

MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 23 April 2019
(7:00 - 7:59 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf (Deputy Chair), Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Evelyn Carpenter, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Syed Ghani, Cllr Margaret Mullane and Cllr Maureen Worby

Apologies: Cllr Sade Bright and Cllr Lynda Rice

107. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

108. Minutes (19 March 2019)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019 were confirmed as correct.

109. Contract for Generic Advice and Enhanced Welfare Rights Service

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration presented a report on proposals relating to the commissioning of a new Generic Advice and Enhanced Welfare Rights Service, to commence from 1 April 2020.

The Council had a statutory duty to establish and maintain information and advice services that covered care, support and other related services, such as finance, health, housing, employment and what to do in cases of abuse or neglect of an adult. In preparation for the expiry of the current contract, a reassessment of the service had been undertaken to ensure that the new service would complement the Council's Community Solutions Lifecycle Model and was aligned with the Council's vision by promoting wellbeing and independence at all stages to reduce the risk of people reaching a crisis point. In that respect, it was noted that the new service would offer home visits for the Borough's most vulnerable residents who met social care eligibility criteria.

The Cabinet Member advised that consortium bids, facilitated through a Lead Provider model, would be welcomed and the new contract would be for an initial three-year term, extendable for up to two further years. The specification would include provisions for future flexibility to enable the service to respond to changing needs and requirements. It was also anticipated that discussions would take place with the new service provider regarding the possible creation of satellite hubs to complement the main information and advice centres at the Barking Learning Centre and Dagenham Library. The Cabinet Member also advised on the intention to directly award a six-month contract commencing 1 October 2019 to the existing provider, the Citizens Advice Bureau, to allow sufficient time to fully develop the new specification.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree the procurement of a contract for a strategic partner to provide a

Generic Advice and Enhanced Welfare Rights Service commencing 1 April 2020, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report;

- (ii) Approve the direct award of a six-month contract commencing 1 October 2019 to the current service provider, the Citizen's Advice Bureau; and
- (iii) Authorise the Director of People and Resilience, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration, the Director of Law and Governance and the Chief Operating Officer, to conduct the procurement and award and enter into the contract(s) and all other necessary or ancillary agreements including activating extension provisions within the contract with the successful bidder, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report.

110. Development of Land at 482-528 Rainham Road South, Dagenham

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing introduced a report on proposals associated with the potential redevelopment of land at 482 - 528 Rainham Road South, Dagenham, to provide circa 64 homes on the 0.56 hectare site.

The site currently comprised 24 homes (one or two-bedroom flats within three, four-storey buildings), occupied by 13 leaseholders and 11 Council tenants. Initial feasibility work undertaken by Be First had identified the site as being under-utilised and suitable as a high-quality housing redevelopment given its location close to Dagenham East tube station and other regeneration activities in the immediate area, as well as the substantial investment that would be required to bring the current stock up to Decent Homes standards. The Cabinet Member stressed, however, that while there were a range of perceived benefits associated with the redevelopment plans, the Council was very mindful of the anxiety that could be caused to the current residents as a consequence of the plans. With that in mind, only 'in principle' approval was being sought from Cabinet at this stage and, subject to that approval, a comprehensive consultation exercise would be rolled out. Those consultation plans would include building on the preliminary briefings given to Eastbrook ward councillors, who had voiced their concerns at the potential displacement of the current residents, and one-to-one engagement with the residents of the three buildings.

The Cabinet Member explained that the proposed tenure mix of the preferred option would include 29 shared ownership units, 15 Affordable Rent units and 20 London Affordable Rent (LAR) units. The properties would be managed via the B&D Reside structure, meaning that they would be exempt from Right to Buy. On that point, the Cabinet Member clarified that the Council had lost approximately 2/3rds of its housing stock since the Right to Buy legislation was introduced by the Conservative Government in the 1980's and only circa 17,000 Council properties remained in the Borough.

It was noted that the current Council tenants would have priority, under Right to Return provisions, to return to the new LAR units at comparable rent levels and the Cabinet Member also advised that officers were looking into the possibility of the leaseholder tenants being able to return into the new shared ownership units. The Cabinet Member also referred to the projected costs and legal issues associated

with the project should it go forward, including the serving of Initial Demolition Notices and the potential use by the Council of its Compulsory Purchase Order powers in respect of the leasehold properties.

Several Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposals, citing the increase in social housing provision at affordable rent levels and the 'place shaping' vision for the benefit of the wider community. It was also suggested that the Council's Estate Renewal Programme 2015 - 2021 should be updated sooner than scheduled in order to properly reflect the latest redevelopment and regeneration options for the Borough.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve in principle the proposed redevelopment of the site incorporating 482-528 Rainham Road South, as shown edged red in the plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to consideration of the outcomes of consultation with affected residents.
- (ii) Approve consultation with affected tenants and leasehold interests in respect of 482-528 Rainham Road South pursuant to Section 105(1) of the Housing Act 1985 in respect of the proposed redevelopment (Option 3) and potential demolition of the premises and delegate approval of the details of any consultation to the Director of Inclusive Growth and/or a delegate on his behalf, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance
- (iii) Agree the service of an Initial Demolition Notices on all secure tenants at the affected properties at the appropriate time, having regard to the outcomes of consultation, in order to suspend the requirement for the Council to complete Right to Buy applications for as long as the notices remain in force and delegate the approval and timing of final notices to the Director of Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance;
- (iv) Agree in principle that, subject to the grant of an acceptable planning permission and receipt of satisfactory construction tender prices, the project be financed and held within the residential asset class of the Investment and Acquisition Strategy;
- (v) Agree in principle the inclusion of the project in the Council's Capital Programme in the total sum of £20,479,000, subject to the securing of planning permission and procurement of a contractor in accordance with the project outputs and budget;
- (vi) Agree in principle the Funding Strategy in section 3.7 of the report, including borrowing up to £13,738,000 within the General Fund from the Public Works Loan Board, to finance the development and ownership of the affordable rent homes via a loan agreement made between the Council and any suitable vehicle that the new units may be held in (e.g. a new B&D Reside Registered Provider or other vehicle); and
- (vii) Approve in principle the appropriation and accounting for its value of the land, as shown edged red in the plan at Appendix 1 to the report, under

Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund.

111. Development of Land at Rectory Road, Dagenham

Further to Minute 112 (9 March 2016), the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing introduced a report on proposals associated with the potential redevelopment of the former Royal British Legion (RBL) site in Rectory Road, Dagenham, and the adjacent housing block of 1-18 Jervis Court to provide circa 56 homes and 468m² of community space on a 0.34 hectare site.

The Cabinet Member explained that while the project had several similarities to the Rainham Road South scheme discussed earlier in the meeting, the 18 properties at Jervis Court, occupied by 4 leaseholders and 14 Council tenants, were in a good condition. Therefore, the benefits of including Jervis Court in the redevelopment project were primarily linked to the additional affordable homes and wider community benefits that could be achieved, as the redevelopment of the RBL site on its own would only achieve up to 18 additional units alongside the 18 units already at Jervis Court, with no community space provision.

The proposed tenure mix of the preferred option would include 35 Affordable Rent units and 21 London Affordable Rent (LAR) units. As with the Rainham Road South project, the properties would be managed via the B&D Reside structure and the current Council tenants would have priority to return to the new LAR units, should they wish to do so.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that should the Cabinet give 'in principle' approval, the full programme of consultation with affected residents and Village ward councillors would commence. On that issue, Councillor Mullane referred to the concerns already expressed by the Village ward councillors regarding the potential displacement of the current residents and suggested that, as a general principle, redevelopment plans for an area should be discussed with ward councillors much earlier in the process. Councillor Mullane also stressed the need to learn the lessons from the redevelopment of The Leys estate, where consultation with residents and ward councillors was lacking in some areas.

Cabinet resolved to:

- (i) Approve in principle the proposed redevelopment of the former Royal British Legion site and Jervis Court (Option 3 in paragraph 2.2 of the report), as shown edged red in the plan at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to consideration of the outcomes of consultation with affected residents;
- (ii) Approve consultation with affected tenants and leasehold interests in respect of 1-18 Jervis Court pursuant to Section 105(1) of the Housing Act 1985 in respect of the proposed redevelopment (Option 3) and potential demolition of the premises and delegate approval of the details of any consultation to the Director of Inclusive Growth and/or a delegate on his behalf, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance;
- (iii) Agree the service of Initial Demolition Notices on all secure tenants at the affected properties at the appropriate time having regard to the outcomes

consultation, in order to suspend the requirement for the Council to complete Right to Buy applications for as long as the notices remain in force and delegate approval and timing of final notices to the Director of Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance;

- (iv) Agree in principle that, subject to the grant of an acceptable planning permission and receipt of satisfactory construction tender prices, the project be financed and held within the residential asset class of the Investment and Acquisition Strategy;
- (v) Agree in principle the inclusion of the project in the Council's Capital Programme in the total sum of £19,700,000, subject to securing planning permission and procurement of a contractor in accordance with the project outputs and budget;
- (vi) Agree in principle the Funding Strategy set out in section 3.5 of the report, including borrowing up to £13,402,000 within the General Fund from the Public Works Loan Board, to finance the development and ownership of the affordable rent homes via a loan agreement made between the Council and any suitable vehicle that the new units may be held in (e.g. a new B&D Reside Registered Provider or other vehicle); and
- (vii) Approve in principle the appropriation of the land, as shown edged red in the plan at Appendix 2 to the report, under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund.