

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee
DATE: 8th September 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
SUBJECT: Boardwalk Extra Care Housing Scheme
WARD(S): Riverside

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To note urgent action taken to approve the provision of revenue support through the Supporting People programme for 90 units of extra care housing at West Bank, Widnes being developed by Cosmopolitan Housing Association.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i) the Board notes that after consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holders for Neighbourhood, Leisure & Sport and Health & Adults, the Chief Executive has under delegated powers (Matters of Urgency, Constitution) determined that subject to the 90 units of extra care accommodation being constructed by Cosmopolitan Housing Association, the Council agree to provide funding through the Supporting People programme for relevant housing support costs at an estimated cost of £100,000 per annum.**
- ii) the Council enter into the necessary legal agreements to give effect to the reported decision.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The development of extra care housing is a strategic priority for the Council given the ageing profile of the local population. Housing Associations were asked to take this into account when formulating their development proposals for submission to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) under the 2011/15 National Affordable Housing Programme.

3.2 The HCA has now notified Housing Association bidding consortia of the amounts of grant awarded to them and the number of dwellings that must be developed in return, and invited them to enter into framework delivery contracts. Prior to doing this Housing Associations that are proposing to develop supported housing schemes are checking with local authorities whether or not revenue support will be available. Only schemes which have support will have their funding confirmed and housing associations have been asked to secure confirmation as soon as possible.

- 3.3 Not all Housing Associations have shared the full detail of their bids with the Council but from discussion prior to HCA bids being submitted, officers were aware of the following extra care proposals being developed.

Housing Association	Location	Number of units
Cosmopolitan	West Bank	90
Plus Dane	Castlefields	62
Riverside	Halton Brook	45

- 3.4 The Council has been made fully aware of the detailed proposals surrounding the Cosmopolitan development. It has now been confirmed that Plus Dane will not be proceeding with their proposal, but at the time of writing Riverside were unable to confirm whether or not their scheme was to be included in their revised offer to the HCA. The proposals from Riverside are unclear and given the urgency to secure the necessary HCA funding there is the potential danger that the larger site may not be supported if the Council does not make its intentions clear.
- 3.5 It is therefore proposed that the Cosmopolitan proposal to develop 90 extra care housing flats at the Boardwalk, West Bank, Widnes be supported by the Council. Following consultation, planning permission for extra care housing was approved by the Council's Development Control Committee on 12 April 2010.
- 3.6 In conjunction with the Scheme of Delegation and Procurement Standing Orders namely 1.8.1, emergency procedures, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and relevant portfolio holders, considered and supported the proposals in this report before the formal meeting of Executive Board Sub Committee on 8th September 2011. The decisions are reported to today's meeting.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The development of extra care housing is a stated policy priority in the Council's Housing and Supporting People strategies.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The development represents a significant capital investment, funded jointly by the HCA and Cosmopolitan.
- 5.2 The housing support costs of approximately £100,000 will be met from the Council's Supporting People programme, and the cost of care packages for eligible residents will continue to be met by the Council from the Community Care budget as it would irrespective of where they lived. This therefore does not constitute a key decision within the context of the budgetary standing orders. Provision will need to be provided from within existing budgets, however, extra care housing has

been identified as a strategic priority to support vulnerable residents of Halton.

- 5.3 Cosmopolitan has agreed that it will offer the Council 100% nomination rights against the new dwellings so the Council can ensure the scheme provides accommodation for those for whom it is intended. If this report is supported detailed contracts would be drawn up between the relevant partners.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The construction stage of the scheme will therefore provide training and employment opportunities, and the subsequent provision of care and support services at the scheme will provide permanent employment opportunities for local people.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Extra care housing has the potential to offer many health benefits to older people, which have been set out in some detail in earlier reports.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

This site (the former Cemex site) has been derelict for some years and a development of this quality would significantly enhance the physical environment, and accord with the West Bank SPD.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 If the Council does not confirm its position as soon as possible, there is the possibility that the HCA will withdraw its proposal to Cosmopolitan.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.0 None identified.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None