

EXTRA CARE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Report By: Head of Strategic Housing Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the position with regard to the development of an extra care housing scheme in Hereford and seek support for undertaking a county-wide review of sheltered housing.

Financial Implications

2. None within this report, although financial considerations will need to be reported in later updates following the review of existing sheltered housing provision.

Background

3. This Committee received an update on the extra care housing scheme in Hereford on 29 September 2003.
4. This report provides Members with an up-date on the progress of the development following the receipt of competitive bids from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
5. Support was received from Cabinet on 25 September 2003 to proceed with the development on the former Local Authority Nursery site off Ledbury Road Hereford.
6. Although six RSLs expressed an interest in assisting in this development only two bids were received from
 - West Mercia Housing Group (on behalf of St John Kemble Hereford Housing Association)
 - Festival Housing Group
7. Those RSLs who expressed a wish but did not submit bids felt that they were unable to meet the requirements of the tight deadlines established in order to meet the submission date for the Department of Health Extra Care Funding allocation.
8. Officers were looking at alternative sites for the relocation of unity gardens should they require assistance.

Current Position

9. In consultation with Extra Care Charitable Trust, Festival Housing Group were selected to assist in the development of the bricks and mortar of the proposed scheme.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Richard Gabb,
Head of Strategic Housing Services, on 01432 261902

10. A capital bid grant application for £4.6m was submitted in November 2003 to the Department of Health (DoH) and simultaneously to the Housing Corporation in December 2003.
11. 127 Social Services departments throughout England have submitted 205 bids to the DoH totalling £310.4m against the £29m available for 2004-5
12. It has been stipulated that joint funding would not be received from both the DoH and Housing Corporation.
13. The level of capital resources required to complement any grant can only be established once the outcome of the bids are known, which is anticipated to be 6 February 2004 from the DoH and during February/March 2004 from the Housing Corporation.
14. Capital costs of the scheme are still only estimates at this stage. Based on previous developments by Extra Care Housing Trust it is expected that the total costs of the Scheme would be some £12,900,000. This Council's contribution would be some £2 million with the remaining costs being met by contributions from the Extra Care Charitable Trust, Festival Housing Private Finance and the application to the DoH Extra Care Fund.
15. Final costs will depend on the valuation of the land and what is required by the local authority for the RSL to purchase the site for the development of the extra care scheme.
16. A valuation of the Ledbury Road nursery site is due to take place on 13 January 2004 with a report due shortly after.
17. Revenue (support and care costs) will be difficult to identify until detailed discussions have concluded the final number of units to be developed and what numbers are to be allocated to the appropriate support/care level.
18. Officers within the directorate have met to discuss the progression of the development. It was agreed that the groups already identified become "active" now the RSL has been selected, as follows:
 - Extra Care Project Board – meet quarterly
 - Extra Care property development team – meet every 6 weeks
 - Extra care, care and support team – meet every 6 weeks
19. It was agreed to take this approach to enable officers with the relevant expertise to concentrate on delivering their own service areas but with chairs on the groups reporting appropriately to the other groups.
20. Officers are to meet with the selected RSL and Extra Care Charitable Trust to establish a draft timetable of preliminary works in order to agree the main areas of work and priority deadlines. Subject to the notification of the Department of Health (DoH) grant allocation we will be requiring the partner organisation to submit a scheme for detailed planning in late spring 2004.
21. Officers have contacted Unity Gardens and requested (for early January) their proposals should there be a possibility for them to remain on the site but to work in

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partnership with the RSL and Extra Care Charitable Trust. These proposals will be considered at the meeting as above, to establish whether there is a possibility for incorporating them within the scheme perimeters.

22. Further negotiations with the allotment society will take place following the outcome of the officers' discussions with the RSL and Extra Care Charitable Trust to establish the exact level of "land swap" that may be required.
23. The extra care provision in the city of Hereford may have an impact on the existing sheltered housing provision elsewhere in the county which will need review to build standards and ensure the provision is appropriate.
24. Existing needs information suggests that the provision is outdated and difficult to let and requires to be reviewed to allow the provision of extra care housing services to be accessible throughout the whole of the county.
25. Officers are currently seeking to commission an external independent consultant to review existing sheltered housing provision within the county to determine the possible impact that the Extra Care Housing development could have on future demand and provision.
26. Members were advised that a full detailed report would be provided outlining the costs of the scheme. This will be reported following the outcome of the grant applications which will have a direct impact on the LA's own resources and the overall size of the proposed scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the latest position with regard to the provision of extra care housing provision in Hereford City be noted and the commissioning of the review of existing sheltered housing provision as outlined be supported.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None.