

# **POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Thursday, 14 October 2021**

## **UPDATE ON THE ONE HORTON HEATH MAJOR PROJECT**

### **Report of the Project Director**

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#### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel note progress with implementation of the aims and objectives for the One Horton Heath major development.**

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#### **Summary**

This report supports an update from the Project Director on the One Horton Heath major development project, two years since approval of the Project Brief. The Project Brief includes the Council's established vision, aims and objectives for building a new community over the next ten years. The Committee will be updated on progress against the aims and objectives and headline issues as they relate to the Council's long-term role as asset owner of the scheme.

The masterplan for One Horton Heath is now at an advanced planning stage following strategic decisions since acquiring the land. The aim of the meeting is for Committee to receive an update on key approaches to date, and how this can assist in progressing the wider Housing Programme.

#### **Focus for Scrutiny**

- To receive an update from the Project Director on the practical ways in which the Council is addressing a range of project aims and objectives;
- To discuss the opportunities and constraints experienced to date in addressing the aims and objectives;
- To identify lessons learnt and potential policy reviews required to inform future Housing Programme schemes where applicable;
- To receive an update from the Project Director on priorities for 2021/22 as this relates to addressing the aims and objectives;
- To identify any specific policy areas of interest on which to receive future updates.

#### **Statutory Powers**

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 i.e. the Local Authority's general power of competence, including power to act for the benefit of its area or persons resident or present in its area

## **Strategic Implications**

1. The One Horton Heath project addresses several corporate strategic objectives, as reflected in the Project Brief approved in July 2019. A Project Brief was prepared to inform the development activity in relation to land west of Horton Heath.
2. The Project Brief was largely underpinned by the Council's Corporate Plan (2015-2025). In preparing the Project Brief the Council's corporate themes (green borough, healthy community, and prosperous place) provided a useful framework for considering how a Council-led development might help achieve wider strategic objectives.
3. This alignment is addressed in the Project Brief which is published online at [www.onehortonheath.co.uk/media/xrkbkeh/c/one-horton-heath-project-brief-v4.pdf](http://www.onehortonheath.co.uk/media/xrkbkeh/c/one-horton-heath-project-brief-v4.pdf) . Indeed, planning a sustainable new community is shown as a way to help improve transport infrastructure, demonstrate low carbon planning and design, provide an attractive new environment, and enable healthier lifestyles of new and existing residents.

## **Introduction**

2. In March 2018 the Council acquired land located west of Horton Heath near Eastleigh. Subsequently approvals were sought to acquire additional land parcels, and to 'self-deliver' the development rather than selling serviced land to the development industry.
3. To lead and guide this major project the Council prepared and approved a Project Brief as mentioned above. The Brief helped confirm the direction of travel or 'roadmap' for the Council's development project team responsible for the design and implementation of the Council's aspirations for the land. The Project Brief includes aims and more detailed objectives under the following themes:
  - (a) Housing Delivery (5 aims and 17 objectives)
  - (b) Green Borough (5 aims and 11 objectives)
  - (c) Healthy Borough (8 aims and 10 objectives)
  - (d) Prosperous Borough (5 aims and 6 objectives)
4. An extract and full list of the approved aims and objectives from the Project Brief are attached to this report (Appendix 1).
5. The Project Brief is a non-statutory document and does not replace or remove the need for any legislative or Town and Country Planning processes that apply to a project of this scale and nature.

6. The Committee will have an opportunity to ask questions about the approach taken to date by the development team to ensuring the emerging project and associated plans address the Project Brief.

## **Project Progress**

7. Since acquiring the land, the Council has been establishing its position to deliver new homes and infrastructure and has launched the project as 'One Horton Heath'.
8. Committee will be familiar with the plans for One Horton Heath, and that works have commenced (first major pieces of road infrastructure are complete or due for completion summer 2021); enabling works and site clearance and preparation elsewhere on site have commenced, with phased demolition starting summer 2021. Subject to planning, the construction of new homes at the first phase (Lower Acre) is programmed to commence summer/ autumn 2022. Works to date have been undertaken in accordance with pre-existing or new planning permissions as required (e.g. demolition applications).
9. Most recently, a planning application was submitted for the final phase of the new link road between Hedge End and Bishopstoke passing through the One Horton Heath development. Further updates are online at [www.onehortonheath.co.uk](http://www.onehortonheath.co.uk).

## **Monitoring performance against the Project Brief**

10. Project performance is closely monitored with regards to timescales, financial and other targets, and programme milestones. This is reported to a Project Board and Housing Programme Board. The team also closely monitor the strategic delivery of the project i.e. how decisions and recommended strategies address the vision for the development in relation to the approved Project Brief:

### **The Vision- One Horton Heath**

People are at the centre of our vision – the community that already live and work in Horton Heath, and the people who will live and work within the village in years to come. This project will create an exemplar development which is integral to Horton Heath engendering pride and a strong sense of place. The local area, and by extension the Borough, will become Greener, Healthier, more Prosperous with a more diverse supply of Housing as a direct result of this project.

11. When approved, Cabinet was advised that the Project Brief is a 'living' document, and the detailed objectives will be kept under review. The Project Brief was also intended to assist in evaluating performance i.e. whether we achieve what we set out to.
12. Inevitably the project will confront changes, both internal and external, and need to be reactive and resilient to new opportunities and challenges. The Project Brief provides a useful foundation against which to evaluate the

Council's ambitions for the project and check alignment with corporate priorities.

13. The Committee is asked to note the feedback from the Project Director on the status of each aim and objectives. The large majority of these are 'work in progress' primarily because the issues have been captured and responded to through the masterplanning and design work prepared in recent months. The Committee will also be briefed on some of the key opportunities which are currently being explored (e.g. solutions to reduce carbon emissions from development). The Committee may wish to identify specific areas of interest or where regular updates are required at future meetings.

## **Eastleigh Borough Housing Programme**

14. The Committee will be familiar with the Council's Housing Programme, of which One Horton Heath is a major project. A Cabinet report in June 2021 provided an update on the Programme, including implementation of the Eastleigh Homes Delivery Strategy, approved December 2020 (available online at [www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/9026/appendix-1-housing-delivery-strategy-2.pdf](http://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/9026/appendix-1-housing-delivery-strategy-2.pdf)).
15. This document sets out the overarching approach to the Council's role in delivering new homes, and in many ways captures the aims and objectives of the One Horton Heath Project Brief, with its emphasis on achieving net-benefits for local communities and the environment through building much-needed new homes. Not all the emerging policy responses developed through planning One Horton Heath will be applicable to the Council's smaller housing projects. Nonetheless, the investment in planning for One Horton Heath enables the Council to investigate innovative approaches and set targets which can be rolled out wider than One Horton Heath alone.

## **Financial Implications**

16. There are no direct financial implications from this report. Revised financial appraisals for the One Horton Heath project are approved by Cabinet and subject to scrutiny.

## **Risk Assessment**

17. To reiterate, the masterplan for One Horton Heath is now at an advanced planning stage following strategic decisions since acquiring the land. The aim of the meeting is for Committee to receive an update on key approaches and solutions to date, and how this can assist in progressing the wider Housing Programme.
18. The Project Brief is clear about its purpose, which is to guide the Council's development team only. The Brief has no planning or policy status with regards to the Council's role as local planning authority. There are no risks therefore associated with updating the Committee on progress and performance. The Local Planning Authority will play a key role in scrutinising

compliance with planning policy (national and local) for all the Programme's schemes.

19. The Project Team will be responsible for testing, modelling, and monitoring the costs associated with the Brief's requirements where appropriate. Any new risks that are identified as part of the project delivery (e.g. risk to the delivery timescales or costs or quality) are reported to the relevant Board and mitigation put in place as part of the Project's Risk Register.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

20. The Equality Act is not relevant to the decision in this report because it is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only (i.e. scrutiny and performance monitoring). It is proposed that the Project Team review and scope the requirements for Equality Impact Assessment for relevant plans and programmes associated with the Project (e.g. procurement) and report on this at a subsequent Committee if required.

### **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

21. There are no direct impacts on Climate Change as a result of this report, but it is noted that the One Horton Heath project has significant climate change and environmental implications. The environmental impacts and net benefits of the One Horton Heath project are set out elsewhere. E.g. in May 2020 the Council submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Request for One Horton Heath to help ensure the highest environmental standards for the new development.
22. As above, the Project Team could report in more detail at a future date as to how the project is addressing this, particularly the objective in the Council's Climate and Environmental Emergency Strategy (2019) to lead by example in its own activity. As an overview however, the Committee will be briefed on some of the key objectives in the Project Brief as they relate to tackling climate change, and progress to date (e.g. reducing reliance on fossil fuels; net biodiversity gain; reducing water consumption and investment in sustainable transport modes).

### **Conclusion**

23. The Council prepared a Project Brief in 2019 to guide delivery plans and activity for a new community at One Horton Heath. Over the last two years the development team has been monitoring and reporting progress with the implementation of the 44 objectives and 23 strategic aims set out in the Project Brief. The Committee will be updated on progress with implementation of the aims and objectives for the One Horton Heath major development.

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Appendices Attached: 1

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - SECTION 100D**

The following is a list of documents which disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. This list does not include any published works or documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information.

Appendix 1: List of Aims and Objectives (extracted from the Project Brief approved 2019)