

## REPORT TO CABINET

|   |   |   |   |                                     |                                    |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Open</b>   |   | Would any decisions proposed :                |   |                                     |                                    |
|   |   | Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide |   | YES                                 |                                    |
| <b>Any especially affected Wards</b> North Lynn   | Discretionary                           | Need to be recommendations to Council         |   | NO                                  |                                    |
|   |   | Is it a Key Decision                          |   | YES                                 |                                    |
| Lead Member: Cllr Richard Blunt<br>E-mail: cllr.richard.blunt@West-Norfolk.gov.uk                 |   |   | Other Cabinet Members consulted: Leader and Deputy Leader, all cabinet members                        |                                     |                                    |
|   |   |   | Other Members consulted:  |                                     |                                    |
| Lead Officer: David Ousby<br>E-mail: David.ousby@west-norfolk.gov.uk<br>Direct Dial: 01553 616505 |   |   | Other Officers consulted: Management Team<br>Matthew Henry, Duncan Hall, Stuart Ashworth, Ruth Wilson |                                     |                                    |
| Financial Implications<br>YES   | Policy/<br>Personnel Implications<br>NO | Statutory Implications<br>YES                 | Equal Impact Assessment<br>NO   | Risk Management Implications<br>YES | Environmental Considerations<br>NO |

Date of meeting: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### **PARKWAY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Summary**

Following the change in leadership at the Council, officers have been instructed to review this project against the original objectives behind the scheme.

#### **Recommendation**

Given that the overall scheme can no longer deliver the benefits originally envisaged it is appropriate that we reconsider our position.

Officers therefore recommend that:

1. Development does not proceed on the Eastern part of the site and that the new road bridge as proposed in the planning application is not constructed
2. That a new planning application be submitted for the development in accordance with the 2016 Local Plan policy E1.6 Allocation (Kings Lynn south of Parkway) site only
3. That the Council seek to re-negotiate the Business Rates Pool funding of £2 million to promote active travel and deliver enhanced cycle and footpath access between Fairstead, Hardwick and the Town Centre
4. That officers enter into discussions to recast the Town Deal submission to reflect wider connectivity issues within the town and promote active travel.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. Planning Committee resolved to grant planning permission for 379 houses at land off Parkway on 15th April 2021. This consent has not yet been issued due to the requirement for third parties to sign the S106 agreement
- 1.2. The Council remains strongly committed to the delivery of homes for local people, incorporating construction methods which reduce carbon emissions, encourage active travel and supporting the environment.
- 1.3. The viability of the bridge and housing on the Eastern portion of the site is heavily linked to funding through both the Towns fund (£5 million) and Business Rates Pool (£2 million). Any assessment of viability would be subject to a business case being prepared and agreed as part of the Towns fund deal the outcome of which will not be known until 2022.
- 1.4. One of the original objectives for the scheme was intending to improve connectivity between Fairstead and Hardwick and reduce congestion around the Gaywood clock. The Council has been particularly keen to promote higher standards of construction within this site reducing carbon emissions.
- 1.5. It is becoming increasingly clear that the restrictions on the planning permission preventing access into the Fairstead and diverting flows through Gaywood clock reduce the benefits that had originally been identified.
- 1.6. Given the uncertainties surrounding cost benefits of the overall scheme impact and the reduced benefits that the bridge will deliver Cabinet is requested to consider whether to progress the consented scheme or reconsider an alternative.
- 1.7. The key points that Cabinet will wish to consider in coming to a decision on whether to proceed are:
  - Whether the scheme will deliver the benefits in terms of improving accessibility that had been originally planned
  - Restrictions on access into the Fairstead estate from the new highway and bridge over the 'Sandline' required by Norfolk County Council Highways reduce the intended connectivity benefits of the development
  - Conditions placed on the planning consent requiring the monitoring of traffic flows at Gaywood clock with trigger points for restricting access to the bridge raise the possibility of restrictions being imposed at peak periods
  - That the reduction in the number of homes through developing the allocated site south of Parkway will not have a detrimental impact on the Local Plan housing requirement.

## **2. Financial implications**

- 2.1. Whilst work on the financial viability has not been fully concluded on the entire scheme to date, it is possible to conclude with certainty from the information already at hand that development on the Eastern part

of the site would not be financially viable and would not deliver the original objectives of the project wholly or sufficiently.

2.2. A further report will be presented to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 with details of the costings for the revised proposal.

2.3. That the Council will seek to re-negotiate the Business Rates Pool funding of £2 million to promote active travel and deliver enhanced cycle and footpath access between Fairstead, Hardwick and the Town Centre

2.4. That officers will enter into discussions to recast the Town Deal submission to reflect wider connectivity issues within the town and promote active travel.

### **3. Environmental considerations**

3.1. The further report to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 will include details on design and environmental considerations of the scheme.

### **4. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations granted**

4.1. None

### **5. Background Papers**

5.1. Parkway Accelerated Construction scheme report to Cabinet 6th August 2019