Council has carried out adaptions to one property where the cost of works exceeded £30,000 but not £50,000. In addition, adaptation works did not proceed on four properties as a result of the cost exceeding £50,000, instead these households were offered assistance through the Housing Allocations Scheme to find alternative accommodation that could be adapted within the financial limit set. Of those four cases where adaptations did not proceed there was only one where the household contained more than one person with potential needs, although the needs of the additional household member had not been formally assessed.

The service is demand led therefore officers use previous years demand to inform budget setting each year.

**4 Risk Implications**

4.1 An increase in budget may be required as a result of the change to levels of funding available. It is difficult to predict how many cases there will be where the two or more people have assessed needs for adaptations and therefore the cap of £80,000 could be reached. This risk will be mitigated by considering other options such as a move to adapted accommodation or accommodation that can be adapted within the cost cap.

**5 Legal Implications**

5.1 The Council has a duty to consider housing conditions in its area and have regard to the needs of the chronically sick and disabled persons (Housing Act 1985), which includes the provision or adaptation of existing accommodation for its own disabled tenants.

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with protected characteristics that are specified in section 4 of the Act. Disability is one of the specified characteristics.

**6 Conclusions**

6.1 A comprehensive review of the Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants has been undertaken with a number of changes made to ensure there is clarity when decisions are made to refuse adaptations and also to increase the maximum spend available, at the discretion of the Housing Director for adaptations.

**7. Background Papers**

Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants 2019

*Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?*

| **Area for consideration** | **Comment** |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | Through ELT |

| | |
|---|---|
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | Through ELT |
| Existing Council Policies: | Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants 2019 |
| Financial Implications (including VAT and tax): | Included in section 3 |
| Legal Implications (including human rights): | Included in section 5 |
| Risk Implications: | Included in section 4 |
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment: | Yes – Disabled tenants are covered by the Equalities Act 2011. |
| Crime & Disorder: | N/A |
| Every Child Matters: | Yes – Adaptations for children are covered in the policy |

# Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants 2021

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|---|---|
| **Document produced:** | May 2021: |
| **Date approved** | |
| **Review date** | May 2023 |

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|---|---|
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| **12** | **Review of Decision** |
| **13** | **Complaints** |
| **14** | **Monitoring & Review of the Policy** |
| | **Appendices**<br>1: Adaptation Process<br>2: Points to Consider When Acquiring & Adapting a Property for Wheelchair Use |

## 1. BACKGROUND

Under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 the council has a duty to consider housing conditions in its area and have regard to the needs of chronically sick and disabled persons. This includes the provision or adaptation of existing accommodation for its own disabled tenants.

**Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC)** provides funding each year for the provision of aids and adaptations to enable its tenants to remain in their home for as long as it is safe and reasonable to do so. This funding comes from the housing service's capital and revenue budget.

This Adaptations Policy specifically refers to adaptations carried out for tenants of GYBC.

## 2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the policy is to set out the council's approach to the provision of aids and adaptations for GYBC tenants, who are eligible to receive them, and how they will be delivered.

The assistance available through this policy aims to provide an efficient, practical and cost-effective adaptation service, taking into account the health and well-being of the tenant and household.

## 3. POLICY AIMS

The policy aims to help GYBC tenants, and their immediate household, who are disabled or suffer from long-term ill health to live independently in their home.

The council is committed to facilitating the provision of aids and adaptations to properties and will endeavour to deal with requests for assistance as quickly, effectively and sensitively as possible. Applications are dealt with using a priority system combined with date order. Any exceptions to this will need approval from a senior officer.

### 3.1 Definitions

The policy refers to 'disabled' persons. A person is defined as 'disabled' under the Equalities Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

## 4. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

**Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970**
Section 1 of the act imposes a duty on the council to provide adaptations or special equipment needs in the home to help with convenience or for safety. Any provision

of resources is dependent upon an assessment of need under the NHS & Community Care Act 1990.

**Disabled Persons Act 1986**
The Disabled Persons Act 1986 strengthens the provisions of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and requires Local Authorities to meet the various needs of disabled people, including provision of aids and adaptations.

**Housing Act 1985**
Under section 8 of the act the council has a duty to consider housing conditions in its district and the needs of the district for the provision of further housing accommodation. This may include the provision or adaptation of existing accommodation for its own disabled tenants.

**Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996**
Under this act the council has a duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to eligible applicants.

**Equality Act 2010**
The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with the protected characteristics that are specified in section 4 of the Act. Disability is one of the specified characteristics.

## 5. DETERMINING ELIGIBILTY FOR ASSISTANCE

### 5.1 Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply:

Applicants must be a secure tenant of GYBC or their partner, or member of their immediate family, who is permanently resident in the household and who have a disability, which has a significant or serious long-term effect on their ability to:

- carry out normal day-to-day activities in and around their home
- and / or access essential facilities within their home.

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Works for others living at the property such as lodgers, will only be carried out in exceptional circumstances and only if they have been resident with the tenant for more than 12 months.

An applicant who is not a named tenant on the tenancy agreement, must be registered as living at the property for Council Tax purposes, and if aged over 18 years, they should be registered at that address on the electoral roll.

Adaptations will only be considered if the property is the main residence of the individual and they do not hold another tenancy or own another property. The tenant must also intend to remain resident at the property for 5 years. Consideration will be given to waiving this requirement where a tenant is on a fixed term tenancy and there is less than 5 years remaining.

### 5.2 Adaptations for Children

In cases where a child is disabled, and the parents are separated, adaptation works will usually only be completed at the property of principal residence (normally the residence of the parent who is in receipt of child benefit for that child).

### 5.3 Adaptations to Facilitate Hospital Discharge

Adaptations will be considered where the applicant is waiting to be discharged from hospital and requires their home to be altered. These applications will be prioritised ahead of less urgent cases.

### 5.4 Who is not Eligible?

Circumstances where requests to adapt a property may be refused include:

- Where an individual has no recourse to public funds

- Where major adaptations are required, and the applicant is waiting for medical procedures, which will improve their mobility. The decision that the individual is not eligible will be reviewed once their recovery time is complete. Temporary or minor adaptations may be considered during this interim period.

- Requests for major adaptations will not normally be approved where a Right to Buy application has been received by the council. Following completion of a Right to Buy sale, adaptations could, however, be considered under the council's Private Sector Policy by way of a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Reasons for refusal will be provided to the customer in writing and each case will be considered on individual merits. GYBC recognises that there may be occasions where applications for adaptations fall outside of this policy and these will be assessed on an individual basis.

## 6. TYPES OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

There are three categories of aid and adaptations:

- Equipment
- Minor Adaptations
- Major Adaptations

The most appropriate solution will be sought in all cases and will aim to offer the best value for money whilst meeting the needs of the household. This will be achieved by ensuring that the works are **necessary and appropriate** to meet the needs of the disabled person and are **reasonable and practical** depending on the age and condition of the property, prior to authorising the works as outlined in the legislation guidance (Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996).

### 6.1 Equipment

Portable or temporary equipment is available to help with those who have difficulties with daily living activities such as:

- Reaching down to put on socks, stockings or shoes
- Turning the taps on and off or generally managing in the kitchen
- Getting in and out of the bath
- Getting up from a low toilet
- Getting up out of an easy chair
- Carrying things between rooms

The Council can assess and recommend the need for portable pieces of equipment on behalf of t Norfolk County Council. In some circumstance's equipment may be provided free of charge to those people who meet Norfolk County Councils eligibility criteria although this is not guaranteed. Further information is available on Norfolk County Council website. Norfolk County Council Support to Stay at Home

### 6.2 Minor Adaptations

GYBC recognises that the timely provision of minor adaptations can often postpone the need for more substantial adaptations.

The type of work carried out includes:

- Lever taps
- Stair rails
- External grab rails
- Internal grab rails
- ½ height steps
- Small ramps

Requests for minor adaptations will normally be made on behalf of the tenant by an Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor but they can also be made by a GYBC staff member.

### 6.3 Major Adaptations

Major adaptations can include:

- Bathroom works for example installation of level access showers
- Kitchen works for example lowering of worktops
- Internal access – door widening, stair-lifts, through floor lifts

- Property access – ramps, car hard-standing and dropped kerbs[1]
- Extensions where remodelling the existing layout is not possible and a move has been considered as not appropriate.

Major adaptations will only be carried out following a formal recommendation from an Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor, for eligible tenants and in suitable properties.

## 7. PROCESS FOR EXISTING TENANTS

The policy in respect of adaptations to GYBC dwellings reflects the statutory requirements for Disabled Facilities Grants in the private sector.

Before an application for adaptations can be considered, an Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will need to confirm that the applicant is disabled as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.

An Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will carry out an assessment of the needs of the applicant to determine what is necessary and appropriate (this may include working with other health professionals, such as a medical consultant or GP).

The Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will consider the competing needs of the household occupying the property including any competing needs of family members that need to be met in that property.

### 7.1 Necessary and Appropriate

An Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will submit a recommendation of what is required and advise whether the proposed work is **'necessary and appropriate'**. Although there is a duty to consider Social Services advice the formal decision as to whether the proposal is 'necessary and appropriate' is for GYBC to take.

If the application relates to a condition, which is medical rather than functional, supporting evidence of a functional disability may be requested by the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor from the applicants medical practioner to inform the assessment of the applicant's needs.

To qualify as an adaptation, the work must be designed to:

- Enable a disabled person to gain access to and from their home and garden
- Make the dwelling safe for the disabled person and other occupants
- Enable access to a room, which is used as the 'principle family room'
- Facilitate access to and from a room used for sleeping

[1] subject to approval being given Norfolk County Highways

- Enable access to a toilet, bathroom or shower room and facilitate the use of the facilities
- Facilitate the preparation and cooking of food
- Improve or provide a heating system to meet the needs of a disabled person
- Facilitate the use of a source of power, light or heat by altering the existing means of control or providing additional ones
- Enable a disabled person to have access and movement around the home in order to be able to care for someone else living there.

The Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor's recommendation will form the basis of any scheme of works required to meet the needs of the tenant (and where applicable their household), which in some cases may include moving to more suitable accommodation. In some cases, the Council may identify other works to address the needs of the individual and/or ensure the practical use of the property.

### 7.2 Reasonable and Practicable

Once the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor's assessment is received and the proposed work is deemed as necessary and appropriate, the Council's Technical Officer will usually visit to determine whether the works are **'reasonable and practicable'** having regard to the age and condition of the property to establish whether the adaptations can be carried out safely without having an adverse effect on the fabric of the building.

Where the assessed needs are complex and there may be more than one way of meeting the identified needs; the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor may carry out a joint visit with the Technical Officer. Taking a person-centred approach, the visit will identify what the applicant is able to do currently and options will be discussed and considered in line with this policy, to establish the most appropriate solution, which will aim to offer best value for money whilst meeting the needs of the applicant. This may include undertaking works that meet the necessary needs of the applicant now pending a move to more suitable accommodation that is able to be meet / or be adapted to meet the whole range of identified needs.

### 7.3 Landlord Permission

Permission will be sought from the Council as landlord before major adaptation works are carried. Major works include but are not limited to extensions and multiple works that involve extensive remodelling to create accessible amenities and facilitate access to the property.

The Council as landlord will not give permission for:

- major adaptation works where the cost of the works exceeds the financial limit set at section 8 of this policy.
- Level access bathing provision or shower trays in flats above ground floor.

- Installation of stair lifts to a communal staircase in a block of flats or the shared common areas of a property as there is a risk that this will restrict access to other users of the building and the emergency services.

- Works to properties if the property is not suitable for the size of the household.

A property will be considered unsuitable for the size of the household where a household is under-occupying by more than one bedroom or where the household is living in a property that is over-crowded. The Council as landlord will consider individual cases of under-occupation sympathetically where the applicant is receiving palliative care and or where there is a need for a carer to sleep in. In these situations, the Council will consider timely provision of some or all the assessed works where they are technically possible. Where the Council as landlord refuses permission the applicant will be offered a move to more suitable accommodation that meets the formally assessed needs of their household. While waiting for more suitable accommodation to become available some of the assessed works may be able to go ahead as an interim solution, for example installation of a stairlift, wash-dry toilet and temporary ramps as these can easily be removed when they are no-longer required.

Circumstances where the Council as the landlord may refuse permission for adaptation works include:

- Where there is suitable alternative accommodation within the social housing stock that is likely to become available within 12 months that would meet the households assessed needs or could be adapted more easily to meet those assessed needs.

- Where the adaptation will have an impact on the property and its future use, such as losing usable living space in the property. For example, relocating a bathroom upstairs resulting in the loss of a bedroom.

- Where the tenant is in breach of their tenancy agreement e.g. rent arrears or substantiated reports of Anti-Social Behaviour and the Council has commenced action seeking possession of the property or formal legal action. In these circumstances, the works will be put on hold pending the outcome of the court case or repayment of the debt. In some exceptional circumstances, for example where the applicant is receiving palliative care, or where essential works are required to meet the needs of disabled children some/all works will be permitted to be undertaken.

Landlord consent for works to communal areas such as ramped access to communal entrances will be considered on a case by case basis taking into account whether the provision of the works would cause health and safety issues for other residents and to consider any likely impact on other residents.

If an adaptation is deemed not **reasonable and practicable** or is refused by the Council as landlord, the tenant will be offered the option of transferring to more suitable alternative accommodation. Transfers are dealt with in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme.

If rehousing is deemed the most appropriate option, then the tenant will be offered support to help them relocate, this may involve assistance to organise a removal company and a contribution towards moving costs.

In cases where a move to more suitable alternative accommodation is recommended, the move will take place as soon as reasonably practicable and will be subject to suitable housing stock being available from the Council or a Registered Providers. In some cases, the tenant may also want to consider a move to the private rented sector.

If a tenant refuses a reasonable offer of more suitable accommodation that is either adapted or can be adapted to better meets the households assessed need, major or extensive adaptations to their current property will not be carried out. In exceptional circumstances, for example where the applicant is receiving palliative care or where adaptations are required to maintain the applicant's safety some essential adaptation works will be provided subject to the financial limit set out at Section 8 and where they are technically possible.

The suitability of an offer of alternative accommodation will be discussed between the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor, Technical Officer, Housing Options Team and Tenancy Services taking account of the applicants essential assessed needs and how they can be met. The applicant will be advised of the options open to them in order to make an informed choice, this will include information on the availability of accommodation.

It is important for the Council as landlord to consider all these factors to ensure it makes the best use of its financial resources and stock whilst meeting the needs of the applicant.

Tenants can request a review of the Councils landlord decision to refuse the works and this should be done in writing within 28 days of receiving written notification of refusal. Section 12 sets out the review process.

When considering the scope of works, the Council as part of its landlord function, will consider the long-term use of the property when making adaptations. This consideration will particularly be relevant where extensions and other major adaptions are being considered. The Council as landlord may decide to enhance the adaption e.g. providing a double bedroom rather than a single bedroom to ensure the property could accommodate as many household types in the future.

Requests for adaptation will not be refused due to any additional costs caused by an enhanced adaptation at the landlord's request.

Appendix 1 contains a simplified step by step guide to the process.

## 8. COST OF ADAPTATIONS

The cost of adaptations to its own housing stock is met by Council from its Housing Revenue Account and is subject to budget availability. The upper cost limit for works is set in line with the maximum award for a Disabled Facilities Grant, which is currently £30,000 per individual.

The Council as landlord will consider applications for multiple people in a household and those from a sole applicant.

For sole applicants the maximum cost of adaptations that can be funded is £30,000. There may be a small number of cases where works are likely to exceed £30,000. For example, where multiple adaptations are needed, where an extension is recommended to create downstairs living, or where works will meet a particular need which otherwise cannot be met in the existing affordable housing stock within a reasonable time period. The cost of works for a sole applicant is capped at £50,000 and agreement to fund works up to this amount is at the discretion of the Housing Director.

Major adaptations for multiple people in a household will only be considered where there is an Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor assessment for each person that explicitly defines their needs, and which clearly defines the works that are required to meet those needs. For a household with assessed multiple needs the maximum amount that can be spent on adapting a property is as follows:

- Two applicants with assessed needs for adaptations, the total amount that can be awarded is £60,000.
- Three or more applicants with assessed needs for adaptations the total amount that can be awarded is £80,000.

Where the cost of the works exceed £30,000 the applicable cap identified above applies to the property and for the life of the tenancy, including succession or where a new tenancy is formed for example the creation of a joint tenancy, which relates to the household that were resident at the time of the adaptation works being completed.

Where the cost of the work is likely to exceed £30,000 for a sole applicant or major adaptations are being considered for multiple people in a household, the Housing Director will consider cases individually and decisions are at their discretion. This discretion will only be used in exceptional circumstances where:

- Suitable alternative accommodation is not available in the current affordable housing stock, or;
- An applicant has been waiting in excess of a year for a move to a more suitable property that is either adapted or can be adapted at a lower cost, and;
- Alternative funding cannot be identified. This would include making representation to NCC Social Services for top up funding or approaching charitable organisations, and;
- Where discussions with the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor to find an alternative less costly way of meeting the applicant’s needs have been exhausted.

### 8.1 Means Test

A means test is not applied to adaptations for tenants or their household and therefore no financial contribution is required.

GYBC reserve the right to review whether a financial contribution should be sought at a future date.

## 9. ADAPTATIONS TO VOID OR ACQUIRED PROPERTIES

### 9.1 Adaptations to Void Properties

In order to make the most efficient use of existing stock the Council makes every effort to let adapted properties to those applicants who require them.

The Council will not routinely remove adaptations from void properties or undertake major adaptations to a property, where there is the likelihood of a suitable property becoming available within 12 months that would meet the households assessed needs or could be adapted more easily to meet those assessed needs.

When a property becomes vacant it will be determined whether it is suitable for someone needing adapted accommodation. This determination will be based on whether the property has existing adaptations and or whether is can be adapted to meet the needs of an applicant waiting for re-housing.

Where a property can be adapted to meet the needs of an applicant the Council will carry out those adaptations once the tenancy has started. Adaptations will not be carried out prior to the commencement of the tenancy unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as:

- applicant is physically unable to access the property with the provision of a temporary ramp
- applicant or disabled person has a medical condition that means it would not be safe for them to be in the property while work is carried out. For example, has severe breathing difficulties that would be aggravated by the works and cannot stay with family or friends while the work is on-going, or there is a member of the household with severe autism who cannot live elsewhere while the work is on-going.
- Where a property requires void works that if delivered differently would meet the needs of the disabled tenant for example, instead of fitting a new standard bathroom, provide an adapted bathroom.
- Where the adaptations required are significant (impacting large parts of the property) or are structural in nature making it unsafe for someone to live in the property while the work is carried out.

In those circumstances the Council may carry out some or all the adaptations prior to the commencement of tenancy.

## 9.2 Adaptations and Acquisitions

From time to time the Council may acquire properties on the open market to meet specific housing needs which cannot be met within the existing stock. When acquiring a property to meet the needs of a disabled household waiting for rehousing, the Council will seek to acquire adapted properties or properties that lend themselves to adaptation at a reasonable cost.

The process for properties acquired for this purpose are outlined in the GYBC Use of Retained Receipts Policy and the GYBC Acquisitions and Disposals Policy. These policies can be found on the GYBC website.

Potential properties to be acquired for this purpose will be surveyed to assess whether they are suitable or can be made suitable for tenants with disabilities before a final decision is made on whether to acquire. Funding for these works will be provided from the acquisitions budget, including the use of Retained Right To Buy Receipts.

Appendix 2 sets out the points and indicative specification that will be considered when acquiring a property to adapt for wheelchair use. This is applicable when considering works in both void properties and properties the Council is seeking to acquire.

## 10. TENANTS INSTALLING THEIR OWN ADAPTATIONS

Secure tenants of GYBC may be able to organise their own adaptations at their own expense. In all cases, the tenant must obtain written agreement from GYBC before carrying out alterations or adaptations to their property. GYBC will only refuse permission with good reason, such as if the work:

- Would interfere with any maintenance to the property
- May cause a potential health & safety risk
- Would breach regulatory requirements.

The written request will need to state what works and adaptations the tenant wishes to carry out and who will be undertaking the works. A tenant must not start works without first gaining written permission from GYBC. GYBC may inspect completed works to ensure they are carried out satisfactorily.

GYBC will also advise the tenant prior to approval of an adaptation that they may be required to remove any adaptations and make good any damage to the property and/or reinstate the original features of the property at the end of their tenancy. For example, when a bath is replaced with a shower, the tenant may be required (depending on the property type) to install a replacement bath at the end of their tenancy.

The tenant will be responsible for the maintenance and repairs of adaptations that they have arranged themselves for the duration of the tenancy. In addition, GYBC will not be liable for any damage or injury caused by the adaptations.

The amount of rent charged will not be affected by installing privately funded adaptations to the property.

At the end of the secure tenancy, tenants who have carried out adaptations at their own expense and with the approval may be eligible for some compensation in accordance with legislation (Housing Act 1985 Part 4 Section 99A 'Right to compensation for improvements)

If adaptations have been carried out at the tenant's own expense without permission:

- GYBC may agree to take over the ownership of the adaptations subject to the standard of the adaptation works being satisfactory and capable of being granted consent for by the Council.
- The tenant may be required to remove the adaptation, reinstate original features of the property and make good the damage to the property if the quality of the adaptation is not satisfactory, the Council would not have given consent for the adaptation works or it would not be suitable to re-let the property with the adaptation in place.
- If GYBC needs to repair any damage after a tenancy has ended caused by the adaptation of the property by the former tenant or remove an adaptation the former tenant had installed, the former tenant will be liable for the cost of the works.

## 11. USE OF ADAPTED PROPERTY

Once major or extensive adaptations have been completed at a property it is expected that the person for whom the adaptation was completed will continue to live at the property for a minimum period of 5 years unless circumstances do not allow this (for example, a deteriorating medical condition means that the property is no longer suitable).

Where the individual's needs have changed and, with agreement from the Occupational Therapist and the council, a move to a suitable alternative property will be considered in line with the current Council's Housing Allocations Scheme. Should the new home require any adaptations to meet specific needs, these will be assessed in accordance with the terms of this policy.

If the tenant applies to be re-housed following completion of an adaptation for themselves or a member of their family, they would normally be considered adequately housed unless their circumstances have significantly changed or there will a material impact on them if they remain in the property.

### 11.1 Mutual Exchange

Mutual exchanges will be considered in line with legislation with Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985 setting out the grounds for refusing a mutual exchange). Therefore, permission may be refused if the property:

- Has been adapted or has features that make it suitable for a disabled person
- Is a property owned by a landlord which lets properties to particularly vulnerable people or;
- Is for people with special needs (supported housing) and if the mutual exchange took place there would no longer be such a person living in the property.

### 11.2 Right to Buy

Applications to exercise the Right to Buy by tenants who have had adaptations carried out by the council may be refused in line with legislation (Housing Act 1985 Schedule 5: Exceptions to the Right To Buy). All applications will be assessed on a case by case basis.

### 11.3 Change of Needs

If a tenant's needs change after adaptations have been installed for example, they can no longer do something that they could manage before, the council, upon request will arrange for the tenants needs to be reassessed.

## 12. REVIEW OF DECISION

It is important that tenants can request a review of a decision in a clear, fair and efficient process. Tenants may request a review of a decision to refuse works. Reviews should take place as soon as possible in order not to disadvantage an applicant.

The review process is as follows:

a) A review request must be made by the tenant within 28 days of the decision regarding their application. This time limit may be extended in exceptional circumstances.
b) The review must be conducted by another council officer who was not involved in the original decision and is senior to the officer who made the original decision.
c) The review process will normally be based on written representations.
d) The review officer may make further inquiries and interview applicants and other interested parties but there will be no requirement to hold a full oral hearing.
e) The review should be concluded within 8 weeks of the review request or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards.
f) The decision on review will be and communicated in writing to the tenant and give reasons if the review outcome is against the tenant.

## 13. COMPLAINTS

Any complaints about this policy or its implementation will be addressed through the council's corporate complaints system.

## 14. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The policy will be monitored and be subject to bi-annual review unless there is a fundamental change of legislation.

Appendix 1:

**Steps by Step Adaptation Process**

| |
|---|
| A referral is made to the independent Living Service – this can be made by the tenant or the tenant's representative. |
| |
| An initial assessment is carried out to determine eligibility and the likely nature of the assistance required. Not all requests will require adaptations, some requests may be more appropriate to be dealt with by the Handyperson service or could be met through the provision of equipment. |
| |
| If adaptations are required, the case will be referred for further assessment to determine the households needs. This assessment will be carried out by an Occupational Therapist (OT) or a Trusted Assessor (AT). |
| |
| The tenant will be contacted to make an appointment for the assessment to be carried out. The assessment could be by telephone or face to face visit. |
| |
| If at the assessment the property is deemed not suitable for the size of the household and there are no exceptional circumstances as defined in the policy the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will advise that the works will not be able to proceed. They discuss with the tenant whether they wish to move to more suitable accommodation and will provide advice on how to apply for rehousing. |
| |
| If the property is suitable in size for the household the Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessor will determine what works are required and whether they are necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed needs. This may involve a joint visit with the Technical Officer to consider how they works could be delivered. The Occupational Therapist or Trusted assessor will provide a formal recommendation for works. |
| |
| On receipt of the recommendation the Technical Officer arranges a survey, unless one has not already been completed as part of the joint visit, to determine if the works are reasonable and practical given the structure and design of the building. |
| |
| Permission from the Council as landlord will be required for adaptations including extensions and multiple works that involve extensive remodelling to create accessible amenities and facilitate access to the property. When considering whether to grant permission the landlord will consider the extent and nature of the adaptations in relation to the property and the cost of the adaptations which cannot exceed the amounts set out in the policy. |
| |
| If the adaptations are deemed not reasonable and practicable or are refused by the Landlord, the tenant will be informed of the decision and offered the option of transferring to more suitable alternative accommodation. The tenant may request a review of the landlord's decision to refuse the works. |
| |
| Where the adaptations can proceed the Technical Officer will liaise with the tenant and contractor to agree a start date. |
| |
| On completion of works the Technical Officer will visit to inspect and will notify the referrer that the works are complete to enable them to provide any equipment that has been identified as part of their assessment. |

Appendix 2

## POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN ACQUIRING A PROPERTY TO ADAPT FOR WHEELCHAIR USE

| Area | Principle | Design Consideration |
|---|---|---|
| **Parking** | Provide, or enable by cost effective adaptation, parking that makes getting into and out of the vehicle as convenient as possible. | Where a dwelling has car parking within its individual plot boundary, at least one parking space length should be capable of enlargement to achieve a level car hardstanding area that is 4800mm x 3300mm, ideally this will be as close to the property as possible. |
| **Approach to the dwelling** | Enable, as far as practicable, convenient movement along approach routes to the dwelling for the widest range of people. | The distance from a car parking space to the dwelling entrance should be kept to a minimum and be level or gently sloping. Where ramping is required consider space available for level access platform at the entrance door, minimum 1500mm x 1200mm, with suitable space available to construct a ramped pathway with a gradient no greater than 1:12 for runs up to 5m. The pathway will ideally be 1200mm wide with a minimum requirement of 900mm. |
| **Entrances** | Enable ease of use of all entrances for the widest range of people. | Where possible entrances would have, or the following will be achievable;<br>a) Be illuminated<br>b) Have level access over the threshold; and<br>c) Have effective clear opening widths<br>d) Have adequate weather protection<br>e) Have a level external platform.<br>All entrances should have an accessible threshold with a maximum 15mm up-stand. The minimum effective clear opening width at all entrances to a dwelling should be a no less than 800mm. |
| **Internal doorways and hallways** | Enable convenient movement in hallways and through doorways. | Movement in hallways and through doorways should be as convenient to the widest range of people, including those using mobility aids or wheelchairs. As a general principle, narrower hallways and landings will need wider doorways in their side walls.<br>Subject to provision of adequate door opening widths, the minimum width of any hallway/landing in a dwelling should be 900mm. This may reduce to 800mm at 'pinch points' (e.g. beside a radiator) as long as the reduced width is not opposite, or adjacent to, a doorway. The minimum clear opening width of any doorway within a dwelling, when the approach to the door is 'head on', is 800mm. A wider clear opening will be required when a turn is required with a minimum clear opening of 850mm being achievable. |
| **Circulation Space** | Enable convenient movement in rooms for as many people as possible. | A clear turning circle of 1500mm diameter will be achievable in all rooms to be used by the wheelchair user. Where movement between furniture is necessary for essential circulation (e.g. to approach other rooms, |

| Area | Principle | Design Consideration |
|---|---|---|
| | | or the window) a clear width of 800mm between items should be possible.<br><br>Kitchens: should have a clear width of 1200mm between kitchen unit fronts / appliance fronts and any fixed obstruction opposite (such as other kitchen fittings or walls). This clear 1200mm should be maintained for the entire run of the unit, worktop and/or appliance.<br><br>Bedrooms: The main bedroom in a dwelling should be capable of having a minimum clear space of 800mm wide to both sides and the foot of a standard sized double bed. Other bedrooms should be capable of having a clear space, 800mm wide, to one side of the bed. In addition, in these bedrooms, where it is necessary to pass the foot of the bed a clear width of 800mm should also be provided at the foot of the bed. |
| **Stairs and potential through-floor lift in dwelling** | Enable access to storeys above the entrance level for the widest range of people. | In dwellings with two or more storeys, the stairs and associated area should be adequate to enable installation of a (seated) stair lift without significant alteration or reinforcement. A clear width of 900mm would be ideal. This clear width should be measured 450mm above the pitch height. Stairlifts can be used when the staircase is narrower, however this will be dependent on the user and whether the stairs are straight (minimum 750mm) or curved (minimum 850mm) but will be subject to specific survey. If a stairlift is not a viable option, then a through floor lift can be considered. Consideration has to be given to the rooms this will affect along with access/egress from the lift. The potential aperture size for the route through the floor should be a minimum 1000mm x 1500mm - with the potential approach to the lift being to one of the shorter sides. This potential aperture area should be clear of services. |
| **Bathroom** | Provide an accessible bathroom that has ease of access to its facilities from the outset and potential for simple adaptation to provide for different needs in the future. | An accessible bathroom should be provided in every dwelling on the same storey as a main bedroom. Ideally the room size requirement will be sufficient to accommodate a clear area for level access shower of 1200mm x 1200mm. The centre line for the WC will be a minimum of 450mm from the adjacent wall with space also available for a suitable wash hand basin. A clear turning circle area of 1500mm should be achievable within the room. The door to the bathroom should be available to open outwards. The minimum room footprint would ideally be 2100mm x 2100mm although this is not always available. Walls in all bathrooms and WC compartments should be capable of firm fixing and support for adaptations such as grab rails. |

| Area | Principle | Design Consideration |
|---|---|---|
| **Location of service controls** | Locate regularly used service controls, or those needed in an emergency, so that they are usable by a wide range of household members - including those with restricted movement and limited reach. | Any service control needed to be operated or read on a frequent basis, or in an emergency, should be included within the height band of 450mm – 1200mm from the floor and at least 300mm away from any internal corner. For example, this would include the following: Electrical switches & sockets, TV / telephone / computer points, consumer service units, central heating thermostatic and programming controls, radiator temperature control valves, and mains water stop taps/controls. |
| **Potential for fitting of hoists and bedroom / bathroom** | Aid with assisted living by enabling convenient movement between bedroom and bathroom facilities. | Structure above ceiling finishes over a bedroom and over the bathroom should be capable of supporting, or capable of adaptation to support the future installation of single point hoists above the bed, bath and WC. The primary bedroom and bathroom should be on the same storey level. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **URN:** | **19-184** | |
| **Subject:** | **Community Housing Fund Update** | |
| **Report to:** | **ELT** | **19 May 2021** |
| | **Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee** | **10 Jun 2021** |
| **Report by:** | **Sue Bolan – Enabling & Empty Homes Officer** | |

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**This report is to provide members with an update on the Community Housing Fund and the community land trusts established in the borough.**

## 1. Background

1.1 In December 2016 Great Yarmouth Borough Council received the first tranche of monies for the Community Housing Fund from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) followed by a second tranche in January 2017, the two amounts totalled £652,770.

1.2 On 5th September 2019, this committee approved the Community Housing Fund Policy which continues to provide grants to new organisations to assist in establishing a legal entity and loans to organisations to support schemes to planning application submission. This report provides an update on the current status of the community led housing organisations funded through the Community Housing Fund.

## 2. Community Led Organisations

2.1 There are four established community land trusts in the borough.

- Flegg CLT
- Great Yarmouth CLT – also know as Yarmouth Roads.
- Lothingland CLT
- Hopton CLT

Each organisation has chosen to form as a Community Land Trust (CLT) which enables the organisation to hold land in perpetuity as a community asset.

2.2 FLEGG CLT

Flegg CLT have appointed a new Chair and Vice Chair due to the previous holders stepping down.

Flegg CLT contacted other parishes within the former Flegg Rural District Council area and as such have increased their membership. The areas covered by the Flegg CLT includes;

- Somerton
- Martham
- Repps with Bastwick
- Rollesby
- Hemsby
- Stokesby with Herringby
- Caister

The CLT are in discussions with the Property and Assets team regarding the acquisition of a long lease of a property and with a charity who owns land in the area covered by Flegg CLT.

Flegg CLT continue to meet virtually each month.

2.3 GREAT YARMOUTH CLT

This is our newest CLT and currently the most active.

Working with Broadland Housing Association the CLT visited and appraised a scheme in the town centre making use of three buildings, unfortunately this proved unviable for the CLT at such an early stage in their formation.

The CLT created the 'Save Our Priory' campaign when the Priory Centre was recently advertised by the liquidator. They successfully registered the property as a community asset and made two bids for the property working with the YMCA. Unfortunately, their bids were unsuccessful, but their campaign has increased the CLT's profile in the community.

The CLT are currently reviewing two opportunities in the town, both being empty properties to convert to flats and both require working closely with The Preservation Trust. It is expected that they will be making a bid for funding to support both properties being renovated.

Great Yarmouth CLT continue to meet virtually each month.

2.4 LOTHINGLAND CLT

Before the pandemic struck, Lothingland CLT were exploring 2 sites as possibilities for development however, they had to put these discussions on hold when the pandemic struck as they were having difficulties meeting as a group and with landowners.

Lothingland will become active again once restrictions are lifted.

2.5 HOPTON CLT

Unfortunately, Hopton CLT has been inactive this year given the pandemic. It is expected that this CLT will need to completely restart. The Council is monitoring the situation to ensure that work continues it is a possibility that Hopton and Lothingland will merge into one CLT.

## 3. Locality

3.1 Locality are providing support to the existing CLT's through the contract in place, this contract is set to be reviewed in August 2021.

3.2 At the beginning of the pandemic, work with the CLTs stalled while priorities shifted for all involved and new ways of working were established.

3.2 Alongside the support being offered to existing CLTs, a priority for this year will be to identify other existing community groups in the Borough and offer the support of Locality to establish new housing led groups to meet local housing needs.

## 4. Eastern Communities Homes

4.1 When a community led housing group is being created and indeed, throughout the development process, it is usual that a group would have to go to several different organisations to receive help and support. Great Yarmouth, by using Locality to provide specialist advice and support limit this requirement.

4.2 However, recognising a need for additional capacity to support such groups, Cambridgeshire ACRE led the development of a bid to MHCLG's CLH Enabler Hub Grant Fund for 2020/21 for the 6 counties in the eastern region to fund the creation of a hub (Eastern Communities Homes) to centralise this support and knowledge.

4.2 Each local authority has been asked to make a small contribution (£3,000) to ensure the hub can set up and operate for the first two years, after this it is expected that the hub will be self-financing.

The Hub's offer is to;

- Raise awareness and training for local authorities, their local council and communities.
- Share expertise and experience of community led housing across all 50 councils and their local councils and communities.
- Support the development of planning and housing policy to enable community led housing.
- Deliver technical advice and support to local councils and communities from inception to completion of community led housing.

Great Yarmouth has supported this initiative using the Community Housing Fund.

## 5. Risk Implications

Currently the only risk to the fund would be a request from Government to repay unspent funds.

## 6. Legal Implications

6.1 Legal implications have been considered and NP Law consulted on the agreement with Locality and all paperwork associated with the Community Housing Fund Policy and the loan funding.

## 7. Financial Implications

7.1 The remaining funds total £515,986.66, the Locality contract costs will be met from this fund leaving a total of £478,086.66 for set up grant's and loans. The budget will recycle as loans repay.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 The pandemic caused an initial slow-down in activity until new ways of working were established, two of the CLT's remain inactive during restrictions.

8.2 Both active CLT's have potential opportunities they are considering with Great Yarmouth CLT having a housing association on board to assist with delivery.

8.3 Support is being provided by Great Yarmouth for the Eastern Communities Homes Hub.

## 9. Background Papers

9.1 Community Housing Fund Policy.

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

| Area for consideration | Comment |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | Via ELT |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | Via ELT |
| Existing Council Policies: | Community Housing Fund Policy |
| Financial Implications (including VAT and tax): | Discussed in report |
| Legal Implications (including human rights): | Discussed in report |
| Risk Implications: | Discussed in report |

| | |
|---|---|
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment: | None |
| Crime & Disorder: | None |
| Every Child Matters: | None |

**URN:** 21-106
**Subject:** Community Champions' Programme - Community Food Project

**Report to:** Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee – 10th June 2021

**Report by:** Paula Boyce, Strategic Director

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee:**

1. **Notes the research and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the Borough Council, and statutory partners including representatives from the CCG and Primary Care Networks.**

2. **Supports the recommendation that Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) and The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps (TSAGYC) are the most suitable Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) operators for the proposed Community Food Stores located on the Shrublands site in Gorleston and in Great Yarmouth respectively.**

3. **Invites the SYACCT and TSAGYC to submit grant applications to the Council accompanied by sustainable business plans developed in association with the NCF, as preferred lead VCSE organisations to establish sustainable VCSE-operated community-based food stores.**

4. **Delegates authority to the Strategic Director to award grants, subject to satisfactory proposals from the applicants, to run the two food stores on a community supermarket operating model, provided also that necessary permissions, consents and operational business plans are in place.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2021, the Council was successful in applying for a grant to deliver the Community Champions Programme. This was made available by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), working jointly with National Health Services (NHS) England. The programme invited local authorities and voluntary groups to apply and work with Public Health England to provide targeted support for people shown to be most at risk from Coronavirus (COVID-19).

1.2 One strand of the Community Champion project is to support the establishment of a sustainable and accessible VCSE-operated food offer, via a community supermarket. The community store or supermarket will offer residents an affordable way to make a contribution to their food shop, reduce waste going to landfill by making use of food abundance and provide a pathway for residents to become financially resilient, independant and able to access mainstream food

provision. It will achieve this by connecting residents with our local partners to offer a range of wrap around support provision to our communities while providing access to affordable food options.

1.3 Establishing a successful community store will contribute to all four Locality Strategy priorities: 1. Health and Wellbeing, 2. Low Educational Attainment, Skills and Aspirations, 3. Vulnerability and Exploitation and 4. Loneliness, Isolation and Social Exclusion. It will also support organisations that have greatly adapted their delivery by increasing their food offer, to return to their prefferred delivery activities. These adaptations have been due to the pressures and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities.

1.4 The spend intentions within the Community Champions' Progamme, including the establishment of a community food store, were reported to and endorsed by Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee (04 March 2021).

## 2. FINDINGS FROM FEASIBILITY WORK

2.1 The Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) was identified as a key strategic partner to help the Council establish this project and find the right local partner(s), set-up the supply chain, seek additional grant and private sector support. The NCF was therefore commissioned to undertake a feasibility study on the back of their trusted relationship with local community groups and VCSE organisations and their experience of establishing a very similar store in Thetford earlier in 2021. In doing so, it was agreed that the objectives of the Community Store are to:

- Deliver a long-term sustainable solution to accessing food in targeted high areas of deprivation and disadvantage in Great Yarmouth Borough.
- Develop a model that is scalable across the Borough and enables the development of wrap around community support activities, such as healthy living/debt/employment support. Please see Phase 2 & 3 below.
- Develop local and national partnerships to deepen the initial food offer, such as with farming communities and housing associations.
- Position the Great Yarmouth community food offer as part of emerging plans for 'Nourishing Norfolk' in collaboration with Norfolk County Council and other key partners.

2.2 By reviewing existing and historic work of the NCF and Great Yarmouth Borough Council, a list of relevant potential lead organisations and collaborators was collated (Appendix 1). 59 staff working at 35 different organisations were invited to a virtual stakeholder meeting held on the 1st April 2021. The meeting provided a virtual forum to hear more about community supermarkets, find out how this project fits in with the Locality Strategy and have the chance to share ideas and ask questions as part of the scoping and consultation process.

2.3 At the stakeholder and partners' meeting, there was a clear and unanimous view that there was a need for a more accessible, long-term and sustainable solution for affordable food provision locally. There were a number of support offers from partners, exploring ways to work together and pooling resources to make this project successful.

2.4 As a part of the project scoping Phase 1, NCF has complied an Interim Options Report (Appendix 2). The findings of the report were based on NCF's investigative work to identify the most suitable and relevant community-based organisation to take the lead on the Community Supermarket project. In coming to its recommendation the following factors were considered in terms of best fit: situated in an area of high deprivation; capacity, capability and desire to deliver; suitable venue; good network of staff and volunteer bank; community infrastructure; accessibility;

suitable organisations; potential for a café; a trusted community space; proven collaborative and partnership approach; and supply chain. Subject to Members' approval of a community-based operator, the Council and the NCF will continue to support that agency to ensure their proposal will lead to a sustainable operating model after 12 months of seed funding. A detailed analysis of possible VCSE operators can be found on pages 9 and 10, in Appendix 2.

2.5 After considering all key features, NCF is recommending that the Council invites the Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) and The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps (TSAGYC) to work with the NCF and the Council, to prepare business plans and submit grant applications to set-up community food stores. The grant will seed fund two community stores for the first twelve months via the MHCLG Community Champtions' Programme grant.

2.6 Owing to the immediate availability of a physical venue, it is likely that the Gorleston store will be the first of the two community stores in the borough with the Great Yarmouth store coming onstream as soon as practically possible in 2021. Both community food stores would sit within a broader 'Nourishing Norfolk' campaign championed by Norfolk County Council.

2.7 The Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee is therefore asked to support moving the project forward by accepting NCF's conclusion and inviting both the SYACCT and TSAGYC to apply for a grant and submit proposals and business plans to demonstrate their sustainability to operate a community food store. If successful, each organisation will be awarded grant funding to work directly with NCF and its national partners FareShare, HiS Church and Country Food Trust.

2.8 Assuming the plans as set-out for the project including any obstacles and risks are overcome, the intention is to establish and open the Shrublands Community Store in the summer of 2021 and the Great Yarmouth Community Store in the autumn of 2021.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 As part of the £465,000 MHCLG grant awarded, £120,000 has been allowed for the community food project across the borough to ideally establish two stores. It is anticipated that further external funders/supporters will come onboard via the NCF's philanthropic work to enable the stores to be sustainable going forward. For example, the NCF supported the set-up and funding of the Burrell Centre Community Supermarket in Thetford with Breckland Council, whereby additional sources of external funding and support from local businesses was leveraged into the project.

3.2 As with the other workstreams in the Community Champions' Programme, the MHCLG funding must be committed and spent by 30th September 2021.

## 4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Localism Act 2011 allows for a general power of competence for local authorities to act in innovative ways, that is, in doing things that are unlike anything that a local authority – or any other public body – has done before, or may currently do.

4.2 The proposed location of the first store, namely Shrublands, is within a site owned by Norfolk CC and is part-leased to the SYACCT. The Council will ensure the lease allows for a retail shop and that any necessary planning and licenses are in place. The location for the second Great Yarmouth store is yet to be identified. TSAGYC has indicated it wishes to obtain larger permises to be able to

operate the Community Store and provide the space to enable futher wrap-around support services.

4.3 In establishing and operating the community store model in the borough, the Council and NCF will work with the lead VCSE operators to ensure compliance with all necessary legal and food-related guidance including but not limted to Food Safety Act (1990), The General Food Regulations (2004) and The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, and associated Trading Standards regulations.

## 5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

| Risk | Mitigation |
|---|---|
| Lack of community support for chosen lead provider | From the NCF's exploratory work and scoping, the SYACCT is known to have a strong support network of volunteers and works in partnership with other VCSE, community & faith organisations in the borough. The Trust is also part of the MESH Neighbourhood Board and multi-agency Community Hub operating model. |
| SYACCT is unable to obtain the necessary permissions to operate a store on its existing Shrublands site. | Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) has operated on the Norfolk County Council-owned Shrublands site since 1977 and a draft lease is in place. Consent will be required from the County Council as landlord together with any potential changes to planning. Should permission not be possible then the council and NCF would work with SYACCT to consider other locations for the store. |
| The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps is unable to find suitable premises | The Council will support the charity to scope and identify suitable premises in order to deliver this project. |
| Lead operators are unable to satisfy the Council that their respective business plan is sustainable. | Alternative operating models and potential provider partners will be re-explored. |

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee:**

a. **Notes the research and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the Borough Council, and statutory partners including representatives from the CCG and Primary Care Networks.**

b. **Supports the recommendation that Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust (SYACCT) and The Salvation Army Great Yarmouth Corps (TSAGYC) are the most suitable VCSE operators for proposed Community Food Stores located on the Shrublands site in Gorleston and in Great Yarmouth respectively.**

c. **Invites the SYACCT and TSAGYC to submit a grant application to the Council together with a sustainable business plan supported by the NCF, as preferred lead VCSE organisations to establish sustainable and accessible VCSE-operated community-based food stores.**

d. **Delegates authority to the Strategic Director to award grants, subject to satisfactory proposals from the applicants, to run the two food stores on a community supermarket operating model, provided also that necessary permissions, consents and operational business plans are in place.**

| Area for consideration | Comment |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | Yes |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | Yes |
| Existing Council Policies: | Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan, Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy |
| Financial Implications: | Yes – as set out in section 3 |
| Legal Implications (including human rights): | Yes – as set out in section 4 |
| Risk Implications: | Minimal |
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment: | No |
| Crime & Disorder: | No |
| Every Child Matters: | No |

**NCF's List of VCSE, Community Groups and Statutory Partner Organisations contacted regarding the Great Yarmouth Community Food Project**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Access Community Trust | Great Yarmouth Food Bank Plus | Norfolk Citizens Advice |
| Action for Children | Great Yarmouth Pathways | Salvation Army |
| Active Norfolk | GY Food Net | Shrublands Youth and Adult Centre Charitable Trust |
| Belton Pantry | GY Library | St Mary Magdalene PCC (Gorleston) |
| Carers Matters Norfolk | GY PCN | St Marys Church Martham Foodbank |
| Change Grow Live | GYROS | Sunbeams Play |
| DIAL Great Yarmouth | Health Watch Norfolk | The Bridge |
| East Coast College | Imagine Together Norfolk | Top Banana |
| Gorleston Baptist Church The Well | Kingsgate Community Church (Great Yarmouth) | Woodlands Primary academy |
| Gorleston Library | Mandalay Wellbeing CIC | |
| Gorleston PCN | Millwood Surgery | |
| Great Yarmouth & Gorleston Young Carers Project | NCC Public Health | |
| Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG | Norfolk and Waveney Mind | |

**Community Champions Programme**

**Community Supermarket - Interim Options Report**

**Context**

In January 2021, Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) were successful in applying for a grant to deliver the Community Champions Programme. This was made available by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), working jointly with National Health Services (NHS) England. The programme invited local authorities and voluntary groups to apply and work with Public Health England to provide targeted support for people shown to be most at risk from Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The four strands of the GYBC Community Champion Programme are:

- Building stronger more inclusive relationships with target communities
- Supporting the establishment of a sustainable and accessible VCSE-operated food offer, via a community supermarket
- Increase capability and capacity to interact and communicate with those residents at greater risk from COVID-19
- Programme Evaluation

This Interim Options Report will explore in greater depth the Community Supermarket strand of the Community Champions programme. It will include: the rationale for a community supermarket, the methodology used to identify partners, key features of a potential lead organisation, and the organisations recognised with the key features and who are in a position to join this partnership; to develop and deliver a sustainable solution to accessing food in targeted areas of high deprivation and disadvantage in the Great Yarmouth Borough.

**Rationale**

In Great Yarmouth, there is a Multiagency Locality Board made up of organisations from across all sectors working in the area. The board have produced the Locality Strategy, which identifies 4 key priorities the organisations can collectively work on. This will enable a more effective and proactive approach to supporting our communities by preventing avoidable issues and making available early intervention advice and support.

The priority areas are:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Low Educational Attainment, Skills and Aspirations
- Vulnerability and Exploitation
- Loneliness, Isolation and Social Exclusion

During the COVID 19 pandemic, communities have been faced with extra pressures relating to these priority areas. Due to this pressure, there has been an increase in residents experiencing food

poverty. Great Yarmouth has experienced the greatest number of food requests in the County and Norfolk Community Foundation has attracted and distributed funding to many VCSE organisations in Great Yarmouth and surrounding area to support communities through this challenging time.

Feedback from some of these organisations confirms that the community food need has resulted in the organisations' food offer now being their main activity. Other support offers provided by these organisations have been required to take a back seat. NCF have developed a longer-term, sustainable solution to help alleviate the pressures on emergency food providers and to ensure that quality, affordable food is available more widely.

**Method**

By reviewing existing and historic work of Norfolk Community Foundation and Great Yarmouth Borough Council, a list of relevant potential partners was collated using their shared local knowledge. This included organisations providing alternative food provision, professionals from the 2 local Primary Care Networks and organisations supporting residents experiencing food poverty with wider support needs (including Norfolk Library Service, DIAL, Shrublands Trust and Action for Children's Early Childhood and Family Services). The potential partners were invited to a virtual meeting on 1st April 2021 to hear more about community supermarkets, to find out how this project fits in with the locality strategy, and have the chance to share ideas and ask questions as part of the scoping and consultation process. After the meeting, the attendees identified 2 extra organisations to involve in future meetings. At the meeting, there was a clear and unanimous view for the need for a more accessible, long-term and sustainable solution for affordable food provision locally. There were a variety of offers of support by partners, exploring ways to work together and pooling resources to make this project successful.

**Key Features**

Taking the learnings from the development of the Burrell Shop, a list of key features needed to successfully and sustainably set up a community supermarket have been determined and used to help identify the VCSE organisations in the best position to successfully work on this project.

The table below lists these key features identified as being desirable and, in some cases, required to ensure the efficient mobilisation of a sustainable Community Supermarket.

| Key features | |
|---|---|
| Area of deprivation and high need | Being based within an area of high deprivation will make the community supermarket more accessible to the target audience – primarily families who are struggling, but increasingly also single pensioners. Many who are in need of support are from working households. |
| Capacity, capability and desire to deliver | The organisation will have the capacity and capability to lead on mobilising a sustainable community supermarket with support from NCF and GYBC. The community supermarket will fit in with the organisations aims and objectives to ensure there is the passion and drive to develop a successful project. |
| Suitable venue | A suitable venue is key in terms of the geography, parking facilities, being accessible, appropriate space for a supermarket and storeroom to place stock. It is also relevant to look at impacts to the wider area e.g. negative impact on local food businesses, although our experience shows that other food businesses are wholly supportive of the concept. |
| Staff and volunteer bank | Having competent staff and a bank of volunteers available will ensure efficient mobilisation and day to day running of the community supermarket. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Community infrastructure | Having a predeveloped network of partners delivering a variety of support offers onsite will increase the speed at which wrap around support can be offered to the local community who use the Community Supermarket. |
| Accessibility | An accessible venue will ensure residents experiencing the highest level of inequalities and barriers to accessing opportunities are fully supported to engage. Factors include disability friendly facilities, access to translation services and parking although it is anticipated that most will walk or cycle to the supermarket. |
| Suitable organisation | A VCSE organisation with a proven track record of successfully delivering activities to communities experiencing high levels of deprivation and food poverty. To include appropriate governance and relevant policies and procedures. |
| Potential for a café | Community Supermarkets set up in other areas have really benefitted from an onsite café. This creates an extra layer of sustainability and income generation and additional affordable options for the local community, encouraging residents to try new healthy options. It also offers another outlet to direct food abundance, reducing the amount of food waste going to landfill. |
| A trusted community space | A community space that is well known to and trusted by the community will maximise the benefits of a community supermarket and additional wrap-around support. |
| Proven collaborative and partnership approach | An organisation with a proven collaborative approach will be in a stronger position to develop a sustainable community supermarket and connect communities to the wrap around support, reducing inequalities and drive change for our communities, resulting in improved levels of resilience. |
| Supply chain | To be able to nurture and further develop relationships with supply chain organisations brokered by NCF e.g. HiS Church, Country Food Trust and Fareshare. Able to develop new relationships with local horticultural organisations to increase access to local quality food in order to trade and be sustainable. NCF will continue to support and assist in securing consistent supplies. |

**Key Organisations**

The two priority key features are identified as:

- Area of deprivation and high need
- Capacity, capability and desire to deliver

Using our knowledge and experience of working with a number of VCSE organisations delivering services in the GYBC area, and with the priority key features in mind, we explored working with the following organisations as the anchor to the delivery of a Community Supermarket:

| | |
|---|---|
| Access Community Trust | • Currently exploring potential sites for their Crisis Cafés - looking at High Street locations in both Gorleston and Gt Yarmouth, and also King's Lynn.<br>• Experience of working with 'hard to reach'.<br>• Passionate about 'open access' to opportunities and support.<br>• ACT continue to expand to meet need across Suffolk and into Norfolk - current capacity to deliver the community supermarket project at pace could be a challenge.<br>• Very keen to partner for referrals and other practical support once the food offering is in place. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Gorleston Baptist Church – The Well Drop-in and Foodbank | • Current foodbank and takeaway lunch scheme operate on a referral basis (over 50 referral agencies) – good partnership working.<br>• Counselling and wrap-around support are key to their work.<br>• Very keen to partner for referrals and other practical support once the food offering is in place.<br>• Limited opening times and although supportive of the community supermarket model, not in a position to host.<br>• Would be interested in reduced offering – possibly consider the pantry model. |
| Salvation Army – Great Yarmouth | • Have been exploring potential community supermarket, but unable to host at present site.<br>• Large bank of volunteers.<br>• Passionate about supporting people to help themselves - proven track record of 'open access' and partnership working.<br>• Prior to the pandemic mainly supporting the homeless and vulnerably housed, this has expanded greatly.<br>• Capt. Marie Burr joined Gt Y Salvation Army in July 2020 and has huge ambition to offer longer-term sustainable support, rather than continuing with just food parcels and basic support currently on offer.<br>• To date they have not been able to identify new premises and continue their search. |
| Shrublands Trust | • Trusted community space open from 8am to 10pm, 7 days a week under normal circumstances.<br>• Existing café on-site with large team of volunteers.<br>• Existing space for community supermarket and storage.<br>• Ethos of community-based activities and partnerships, building on the strengths of the local community.<br>• Passionate about supporting people to help themselves – to move from relief to resilience.<br>• Capacity to deliver at pace.<br>• Recognised as a key organisation. |
| St Mary Magdalene Gorleston | • Part of the Gt Y Foodbank network and operate their food bank x3 mornings a week - partner referral system.<br>• Part of the 2020 COVID-19 Foodbank Emergency Delivery Service.<br>• Dedicated team of volunteers.<br>• Community activities based in the church and church hall – no facility for a permanent community supermarket. |

**Conclusion and Recommendation:**

Taking all key features into account, and the desire to deliver an operational community supermarket at pace, The Shrublands Trust has been identified as the strongest contender to host and lead on the delivery. The Salvation Army in Great Yarmouth are a strong contender and are keen to collaborate. It has been impressive to see the strength and desire of the VCSE organisations wishing to support the project. NCF will continue to offer support as part of their wider Nourishing Norfolk Initiative.

In conclusion, Shrublands Trust are recommended as the anchor organisation with the Salvation Army in Great Yarmouth recommended as the lead partnership organisation. This would ensure that both Gorleston and Great Yarmouth are supported equitably with two trusted and committed organisations.

**URN:**

**Subject:** HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOODS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2020/21

**Report to:** Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee 10th June 2021

**Report by:** **Trevor Chaplin – Housing Transformation Manager**

**SUBJECT MATTER**

HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOODS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT - 2020/21

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee note this report.

## 1. Introduction / Background

1.1 A report on key performance indicators (KPI's) will be provided to the Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee each quarter, including the annual report.

## 2. Performance Indicators

2.1 The indicators reported to committee are those where targets are set and performance can be measured against. For 2020/21 performance has been impacted by the Covid Pandemic. This has required services to be delivered differently as offices were mainly closed to the public and staff worked remotely. Some services involving non-essential repairs, improvements and adaptions were more severely impacted as building supplies were unavailable and/or property visits were not possible. Staff across the service have demonstrated flexibility and dedication to maintain services where possible in difficult circumstances.

2.2 From April 2021 the Asset team has moved from GYN to the Property and Asset Management team within GYBC which will allow greater focus in repair expenditure. This has also enabled a new way of managing void properties to be implemented, with the Council inspecting voids which will provide more control of the void process irrespective of whether a standard or major void.

## 3. Indicators to Note

HN01: Housing Rent Collection

Targets for this indictor are under review due to the Covid pandemic. The collection of rent during the during this time continues to be challenging, however performance continues to be at an excellent level with a marginal increase in arrears compared with 2019/20. Customer demand continues to be at increased levels to support residents with payment plans and signposting for support.

HN02 Housing Applications

a) Social housing applicants in allocation pool has reduced from quarter 1 at 1135. Applicants in the pool dramatically rose in Q1-Q3 and the numbers have reduced in Q4 to similar levels within 2019/2020.

b) Social housing new applicants awaiting assessment has increased quarter on quarter due to the high demand on the service. With a significant focus on relieving rough sleeping, a large part of resources was dedicated to Homeless applications. This has resulted in high workloads and revising application procedures whilst remote working. A temporary additional assessment officer is being recruited to assist with the increased workload.

HN03 - Average Time to Re-let Local Authority Housing

Timescales have been impacted by the impact of the Covid pandemic as repair work has not been able to be completed within target. A new approach to the management of void repair works was introduced in April 2021 and a review of the nomination process has been commenced.

HN04: Average cost of a Void repair

This indicator has remained fairly consistent throughout the year and comparable with previous years. There has however been a significant increase in the numbers of standard voids which have been received in comparison to previous years.

HN06: Costs – Total Voids Works (service provision) as a % of Total repairs Costs (Q1 & Q2)

There has been a significant reduction in Q4 as a result of a large volume of Capital works processed through completion in the last quarter. The year to date figure is slightly better than the 19/20 outturn. We continue to review the delivery of the voids service.

## 4. Financial Implications

None

## 5 Risk Implications

None

## 6 Legal Implications

None

## 7. Background Papers

None

*Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?*

| **Area for consideration** | **Comment** |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | N/A |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | N/A |
| Existing Council Policies: | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| Financial Implications (including VAT and tax): | N/A |
| Legal Implications (including human rights): | N/A |
| Risk Implications: | N/A |
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment: | N/A |
| Crime & Disorder: | N/A |
| Every Child Matters: | N/A |

**Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee**

| Performance Measure | 2020/21 Actual | 2020/21 Target | Status | 2019/20 Outturn | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HN01 - Great Yarmouth Local Authority Housing rent collection rate | | | | | |
| a) % of rent & arrears collected | 98.51% | Under Review | N/A | 99.39% | ↓ |
| b) Arrears as a % of rent debit | 1.89% | Under Review | N/A | 1.93% | ↑ |
| c) Total rent arrears | £424,697 | Under Review | N/A | £423,709 | ↓ |
| Commentary: Targets for this indictor were under review due to the Covid pandemic. The collection of rent during 2020/21 was challenging with additional resourcing used to maximise income collection and support to tenants, however performance continues to be at an excellent level with a marginal increase in arrears compared with 2019/20.<br>Customer demand continues to be at increased levels to support residents with payment plans and signposting for support. | | | | | |
| HN02 - Number of: | | | | | |
| a) Social housing applicants in allocation pool | 754 | Demand Lead | N/A | 943 | ↑ |
| b) Social housing new applicants awaiting assessment | 221 | 150 | R | 174 | ↓ |
| Commentary: HN02 a) Social housing applicants in allocation pool has reduced from quarter 1 at 1135. Applicants in the pool dramatically rose in Q1-Q3 and the numbers have reduced in Q4 to similar levels within 2019/2020.<br>HN02 b) Social housing new applicants awaiting assessment has increased quarter on quarter due to the high demand on the service. With a significant focus on relieving rough sleeping, a large part of resources was dedicated to Homeless applications. A temporary additional assessment officer is being recruited to assist with the increased workload. | | | | | |

| Performance Measure | 2020/21 Actual | 2020/21 Target | Status | 2019/20 Outturn | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HN03 - Average Time to Re-let Local Authority Housing | 39 days | 30 days | R | 24 days | ↑ |
| Commentary: Timescales have been impacted by the impact of the Covid pandemic as repair work has not been able to be completed within target. A new approach to the management of void repair works was introduced in April 2021 and a review of the nomination process has been commenced. | | | | | |
| HN04 - Average cost of a Void repair | £3,117.53 | £2,745 | R | £2,978.62 | ↓ |
| Commentary: This indicator has remained fairly consistent throughout the year and comparable with previous years. There has however been a significant increase in the numbers of standard voids which have been received in comparison to previous years. | | | | | |
| HN05 - Percentage of residents very or fairly satisfied with the repairs service they received | 92.40% | 95% | A | 97.20% | ↓ |
| Commentary: Performance is under target by 2.6% for the year but figures have increased monthly since December, therefore the trend indicates a return to previous levels of satisfaction if this continues. Data is still be collected for Q4, which could increase the total percentage.<br>The "Neither" responses are the ones pulling the data down. Each month those responses are greater than any very or fairly dissatisfied answers.<br>Survey data was unable to be collated for the early part of the financial year when GYN were operating emergency repairs due to the pandemic. | | | | | |
| HN06 - Costs – Total Void Works (service provision) as % of Total Repairs Costs | 9.11% | 8.1% | R | 10.10% | ↑ |
| Commentary: There has been a significant reduction in Q4 as a result of a large volume of Capital works processed through completion in the last quarter. The year to date figure is slightly better than the 19/20 outturn. We continue to review the delivery of the voids service. | | | | | |
| HN07 - Costs – total responsive repairs as a percentage of total repairs costs | 18.52% | 22.1% | G | 16.33% | ↓ |
| Commentary: This indicator is also impacted by the delivery of the capital programme. Due to COVID the commencement of capital delivery was delayed with the bulk of works completing in the last quarter of the year. The final year to date figure is slightly higher than 19/20. | | | | | |

| Performance Measure | 2020/21 Actual | 2020/21 Target | Status | 2019/20 Outturn | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HN08 - Number of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs) | | | | | |
| a) Numbers of calendar days from initial request to works complete in that quarter | 363 | Monitor | N/A | 289 days | ↑ |
| b) Number of calendar days from OT recommendation to completion of works in that quarter | 247 | Monitor | N/A | New measure | N/A |
| Commentary: Covid has impacted performance. Works that were on site in March 2020 were stopped and works that were due to start were delayed several months as a result of Lockdown. When works recommenced, additional measures were required to ensure safety which lengthen the time to complete works. Despite Covid the service has still managed to deliver Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations, completing just under 50% of the works it would have completed in a normal year. | | | | | |
| HN09 - Neighbourhoods That Work programme **(Reporting period for this indicator runs from Oct 2015- Sept 2020)** | | | | | |
| a) Number of self-help resident led community groups supported to develop | 170 | 120 | G | 167 | N/A |
| b) Number of residents who have overcome issues preventing them from getting and holding down a job, resulting in them sustaining employment | 158 | 150 | G | 137 | N/A |
| c) Number of residents with complex needs supported to overcome at least one personal challenge. | 403 | 400 | G | 396 | N/A |
| Commentary: a) The overall project target is 120 and at the end of the project we have supported 170 which exceeds the overall project target. We are very pleased that our project delivery has exceeded the required target set by The Lottery who fund. To date our Community Development Work has also brought in nearly £1.6 million of grant funding to community groups in the Borough.<br>b) Our total project target was to support 150 people, and we ended up supporting 158. Whilst NTW is not primarily an employment support programme, our sustained support and engagement with residents has resulted in many getting jobs but also keeping them for a period of time, which thus builds their resilience and makes it much more likely that they will continue to remain employed, which is why we include this measure as a demonstration of the success of the project's ethos.<br>c) Our total project target was to support 400 people, in the end we supported 403. These were residents that presented with a wide range of personal challenges, and many were faced with more than one issue which took some time to address with them. The most common reasons for needing support are problems with housing, debt, welfare rights, self-esteem and self-confidence, health problems and social isolation. | | | | | |

CONFIDENTIALITY

The contents of the appendix to this report qualifies as exempt information under section 100(A)(4) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it is "*information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person* (including the authority holding that information)"
and
2) In relation to the "exempt" information, it has been determined that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because disclosure would adversely affect the authority's ability to manage its commercial financial and business affairs. Accordingly, it is proposed that the appendix shall remain exempt.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **URN:** | **21-081** | |
| **Subject:** | **Council Homes Programme Update Report** | |
| **Report to:** | **ELT**<br>**Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee** | **26 May 2021**<br>**10 June 2021** |
| **Report by:** | **Claire Wilkins, Housing Delivery Manager**<br>**Nicola Turner, Housing Director** | |

**SUBJECT MATTER**

**This report provides an update of the work that has been carried out to date and the next steps in the provision of the Council Homes Programme. It seeks approval of the drawdown of expenditure to be incurred in the delivery or acquisition of the new Council Home schemes detailed in the report.**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Committee:**

1. **Note the report and progress to date**
2. **Approve the drawdown of the expenditure to be incurred in the development of the Beach Coach Station development as set out in the Confidential Appendix**
3. **Approve, subject to the Council's conditional offer set out in the Confidential Appendix being accepted, the drawdown of the expenditure required to acquire the three affordable homes at St Nicholas Drive, Caister via a Section 106 Agreement.**
4. **Delegate expenditure in relation to recommendations 2 and 3 above to the Housing Director.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2020 a report was provided to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee detailing work that had been carried out to identify an initial tranche of potential sites that may be utilised to bring forward the delivery of Council Housing under the Council Homes Programme. Other opportunities that would form part of the Programme were also highlighted and this report provides an update on the work undertaken over the past seven months. A further report will be provided in November setting out the Council's approach to the delivery of additional Council homes.

## 2 DELIVERY OF ONE BEDROOM HOMES

2.1 Of four potential sites previously identified for provision of much needed one-bedroom homes, three were progressed at Beach Coach Station and Great Northern Close in Great Yarmouth and at Crab Lane, Gorleston. Broadland Housing Association were appointed as development agent and have worked closely with the GYBC 'design team' incorporating input from various departments to produce three individual schemes using a design led approach. Following submission of planning applications on all three sites, planning consent for 18 homes has been granted at Beach Coach Station. The planning applications for the Crab Lane (10 homes) and Great Northern Close (8 homes) have been withdrawn following consideration at Development Committee.

2.2 The overall estimated costs of the homes on Beach Coach Station has increased from initial estimates due to the identification of several 'abnormals' costs that have arisen in relation to unforeseen land remediation costs as well as design changes required by the Fire Service and Building Control. In addition, design changes have added to the overall costs of the scheme, these changes, including raising the roof heights to comply with conservation and planning feedback have ensured the provision of a high-quality external appearance and scheme design. The use of quality materials will reduce ongoing repair and maintenance costs. The homes will be required to achieve an EPC of B to ensure the homes are energy efficient and affordable to rent and occupy.

2.3 The next step is to procure the delivery of the homes. In procuring the development of the homes, tenderers will be able to tender to develop the 18 homes at Beach Coach Station as traditional construction, modular or another form of Modern Method of Construction (MMC) in order that the Council can test the market of the costs of each option and achieve best value for the costs of developing these homes. In evaluating the cost of tenders, the timescale for delivery of homes will be taken into account reflecting where modular or MMC construction provides a shorter development period, therefore allowing rental income to come on stream earlier to meet development costs.

## 3 INFILL SITES

3.1 The development of infill sites (sites which may have an existing use or which were left vacant following historic development of a larger site) will form an integral part of the delivery of the Council Homes Programme, particularly where such sites sit within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). HRA sites are more viable to deliver as there is no land cost associated with the development of HRA sites. Infill sites vary in size with some only being able to accommodate a single home – these sites can, however, be useful in meeting particular needs such as the need for wheelchair accessible homes. A further report to Committee in July will consider two specific infill sites which can each deliver one home as well as the wider approach to the delivery of infill sites reflecting the recent withdrawal of planning applications for Crab Lane and Great Northern Close.

## 4 OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 In addition to acquisitions of open market properties purchased using Right to Buy receipts[1], the Council is open to acquiring affordable homes which are designed and constructed to the Council's requirements through Section 106 Agreements. A number of opportunities have been considered, but a conditional offer has only been made to acquire the homes on one scheme to date at St Nicholas Drive, Caister. This offer is subject to this Committee's approval of the conditional offer and the required expenditure.

4.2 An offer has been made to purchase the affordable housing requirement of three properties, two of which are for Affordable Rent and one for Shared Ownership. Two will be built to Part M(4)2 (adaptable and accessible dwellings) with the third being Part M(4)3 fully wheelchair accessible. In total there are 17 bungalows on the site.

4.3 The offer was made as the design of the scheme and information on the specification of the homes reflected the Council's requirements for new build homes within the HRA. The Council's offer reflects the fact there should be no public grant used to acquire the homes.

4.4 The Council continues to explore other opportunities to deliver more Council Homes and is working to establish a pipeline of schemes.

## 5 OTHER UPDATES

5.1 In March 2020, a paper detailed the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to support the preparation of the Development Standard for Council home delivery was discussed. The establishment of this group has been delayed but it is anticipated that workshops will be held in the coming weeks to inform standard.

5.2 The Council's application for Investment Partner status with Homes England has been approved. This allows the Council to bid for grant funding in addition to the borrowing already allocated for the Council Home Programme which will, if bids are successful, allow the Council to increase the number of homes which can be delivered.

5.3 Claire Wilkins was appointed in December as the new Housing Delivery Manager and Andrew Copson has joined the Council as Housing Growth Manager. Claire has a background in housing, both from the private sector and more recently as a Housing Officer for the Council. Andrew brings a wealth of experience within the development sector, both from a private and public sector perspective. Both are currently investigating opportunities to increase the supply of quality homes within the Borough through the Council Home Programme, other opportunities and through Equinox Enterprises Ltd.

## 6 Financial Implications

6.1 The Government removed the HRA debt cap in October 2018, which removed the constraint on borrowing within the HRA allowing local authorities to use their rights under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985 to provide homes through acquisition, conversion or new build based on a prudential approach to borrowing. As agreed at the November 2019 Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee, the reduction of the Repairs & Maintenance spend by £500k for the years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 will support the additional borrowing to support the Council Homes Programme. To this date, none of this borrowing consent has been used. In

[1] A separate report on the use of Retained Right to Buy receipts will be presented to members later this year

addition, Full Council approved £5.2m of expenditure to deliver 36 homes on 30th July 2020 - this funding will fund the delivery of the 18 homes set out above at Beach Coach Station.

6.2 In bringing forward new sites for the delivery of Council homes, there will be abortive costs incurred. A scheme will not proceed to be delivered for a number of reasons. These abortive costs will be for professional fees such as architects and engineers as well as costs for surveys such as drainage, contamination and ground condition. Where a scheme does not proceed, these costs fall to the HRA revenue budget rather than being met as part of the capital cost of the development of the new homes. It is not possible to quantify the level of abortive costs which will be incurred as it depends on the number of schemes for which abortive costs are incurred and the stage the scheme reaches before becoming an abortive scheme. To mitigate the level of abortive costs incurred, efficient procurement of professional fees and careful control of what and when surveys are instructed will seek to minimize pre planning and predevelopment costs. A specific revenue reserve will be established to cover any future abortive costs which cannot be capitalized as the scheme associated with those costs is not developed.

6.3 The Confidential Appendix sets out the expected costs of the developments at Beach Coach Station as well as the value of the Council's proposed conditional offer for the three Section 106 Agreement homes at St Nicholas Drive, Caister. The total expenditure for which this report seeks approval is within the approved budget as detailed at 6.1 above.

6.3 Procurement processes will seek to ensure an optimum tender price, maximising quality alongside value for money. Costs will be closely monitored during the procurement and development periods to ensure any cost overruns can be managed appropriately.

6.4 During 2021/22, the Council has £1,079,907.30 of Retained Right to Buy Receipts available to support the affordable home programme of which £691,516.80 remains available reflecting an overspend in 2020/21 and existing spend. A further £486,828.90 is available in 2022/23. Changes to the use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts in April 2021 will enable the use of receipts to fund up to 40% of new development costs, an increase from 30% where this supports scheme viability. The use of 40% Retained Right to Buy Receipts has been used to model the costs and viability of the schemes set out in this report, however, the Council will also consider applying for Homes England grant for some/all of the schemes at sections 1 to 3 above. It is noted that the offer for the Section 106 Agreement homes does not include any use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts or Homes England funding as these homes must be delivered with no public subsidy unless there is demonstrable evidence such subsidy provides additionality of provision above the Section 106 Agreement requirements.

## 7 Risk Implications

7.1 The delivery of the Council Homes Programme remains a time and staff intensive process with elements of abortive work and costs. To help minimise this the Council is acquiring a new appraisal tool which will speed up the process of assessing the viability of schemes, the tool will also allow more robust financial assessments to inform decision making on which sites and Section 106 Agreement opportunities to pursue. The production of the Development Standard will provide full clarity on the Council's requirements for both new build homes and acquisitions removing the requirement for this work to be completed for every scheme progressed whilst also allowing for new build schemes to be designed specifically for each site.

7.2 The requirement for adequate staffing remains an ongoing risk and the need for additional staff will be closely monitored to ensure there is appropriate staff resources to deliver the Council Home Programme.

7.3 The offer to acquire three affordable homes set out above, includes the acquisition of a shared ownership home. Whilst it is possible to hold Shared Ownership homes within the HRA, this is not a tenure that the Council has previously owned. There would need to be procedures and changes made to accommodate this from an IT system, rent collection, management and resource perspective. The model of Shared Ownership is changing and the Council's conditional offer for the Shared Ownership home reflects the new requirements for repairs and maintenance to ensure that its offer is affordable and does not put a burden on the HRA. As the development is yet to start on site, there will be approximately one year to implement any procedures or changes.

## 8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Council is able to provide homes through acquisition, conversion or new build in accordance with Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985.

## Conclusion

9.1 This report shows that there has been a significant amount of work undertaken to provide the foundations for a noticeable increase in the number of Council Homes, with the first new homes to be delivered during 2022. It seeks approval to drawdown the expenditure required to deliver the Beach Coach Station site and acquire, subject to the Council's conditional offer being accepted, three new homes via a Section 106 Agreement on the St Nicholas Drive site.

## 10 Background Papers

Council Homes Programme update October 2020.

HRA Borrowing report approved at November 2019 Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee.

*Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?*

| Area for consideration | Comment |
|---|---|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | Through ELT |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | Through ELT |
| Existing Council Policies: | N/A |
| Financial Implications (including VAT and tax): | At section 6 and in the Confidential Appendix |
| Legal Implications (including human rights): | Included in section 8 |
| Risk Implications: | Included in section 7 and the confidential appendix |
| Equality Issues/EQIA assessment: | The new homes provided will be designed to meet housing need and address particular shortages in supply which may currently have a negative impact on the |

| | |
|---|---|
| | likelihood of some households with protected characteristics from being able to be have their needs met in a timely way. This recognises that households in higher levels of need will have more opportunity to be accommodated in the Council's housing stock (and that of Registered Providers) than those with low needs. |
| Crime & Disorder: | New housing schemes will be designed and built to minimise properties vulnerability to crime. |
| Every Child Matters: | The Council's Development Standard for new housing will take into the account the needs of children. |