

**Report of East Leeds Regeneration Programme Manager**

**Report to The Inner East Area Committee**

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Subject: East Leeds Regeneration Programme Update**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Burmantofts & Richmond Hill; Gipton & Harehills; Killingbeck & Seacroft; Temple Newsam	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. East Leeds is a regeneration priority for the city and has long been the focus of concerted partnership activity and investment. An East Leeds Regeneration Board is being established to oversee, guide and monitor the regeneration programme for this area.
2. The Council has continued to commit resources through a dedicated team, which will manage delivery of the regeneration programme, working closely with the new Locality arrangements and through the East North East Area Leadership Team.
3. The main themes of the regeneration programme are Housing; Environment and Greenspace; Employment, Enterprise and Training. Details of progress so far and future work are given in the body of the report.

**Recommendations**

That the Area Committee:

- i) Notes the contents of the report;
- ii) Offers comment on the regeneration programme;
- iii) Offers views on appropriate future consultation arrangements for consideration by the East Leeds Regeneration Board.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To provide an update to the East Inner Area Committee on the regeneration programme for East Leeds.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 East Leeds is a regeneration priority for the city and has long been the focus of concerted partnership activity and investment. The regeneration needs of the area are however deep-seated and there remain significant challenges (and opportunities) across the area.
- 2.2 Alongside the newly-established long-term Vision for Leeds, 5 City Priority Plans have been published, which set out the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the council, and its partners, over the next four years. These will be performance managed through 5 strategic partnership boards.
- 2.3 A Housing and Regeneration City Priority Plan will be overseen by a strategic partnership board that will focus on priorities to:
  - maximise regeneration investment to increase housing choice and affordability within sustainable neighbourhoods;
  - enable growth of the City whilst minimising the impact on the environment and the distinctive green character of Leeds; and
  - improve housing conditions and energy efficiency.
- 2.4 An East Leeds Regeneration Board is being established as part of these arrangements, to oversee, guide and monitor the regeneration programme for this area. This will report to the main Housing & Regeneration Board and will have member representation from each Inner East ward and the two Outer East wards that are within its area, together with other public, private and third sector representation. The East Leeds Board will set its own local regeneration priorities and oversee and guide the regeneration programme.
- 2.5 East Leeds as a regeneration priority is also confirmed within the Leeds Local Housing Investment Plan (LHIP), which has been developed with the Homes and Communities Agency and describes in detail the investment needed in the city's housing and infrastructure, setting out the objectives, priorities and outcomes for the period 2011 to 2015.
- 2.6 The new governance arrangements recognise the scale of regeneration needs in this part of the city and the potential for positive changes to contribute to the achievement of wider city outcomes.
- 2.7 The Council has continued to commit resources through a dedicated team, which will manage delivery of the regeneration programme, working closely with Area Management and through the East North East Area Leadership Team. The skills and resources of other Council services and those of partners from all sectors will be drawn in to achieve the outcomes that deliver the ambition for the area.

### **3 Programme Update**

- 3.1 The regeneration programme has been predicated on the principles of 'mixed communities', to diversify the housing tenure and support the development of mixed tenure, mixed income neighbourhoods, with a broader social mix and an income profile that supports the local economy.
- 3.2 This has been sought through collaboration between the public and private sectors to bring about the investment needed. The principle approach to this has been through the use of Council land assets to encourage private sector development.

### **3.3 Housing - EASEL**

- 3.4 Development activity is ongoing at two large sites in Gipton and Seacroft as part of the Phase 1 EASEL Strategic Development Agreement between Bellway Homes and the Council. This has been sustained through the very difficult recent economic conditions by public support to enable Bellway to maintain construction rates – this has included 'Kickstart' and equity share support for purchasers from the HCA, sales to Chevin Housing Association for sub-market rent and the direct purchase by the Council of 20 homes for social rent and 'rent to buy'.
- 3.5 Two smaller sites in Gipton at Easterly Mount and St Wilifred's Avenue were completed in March 2010 with Council and HCA support to create 63 new social rented Council homes.
- 3.6 As part of the existing development contract with Bellway, work is ongoing to bring forward over 200 further new homes and to identify the housing sales products and funding that may be required to maintain development momentum.
- 3.7 A report will be presented to the East Leeds Regeneration Board detailing the contractual considerations for the Council and Bellway under this scheme.

### **3.8 Housing - Urban Eco Settlement (UES)**

- 3.9 The UES area spans parts of east Leeds, the Aire Valley and city centre and forms an important opportunity for housing growth and exemplar environmentally themed development. There will be opportunities through this area to connect east Leeds more effectively to these adjoining areas, upgrade existing housing stock and provide support for private housing investment.
- 3.10 As part of this area approach, initial pilot group repair and internal retrofit of properties has been undertaken at Cross Green to improve their environmental performance. There is ongoing research attached to this work to measure and learn from the improvements and the behavioural change of occupants, which will feed into the broader UES project development.

### **3.11 Housing - Future Developments**

- 3.12 The Council has a large number of vacant and cleared former housing sites that were originally to be developed through the EASEL partnership with Bellway. The larger area of these is predominately in Seacroft, but there are also sites in Osmondthorpe, Halton Moor and in Lincoln Green.

- 3.13 The planning and market context for developing these sites and realising the required investment to regenerate the neighbourhoods has changed dramatically since the establishment of the EASEL project. The credit crunch, subsequent recession and property slump have reduced the commercial viability of 'brownfield' site developments and limited the potential for surplus values to be created.
- 3.14 Additionally a large area of land to the east of the current built up area of the city (known as the 'East Leeds Extension') has now been released for house building following a number of planning appeals, resulting in the focus of house builders shifting to 'greenfield' developments in the outer east Leeds area.
- 3.15 The Council is therefore investigating how development interest can be refocused on brownfield sites to deliver housing and generate the required investment for regeneration in the Inner East Leeds neighbourhoods.
- 3.16 This will involve market testing of the available land and consideration of how its development could be supported through links to the development of Greenfield sites, the provisions and principles for which will need to be established through the Council's emerging planning Core Strategy.
- 3.17 To this end a new Investment Prospectus for East Leeds is currently being drafted to support market testing which will assist the Council and Regeneration Board in:
- understanding investment potential in East Leeds.
  - introducing the development opportunities within the area providing details of the significant public land available.
  - understanding how regeneration can be funded and supported.
- 3.18 The Prospectus will in due course be issued to local and national developers and investors to provide a base for further discussion on the level of commercial house building interest in the 'East Leeds Offer'. The information from developers will be collated, reviewed and analysed and reported back the East Leeds Regeneration Board, Ward Members and future Area Committees.
- 3.19 Officers can provide further details of the sites, process and timetable for the market testing to Members on a ward basis.

### **3.20 Environment and Greenspace**

- 3.21 A rolling programme of greenspace investment is being co-ordinated utilising s106 planning funds from the Bellway EASEL developments, Access to Nature funds from Natural England, Green Leeds, Playbuilders and LCC Area Committee Well-Being. The value of investment spent to date has been approximately £695K.
- 3.22 A major programme of work is ongoing on the Wyke Beck Valley and smaller projects have been undertaken at Oaktree Drive (renovated public greenspace), a new playground in Gipton Square, improvements in Harehills Cemetery, new tennis courts in East End Park and new pocket parks at Raincliffe Recreation and Longclose Lane, Richmond Hill.

- 3.23 Work is currently being planned for improvements to Seacroft Play area (former Seacroft gardens) and Seacroft Multi Use Games Area, a new and improved greenspace at the Rein in Seacroft, improvements to Killingbeck Fields and a new nature area in Halton Moor.
- 3.24 The attached table provides an overview of the work being undertaken on a ward basis, the sources of funding available to date and the programme for future greenspace improvements.

### **3.25 Employment, Enterprise and Training**

- 3.26 Work has been ongoing with Leeds College of Building to develop new ways of working at the Rise Centre in Seacroft. Taster sessions have proved successful and take up has been good from local residents.
- 3.27 To date 6 apprentices (3 bricklayers and 3 joiners) have been employed by Bellway Homes working on the 3 sites in Gipton and 1 in Seacroft. The downturn in the economy led to a slowdown in construction and a reduction in the number of apprentices being recruited.
- 3.28 Work will continue to develop social impact plans and to draw out training and employment opportunities for any new developments in the area through Employment Leeds, including ensuring connectivity to those opportunities arising in the Aire Valley Leeds.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Consultation, engagement and communication are recognised as a central part of the regeneration of East Leeds and officers will work with Ward Members through the appropriate Governance arrangements in order to bring information for consultation in a timely and relevant way.
- 4.1.2 Following the establishment of the East Leeds Regeneration Board it will be necessary to agree the reporting arrangements for the programme, given the potential for duplication of reports between this and the Area Committee. Members' views are sought on how this could be best achieved, though it is suggested that a regular highlight report from the Board could be provided.
- 4.1.3 The emerging 'Localism' agenda is likely to require a much greater level of engagement with and lead from local communities in setting the regeneration agenda. The draft Localism Bill 2011 sets clear expectations that some power and budgets will be passed to local communities, aiming to give them greater choice in shaping local services and delivering change. However it is expected that further refinement and clarification of the Bill's provisions will take place prior to it passing into statute later in the year.
- 4.1.4 This will offer both challenge and opportunity for the delivery of regeneration. A communications plan for the regeneration programme is being drafted to respond to these and will be shared with members for their views at an early stage.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 There are no specific issues arising in relation to this report.
- 4.2.2 All projects within the programme are subject to Equality Impact Assessment screening and full EqIA's where required.

## **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The Vision for Leeds 2030, the Council Business Plan 2011-2015 and the City Priority Plans (CPP) 2011-2015 provide the strategic frame of reference for regeneration in East Leeds.
- 4.3.2 The Housing & Regeneration CPP establishes priorities to:
  - Maximise regeneration investment to increase housing choice and affordability within sustainable neighbourhoods
  - Enable growth of the city whilst minimising the impact on the environment and protecting the distinctive green character of Leeds; and
  - Improve housing conditions and energy efficiency.
- 4.3.3 There are also important links from the regeneration programme to the Sustainable Economy and Culture CPP and its priorities to increase jobs, improve skills and support access and take up of these.

## **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

- 4.4.1 The Council's regeneration programme is managed through the existing East Team of the Regeneration Programmes Division, working with Area Management.
- 4.4.2 Delivery of the major investment required to realise the programme over the long term is likely to require significant private sector intervention.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications in relation to this report.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 The programme comprises a range of individual projects which, when being prepared are tested through the Council's internal Delivering Successful Change project management framework and all risks and issues are assessed, logged and resolved according to the rigour of the project management process.

## **5 Recommendations**

- 5.1 That the Area Committee:
  - i) Notes the contents of the report;
  - ii) Offers comment on the regeneration programme;

iii) Offers views on appropriate future consultation arrangements for consideration by the East Leeds Regeneration Board.

## **6 Background documents**

6.1 No background documents are referred to in this report.