



CABINET – 10TH APRIL 2019

**SUBJECT: PROGRESS REPORT – RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE
 OF THE FORMER CIVIC CENTRE, PONTLLANFRAITH**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
 SERVICES**

- 1.1 The attached report, which provided a progress update on the proposed residential redevelopment of the site of the former Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith, was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 12th March 2019. The report sought Member's views on the involvement of Caerphilly Homes in the Social Housing element, prior to its consideration by Cabinet.
- 1.2 Members were advised that following the decision taken by Cabinet on 3rd October 2018, master planning for a residential development on the site of the former Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith has been progressed in conjunction with Registered Social Landlord Pobl. The outline proposals adheres to the Cabinet decision insofar as they are based on the Garden Village model and comprise broadly equal proportions of social rented, affordable housing and market sale, and approximately two thirds of the development will be classed as 'affordable'. Whilst the master planning to date is work in progress it gives assurance that the project is being developed in accordance with the direction given by Cabinet.
- 1.3 Members noted the details of the masterplan presentation appended to the report, which outlined details of the collaboration between the Council and Pobl, the vision for this development (Chartist Gardens), examples of similar schemes elsewhere, and target programme milestones and the overview for the scheme.
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Committee were pleased to note the progress made and the quality of the proposed scheme, and welcomed the benefits this would bring to the local area. During the course of the debate, Members sought clarity on the definition and criteria of affordable housing and the type of pricing structure involved. Officers explained that the definition is set in accordance with WG guidelines, in particular Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 relating to planning and affordable housing, and that there are a number of different elements involved in regards to affordable housing. Further information will become available as the scheme develops. Members expressed concerns that the scale of affordability might be more achievable for those individuals living outside the county borough and looking to relocate in order to commute. They also enquired as to whether the new properties could be ring-fenced to existing residents of the county borough. Officers confirmed that if the social housing element is transferred to Caerphilly Homes, these particular properties would be allocated to those on the Common Housing Register.
- 1.5 In response to Members' queries, Officers outlined the process by which the Council would purchase the houses which fall under the social housing element, including the use of a Section 106 agreement. The specifics of these will be brought back to Cabinet at a later date.
- 1.6 A Member sought further information on a number of sections across the report and agreed to email his queries to Officers. He highlighted concerns regarding the amount of residential development in the Blackwood area, the impact of the development on the war memorial and

encroachment on the neighbouring park. He also suggested that there is a covenant in place to protect use of this area. Officers confirmed that the planning process would address any concerns regarding over-development. They explained that no covenant exists and development would anyway be confined to the civic site itself. The war memorial will remain in its current location but the Sir Harold Finch memorial plaque and adjacent buried time capsule will be relocated in consultation and agreement with family representatives.

1.7 Following consideration of the report and in noting its contents, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted;
- (ii) the proposal to transfer the social element of this development to Caerphilly Homes, with the purchase cost being covered from the Housing Revenue Account, be approved.

1.8 Members are asked to consider the report and the above recommendations.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 12th March 2019 - Agenda Item 9



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12TH MARCH 2019

**SUBJECT: PROGRESS REPORT - RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE
 OF THE FORMER CIVIC CENTRE, PONTLLANFRAITH**

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides a progress update to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in relation to the proposed residential redevelopment of the site of the former Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith and seeks the committees view on the involvement of Caerphilly Homes in the Social Housing element prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the decision taken by Cabinet on 3rd October 2018 master planning for a residential development on the site of the former Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith has been progressed in conjunction with Registered Social Landlord Pobl.
- 2.2 The outline proposals adheres to the Cabinet decision insofar as they are based on the Garden Village model and comprise broadly equal proportions of social rented, shared ownership and market sale and approximately two thirds of the development will be classed as 'affordable'.
- 2.3 Whilst the master planning to date is work in progress it gives assurance that the project is being developed in accordance with the direction given by Cabinet.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That members of the committee note the contents of this report.
- 3.2 The Committee provides its view to Cabinet on proposals to transfer the social housing element of this development to Caerphilly Homes, with the purchase cost being covered from the Housing Revenue Account.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure members are appraised of progress to date.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Cabinet took the decision on 3rd October 2018 to give approval to develop a residential scheme for the site of the former Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith in conjunction with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). The full decision taken was:

Site C - Pontllanfraith House. A scheme is developed with an RSL to include broadly equal proportions of social rented, shared ownership and market sale dwellings, and commercial terms are established for both outright sale and the Lease models for further consideration and approval by Cabinet;

- 5.2 Under the Welsh Government's Social Housing Grant funding programme, Housing Associations (also known as RSLs) are zoned to operate in specific local authority areas for affordable housing development. The current RSL for the Eastern Valleys zone is Pobl (part of the Seren Group).
- 5.3 The Cabinet's vision for the site was discussed with Pobl and they have enthusiastically developed outline proposals in conjunction with Council officers. Preliminary meetings have been held with planning, highways and drainage officers and site surveys have been carried out. The outline proposals are based on the 'Garden Village' model which aspires to create a development which:

*Feels welcoming and green with a strong sense of community
Looks well portioned with a timeless character and built around attractive landscaping and external spaces
Promotes shared resources and community and neighbourly values.*

- 5.4 The site is well positioned and the masterplan is designed to make best use of the setting and the proximity to green space with many houses looking out of the development rather than in. Off street parking is provided on the basis of one space per bedroom, up to a maximum of 3 spaces per dwelling, with clustered parking typically set behind houses. Additional parking is included for the Cenotaph.
- 5.5 The masterplan features accessible one and two bed dwellings grouped around the Cenotaph in a style reminiscent of Alms Houses. The Cenotaph sits at the western end of a tree lined road leading to a rural style play and recreation area.
- 5.6 The remaining dwellings range from social housing, one bed affordable apartments to four bed detached houses. All will be designed to provide the space standards prescribed by the Development Quality Requirement (DQR). All will provide good space standards when compared to the output of many national housebuilders. All dwellings will include fire protection by water sprinklers. All social housing will be designed to the WHQS standard. The feasibility of including renewable technologies, including battery storage, will be explored together with provision to charge electric vehicles, although the ability to achieve this may be constrained by electricity supply issues.
- 5.7 In relation to the social housing units, it is proposed that these be transferred to Caerphilly Homes and be incorporated into the Council's housing stock, with the cost being covered from the Housing Revenue Account. This would also include the transfer of the land that the social housing has been developed on, with the type of properties also being determined by Caerphilly Homes to ensure they meet current and future demand.
- 5.8 The Local Development Plan requires that for new residential developments in Pontllanfraith 25% of dwellings should be affordable where this is economically viable. However, in line with the decision of Cabinet the outline masterplan comprises 118 dwellings of which approximately one third will be social rented, one third will be affordable, including rent to buy and intermediate rental properties, and one third will be market sale. Thus approximately two thirds of the development will be categorised as 'affordable'.

- 5.9 No formal agreement has been reached with Pobl and the commercial elements of the development will be explored and reported to Cabinet in due course. Options that will be considered include the freehold sale of the site to Pobl, a hybrid approach where a proportion of some plots are sold and others are retained to provide a leasehold income and the sale and transfer of the social rented dwellings to Caerphilly Homes.
- 5.10 The masterplan, which is still work in progress, is included in a presentation attached as an appendix to this report.

Conclusion

- 5.11 This report is intended to give assurance that the project is being developed in accordance with the direction given by Cabinet.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 That, subject to development and refinement, the master planning that is presented in this report is appropriate to obtain planning approval.
- 6.2 A formal agreement and associated commercial terms can be agreed between the Authority and Pobl.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 The report links to the council's policies as follows:
- **'A Foundation for Success 2018-2023':**
Supporting People (reducing inequality, building capacity and resilience to create healthier, prosperous, cohesive communities);
Supporting Quality of Life (providing the right physical environment for our communities that encourages them to prosper);
 - **Local Housing Strategy**
Aim 5: Affordable Housing: Meet housing requirements through the provision of a range of good quality, affordable housing options."
Aim 6: Housing Management: Provide good quality, well-managed homes in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations.
Aim 11: Community Regeneration: Promote sustainable and mixed communities that are located in safe and attractive environments.
 - **Local Development Plan (LDP)**
Policy CW11 sets Affordable Housing Targets throughout Caerphilly County Borough, ranging from 40% in the higher viability area around Caerphilly Basin, to 0% in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (HOVRA). Economic indicators and housing need have influenced these targets.
Policy SP6 requires development proposals to 'contribute to creating sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment'.
A shortfall in affordable housing is a significant issue facing residents in the county borough. In this context **Policy SP15** seeks to deliver at least 964 affordable houses through the planning system up to 2021.
- 7.2 The **2015 Local Housing Market Assessment** identifies a shortfall throughout the County Borough of 526 affordable homes per annum. It also identifies a high number of households who are living in unsuitable housing because their accommodation no longer meets their requirements arising from disabilities, medical conditions or old age.

7.3 Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

This report content contributes towards or impacts on the Corporate Well-being Objectives as follows:

- *Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all*
The project will promote Targeted Recruitment and Training that will enhance employment prospects and skills of local people, particularly the young and those at a disadvantage, and promote equality of opportunity
- *Objective 2 - Enabling employment*
The project will promote Targeted Recruitment and Training that will enhance employment prospects and skills of local people, particularly the young and those at a disadvantage, and promote equality of opportunity
- *Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being:*
The project will promote the provision of a range of good quality, affordable housing options, as well as an emphasis on sustainable construction
- *Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.*

The project will offer 'housing for life' as the accommodation can be adapted to meet changing needs.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The report contributes to the Well-being Goals as follows:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

8.2 This proposal contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out above. The scheme is also consistent with the five ways of working set out in the sustainable development principle, as defined in the Act. The scheme is integrated in that it contributes to a number of the Well-being goals and supports the objectives of other stakeholders within the community. Implementation of the scheme exemplifies collaboration across organisational boundaries; working together for the good of our communities in pursuit of shared objectives.

8.3 Registered Social Landlords (RSL), as developers, generally take a longer view, protecting (as far as possible) and improving the local environment and infrastructure for the future. Other benefits that RSLs can bring are an emphasis on sustainable construction including Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3+, and Targeted Recruitment and Training that will enhance employment prospects and skills of local people, particularly the young and those at a disadvantage, and promote equality of opportunity.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the issues covered have previously been considered by Cabinet and no EIA was considered necessary at that time.

9.2 The development is unlikely to impact on any specific groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

9.3 The land appropriation is unlikely to impact on the Council's obligations under the Welsh Language Standard Regulations 2015.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This report provides an update on progress only and at this time there are no financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no personnel implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 The views of the consultees listed below have been incorporated in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000. This is a Cabinet Function.

Author: Mark Williams – Interim Head of Property Services – willim17@caerphilly.gov.uk
Consultees: Cllr Lisa Phipps – Cabinet Member for Homes and Places
Mark S Williams – Interim Corporate Director - Communities
Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Tim Broadhurst – Estates Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Chartist Gardens Presentation



Chartist Gardens



CAERPHILLY
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
CAERFFILI



We are

We are a group working together as a team to provide great **local** housing, care and support services.

Commercial Division

We work in partnership and innovate, building and managing great homes and accommodation across Wales. We provide a range of home ownership options across South Wales and operate an extensive commercial portfolio including student and medical staff accommodation.

Care and Support

We support people to live happy, independent lives. We provide great care and support to over 9,000 people, each an individual.

Homes and Communities

We provide high quality housing that is affordable in communities that are safe, attractive and supported to thrive. We manage over 16,000 homes and we're creating thousands more.



Recently Completed Projects – Oakdale Hotel, Oakdale



Recently Completed Projects – Kennard Point, Crumlin



Vision

feels like

A welcoming and green place with a strong sense of community. Residents of all ages will enjoy walking, playing and interacting in the streets, parks and gardens they take pride in.



Chartist Gardens

looks like

A variety of simple, well-proportioned homes with a timeless character.
A landscape of street trees, grass verges, flowering front gardens and hedges.



functions like

A place of shared resources and responsibilities, where residents and owners take a leading role in shaping and maintaining their neighbourhood.

A place that plays a key role in the wider community.

Loftus Garden Village, Newport

250 mixed tenure homes, 60% of which meet the Welsh Government definition of affordable housing



Illustrative Masterplan



**Chartist
Gardens**

Main Avenue CGI



View from the green towards the War Memorial

Street Scene



Photograph of Loftus Garden Village

Green Space



Photograph of Loftus Garden Village

Informal Play



Photograph of Loftus Garden Village

Sustainable Drainage



Photograph of Loftus Garden Village

Target Programme Milestones

Presentation of outline design to Cabinet	Jan 2019
Design development	Jan to Sept 2019
Presentation of final scheme to Cabinet	Sept 2019
Public Consultation	Oct 2019
Submission of Planning / SuDS	Nov 2019
Planning approval	Feb 2020
Construction procurement	Nov 2019 to Feb 2020
Start construction	March 2020
Complete construction	Dec 2022

Overview

Land Value

- Capital receipt or lease model

Tenure Mix

- 65% affordable housing, against Caerphilly CBC's requirement of 25%
- Social Rent / GFSO / Outright Sale
- Older Persons

Design Standards

- Good space standards
- Up to 20% above national housebuilder sizes
- Low carbon agenda
- Developable area and site coverage

Caerphilly CBC's House Building Programme

- Access SHG
- Partnership working

Added Value

- Apprentices
- Investing in the local community
- Customer focussed KPI's

