

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 1 AUGUST 2023 FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2023

EC21: CABINET REPORT – LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND – ROUND 2

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

Officers presented the report and reminded Members that the Council had been successful in round one of this scheme in providing sixteen additional homes. This report considered round two of the scheme which would allow the Council to provide a further seven affordable homes; six for Afghan families and one for temporary accommodation.

Details of the match funding and other funding opportunities available were presented to the Panel and the Panel were informed that work was ongoing with Freebridge Community housing regarding an empty property which may be suitable for use. The remaining properties would be acquired on the open market by the Council, with a view to transferring them to West Norfolk Housing Company at a later date.

The Chair thanked officers for their report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Bullen addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He hoped that properties would be located in areas where there was community support in place.

In response to a question from the Vice Chair, Councillor Devulapalli, officers explained that at the moment West Norfolk Housing Company were not in a position to purchase the properties, but they could be purchased from the Council in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, Councillor Kemp commented that she supported the scheme which would permanently increase the housing stock which would help alleviate pressures and issues with homelessness.

In response to questions from Councillor Bhondi, it was explained that it was the intention to purchase new or nearly new properties so that they were up to energy efficiency standards etc. Any repairs or maintenance costs would need to be accounted for in the total cost.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out below.

1. The Council will enter a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 1) with DLUHC based on the attached prospectus for the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 2 (appendix 2)
2. The Council will accept the total sum of £868,000 offered to the Council by DLUHC under the Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver the programme understanding the match funding requirements as set out in the report and attached prospectus.
3. The Council will commit match funding of up to £952,000 to deliver the 7 homes.
4. The Council will seek to maximise the Flexible Housing Fund to reduce the overall match funding required from the Council.

5. Authority is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing People and Communities to negotiate and agree the final terms of contract with DLUHC under which the grant will be accepted.

6. The Council will purchase up to 7 properties on the basis of a subsequent freehold transfer to West Norfolk Housing Company subject to agreement from West Norfolk Housing Company.

7. Authority is delegated to the Assistant Director (Regeneration, Housing and Place) and portfolio holder for Communities to provide grant funding from the Local Authority Housing Fund to Freebridge Community Housing in the event that they agree to bring an identified long term empty property back into use as detailed in the report.

8. The Council agrees to the principle of allocating 6 of the properties acquired through the fund to eligible Afghan households in accordance with the existing Local Lettings Plan. 1 property will be used as temporary accommodation.