

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ASSET MANAGEMENT CULTURE AND HOUSING
CABINET MEMBER**

HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY FUNDING UPDATE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on the opportunity for partner Registered Housing Providers to secure funding to deliver new affordable homes to meet identified local housing needs.
- 1.3 Key points in this report are:
- The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have £800 million available to provide affordable homes during 2015-2018
 - Priorities for investment in this funding round are considered

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have announced that the next round of funding in the 2015-2018 Affordable Housing Programme, known as Continuous Market Engagement (CME) is now open.
- 2.2 The HCA allocated over half of the funding during the first bid round. They will now seek to allocate the remaining £800 million on an ongoing basis until the programme is fully allocated.
- 2.3 CME allows housing providers to bid for funding for firm schemes during the 2015 to 2018 period. This includes specialist, supported or rural housing, which often needs a longer lead time. Schemes making use of innovative construction methods, are especially encouraged under CME.
- 2.4 Partner Registered Housing Providers secured funding to deliver a range of new affordable homes through earlier bid rounds. These included rural housing schemes, part of the Westcliff Regeneration Programme, and specialist schemes such as the Haig Avenue Learning Disability Supported Housing project.

2.5 Our ongoing work to understand our local housing needs and work up project proposals with partners, in line with the approved Housing Strategy, has identified the following priorities for investment:

- 1: Scunthorpe and the Market Towns to support economic growth
- 2: Housing for vulnerable and older people
- 3: Housing for those needing disabled adaptations

2.6 Partners will now aim to develop suitable projects that help in delivering these priorities for submission to the Homes and Communities Agency.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1: Work with Registered Housing Provider partners to develop detailed schemes ready for submission in line with the above priorities.

3.2 Option 2: Agree alternative priorities for action.

3.3 Option 3: Do not progress schemes to secure funding.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The priorities for action are based upon current housing needs; gaps in provision; recently funded schemes; and intelligence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). Option 1 is therefore the preferred option.

4.2 Option 2 offers the potential to submit more rural housing schemes. However, all firm rural schemes were submitted in the previous round. It is essential that consultation is carried out with the local areas before submitting schemes for sensitive development of this nature. As this work takes time, there are no rural schemes ready to progress. Work will continue to get projects ready for future bid rounds.

4.2 Adopting Option 3, would mean that North Lincolnshire would not receive a share of the £800 million of available investment.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 The Registered Housing Providers submitting bids for funding must provide match funding in support of the projects. Discussions are underway around the potential to use funding currently used for large-scale disabled adaptations. This would support the development of new adapted accommodation, where new build provides a more cost effective and appropriate solution to a large-scale property adaptation.

5.2 Each new affordable home developed secures the council £8,100 of New Homes Bonus funding.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 N/A

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 The priorities above were established through a comprehensive programme of consultation as part of the development of the Housing Strategy.

7.2 Engagement with partners and members of the public will be undertaken as part of each individual development.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Cabinet Member supports the proposal to develop funding bids in line with the priorities set out above.

8.2 That the Cabinet Member receives detailed reports on all schemes prior to submission to the Homes and Communities Agency.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

Civic Centre
Ashby Road
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB
Author: Sally Grindrod-Smith
Date: 30th October 2014

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

North Lincolnshire Housing Strategy 2013 to 18