

(For Democratic Services use)

Decision Number: 27 (2015/16)

## Portfolio Holder Executive Decision Statement

The Local Authority (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

**Subject:** *Proposed remodelling of an existing supported housing facility for people with learning disabilities in Ash Close, Edenbridge.*

**Details of Decision taken:** *To agree to contribute £100,000 from the District Council's S106 affordable housing planning gains to enable the remodelling of a West Kent Housing Association (WKHA) supported housing facility for people with a learning disability.*

### Reason for Decision

*There is an evidenced need for supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities in the Sevenoaks District (bespoke SDC-funded local survey and wider county data). As well as there being a requirement for new provision to meet existing and future need, the District Council must also work with providers to maintain and preserve the District's existing specialist and supported housing schemes. In doing so, this will enable established schemes to continue to provide for specific needs well into the future. The scheme in Edenbridge is in need of remodelling to bring it up to current standards and to enable its continued use as a decent and safe home for people with learning disabilities. This was made more pressing following a fire around 18-months ago and which caused damage to part of the building. The proposed scheme will deliver eight 1-bedroom self-contained flats with access to a ninth for staff use. It will also have enhanced facilities such as an accessible lift and other wheelchair accessible measures, sensory garden and a scooter store, plus it will have a layout that supports people with early dementia to live well within the building. Total project costs are set at around £1.47-million. This is to be part-funded with £868k from WKHA's loan re-financing and supported with a grant allocation from the HCA. The HCA grant element is not adequate enough to fully fund the remainder of the project, however, and additional funding is required. WKHA's Board has subsequently agreed to provide a further £90k additional subsidy as an exceptional request, which demonstrates WKHA's commitment to the project, but this still leaves a shortfall of £108,037 and which the District Council has been subsequently asked to contribute towards. The HCA has indicated that it would be more supportive*

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Decision Number:

*of this grant bid if additional partnership funding could be agreed. This project supports previously-adopted housing strategy as well as wider health, welfare and other community priorities (as agreed in several corporate policies). More specifically, it would support the Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2014-17), which puts a strong emphasis on the need for prevention, early intervention and integration of services to deliver improved outcomes for people. It would also support the District Council's own emerging Learning Disabilities Action Plan, which has been developed in partnership with KCC and WKHA through a joint-agency working group. This would enable the District Council to preserve much-needed specialist housing and reduce reliance on new-build projects, with the new-build approach having significantly high land and property costs (difficult to compete with private sector), planning restrictions (starting from scratch whereas the existing facility has consent in place), permanent decants (in this particular case), and lengthy project planning and development processes etc. Through making best use of the existing housing stock (again, a key District Council priority), the District Council could avoid these issues by maximising use of a well-established and popular facility in the local Edenbridge community. The scheme is located in a quiet neighbourhood and in the vicinity of the local High Street, GP surgery (scheme support staff will liaise with the Edenbridge GP learning disabilities nurses), health clinics, churches and the local leisure centre. It is also close to the new Eden Centre which provides additional services including a library, Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB), community café, one-stop housing advice service, and with additional support and an activity group for people with learning disabilities. It is ideally situated, therefore. This project would also support the integration of care and support with health services (as required under the Care Act 2014) to improve the quality of care and support for vulnerable adults (and, in turn, families and carers) by protecting health-related housing provision - this being provision of housing which has a positive effect on the health of individuals, but which is not provided by health services. With its proposed set-up, support, training and facilities, this scheme has the potential to save money on health budgets, as follows: 1) the inclusion of smart telecare within the building could save a total of £28,800 pa, 2) an accessible building with appropriately placed grab-rails, level-access door openings, use of natural light, and smart use of colour contrast to help with visual impairment and which would help to prevent falls and support ease of mobility around the building, which*

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could save a further £15,816 pa. This investment would also help to generate an additional £1.37-million external investment in the Sevenoaks District and have a significantly positive effect in terms of locally-based investment and economic development. The scheme will be designed to be future-proof in a way that, should it become necessary in the future, a change of client group could be introduced. This proposal corresponds with spending criteria/rules, as set out in the Affordable Housing SPD. These are: 1) initiatives to make better use of the existing stock, and 2) managing future needs for affordable housing. This project has the full support of Kent the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group which would be essential to the ongoing operation of the scheme. The CCG has confirmed that the scheme is in line with the West-Kent CCG Mapping the Future programme and plans to redesign primary care provision, particularly in relation to falls prevention and diabetes management. Additionally, the scheme has the support of KCC in terms of integrated commissioning through the Kent Accommodation Strategy. In terms of the District Council's own Housing Strategy, again this proposal meets with objectives. Learning disabilities clients were also identified as a priority group in the District Council's recent joint member/officer housing strategy review, which was led by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health. Without this investment, the project will not go ahead and the site is likely to be sold on and/or used for another purpose. This would be a significant loss to what is already limited specialist social housing stock and result in several negative knock-on effects across housing, health and wider community strategy.

**All Documents considered:**

Housing Strategy Action Plan; Community Plan; Health Inequalities Action Plan; Kent Supporting People Strategy; Kent Accommodation Strategy; LD housing needs study.

**Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the Member when making the Decision:**

None

**Financial implications**

To be funded through S106 affordable housing planning gains and with no consequent impact on District Council budgets, therefore.

**Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement**

Reference is made to the Care Act 2014, as set out above. This funding would

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*enable the project to go ahead and the District would not, as a consequence, lose much-needed specialist housing for a vulnerable client group. Without this funding, the site would likely be sold on and/or used for another purpose.*

**Equality Impacts** (Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty)

*This project aims to advance equality of opportunity for people with learning disabilities (and their families and carers) and fosters good relations between people from different groups. The decision recommended through this paper would directly impact end-users in a positive way.*

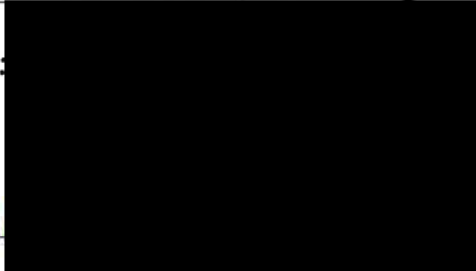
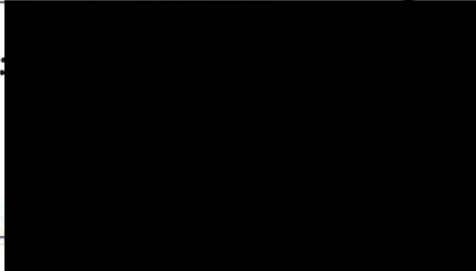
**Local Member (s), other Portfolio Holders and/or Directors/Heads of Service Consulted**

- Pat Smith, Chief Housing Officer
- Richard Morris, Chief Planning Officer

**Details of any conflicts of interest**

a) declared by any executive member who is consulted by the Decision Taker

b) and any details of dispensations granted by the Chief Executive in respect of any declared conflict

<b>Decision taken by:</b>	<i>Cllr Michelle Lowe, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health; and</i> <i>Cllr Robert Piper, Portfolio Holder for Planning</i>
<b>Signed by Portfolio Holder</b>	<i>Cllr Michelle Lowe:</i>  <i>Cllr Robert Piper:</i> 
<b>Date of Decision</b>	29/01/16
<b>Record made by:</b>	David Lagzdins

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Decision Number:

**Date of record:**

01/02/2016

**LINKS FOR DOCS CONSIDERED:**

KCC Accommodation Strategy: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/accommodation-strategy-for-adult-social-care#>

District profile: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/accommodation-strategy-for-adult-social-care#>

Housing Strategy Action Plan:

[http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/81364/hsapfinalcopy.pdf](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/81364/hsapfinalcopy.pdf)

Community Plan:

<http://documents.sevenoaks.gov.uk/community%20and%20living/community%20plan/Sevenoaks%20Community%20Plan%202013.pdf>

Health Inequalities Action Plan:

<http://documents.sevenoaks.gov.uk/Community%20and%20Living/Health/2013-15%20Sevenoaks%20Mind%20the%20Gap%20HI%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

LD housing needs study (by request)

KCC Supporting People Strategy:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/adult-Social-Services/housing-related-support/Updated%20documents%2016Dec09/Draft%20SP%20Strategy%202010-2015V3.pdf>

Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/250877/5086.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/250877/5086.pdf)

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