

## EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**LEADER DECISION**

**Ref No: 8/2012/3**

**Subject: Cabinet Committee on Council Housebuilding**

### **Decisions:**

- (1) To establish a Cabinet Committee on Council Housebuilding with immediate effect;
- (2) To set the following terms of reference for the new Committee:
  - (a) To consider and recommend to the Cabinet the Development Strategy for the Council's Housebuilding Programme on an annual basis;
  - (b) To consider and sign-off development appraisals and financial appraisals produced by the Council's appointed Development Agent for sites previously identified by the Cabinet as having development potential and that could be included within the Council's Housebuilding Programme;
  - (c) To approve the submission of detailed planning applications, and/or if more appropriate outline planning applications, by the Council's appointed Development Agent for sites that the Cabinet Committee considers are suitable for development and viable, having regard to the development appraisals and financial appraisals for the sites;
  - (d) To invite ward members to attend meetings of the Cabinet Committee when potential development sites in their ward are under consideration, and to provide an opportunity for ward members to provide comments on proposed developments, before development appraisals and financial appraisals are signed-off and approvals to submit planning applications are given;
  - (e) To approve the subsequent development of sites considered suitable for development and viable that receive planning permission, subject to the acceptance of a satisfactory tender for the construction works;
  - (f) To approve, and include within financial appraisals, the use of the following sources of funding for the development of individual sites within the Council's Housebuilding Programme:
    - (i) the agreed Housing Capital Programme Budget for the Housebuilding Programme;
    - (ii) capital receipts made available through the Council's Agreement with the Department of Communities and Local Government allowing the use of receipts from additional Right to Buy (RTB) sales as a result of the Government's increase in the maximum RTB Discount to be spent on housebuilding;
    - (iii) financial contributions received from developers for the provision of affordable housing within the District, in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision, in compliance with Section 106 Planning Agreements; and
    - (iv) grant funding received from the Homes and Communities Agency;

(g) To approve the submission of the Council's Pre-Qualification Questionnaire to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), applying for Investment Partner status with the HCA;

(h) To consider and accept tenders received for the construction works on sites included within the Council Housebuilding Programme;

(i) To determine whether, in addition to the potential development sites already considered by the Cabinet, sites with development potential within the following categories should be added to either the Housebuilding Programme's Primary List or Reserve List and detailed development appraisals and financial appraisals undertaken by the Council's Development Agent:

- (i) Other specific garage sites comprising 6 or less garages;
- (ii) Specific garage sites where garage vacancies arise with no waiting list of applicants; and
- (iii) Specific areas of Council-owned land on housing sites considered to be surplus to requirements;

(j) To determine whether sites on the Reserve List of potential development sites previously agreed by the Cabinet should be promoted to the Primary List, and detailed development appraisals and financial appraisals undertaken by the Council's Development Agent, due to:

- (i) There being insufficient numbers of properties that can be viably developed from the Primary List of potential development sites to deliver a Housebuilding Programme of 120 new homes over a six-year period; and/or
- (ii) The Cabinet subsequently deciding to increase the size of the Housebuilding Programme and there being insufficient numbers of properties that can be viably developed to deliver a larger Programme;

(k) To monitor and report to the Cabinet on an annual basis:

- (i) Progress with the Council Housebuilding Programme; and
- (ii) Expenditure on the Housing Capital Programme Budget for the Council Housebuilding Programme, ensuring the use (within the required deadlines) of the capital receipts made available through the Council's Agreement with the Department of Communities and Local Government allowing the use of receipts from additional Right to Buy (RTB) sales as a result of the Government's increase in the maximum RTB Discount to be spent on housebuilding.

(3) That the following Portfolio Holders be appointed to the proposed Cabinet Committee:

Housing Portfolio Holder (Chairman)  
Finance and Technology Portfolio Holder  
Planning Portfolio Holder  
Environment Portfolio Holder  
Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

(4) That the Cabinet Committee meet as and when required, as determined by the Housing Portfolio Holder in consultation with other Committee members.

## **Explanatory Note**

1. The Cabinet has over several meetings during 2012 prepared a Council Housebuilding Programme. Potential sites for such developments have been identified and a development agent appointed to review the feasibility of schemes and advise the Council.
2. I have decided that the most effective way of progressing schemes is by means of a Cabinet Committee. I have coupled this with terms of reference under which the Committee may make delegated decisions without awaiting confirmation from the full Cabinet in respect of schemes and various steps in the process. The terms of reference also encompass financial arrangements.
3. I have decided to appoint 5 portfolio holders and have appointed the Housing Portfolio Holder as Chairman.

## **Legal and Constitutional Powers**

**Local Government Act 2000**

**Local Government and Public Access to Health Act 2007**

**Localism Act 2011**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Councillor Chris Whitbread, Leader of Epping Forest District Council**

**Date:**