

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Panel**  
Date: **3 May 2018**  
Title: **Update on the Urban Fringe Deliver Team and Sherford Strategic Review**  
Portfolio Area: **Customer First**  
Wards Affected: **Wembury and Brixton and Woolwell located in the Urban Fringe area**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: N/A

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y / N**

Date next steps can be taken: N/A  
(e.g. referral on of recommendation or implementation of substantive decision)

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**Recommendations:**

**That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel:**

- 1. support the set up and function of the new Urban Fringe Delivery Team; and**
- 2. welcome the latest update on the Sherford Strategic Review.**

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) has been submitted and the Examination in Public took place between 30th January 2018 and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- 1.2 The JLP sets the policy and strategy to deliver 27,700 new homes over the plan period, 1900 in the Plymouth Policy Area and 7,700 in the Thriving Towns and Villages policy area. The Urban Fringe is in the Plymouth Policy Area and includes Sherford and other sites that

fall in the South Hams boundary within Plymouth, for example land allocated at Woolwell for an urban extension and employment land at Langage.

- 1.3 The Urban Fringe Delivery Team is a continuation of the previous Sherford Delivery Team, which was funded by money secured from Homes and Community Agency now known as Homes England (HE). To continue supporting the delivery of large sites in the Urban Fringe a further successful bid was made to the HE. The fund provides £559,500 to fund a team of specialists for approximately 2 years.
- 1.4 The team is hosted by this Council and currently comprised of a team manager, (Gina Small) a senior planning specialist (Ian Sosnowski), a senior specialist (Mark Harris), specialist development management (Tom French) and a project officer (Anna Booth), the team also commissions flexible support of other officers, such as ecologist and green infrastructure specialists, officers are seconded from SHDC, Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council.
- 1.5 This paper also provides an update on the Sherford Strategic Review. The Sherford Consortium have completed their review of the site including a Developers Forum held on 7th December and public events on 8th and 9th December. There has been a review of the Town Code and a section 73 application was approved by South Hams District Council. A second section 73 application was received by SHDC on 23rd March 2017.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council is committed to delivering a Joint Local Plan and as such has a shared commitment to delivering the housing targets. The innovative and positive approach taken in the JLP will require a similar approach to its implementation.
- 2.2 A Members steering board has been set up to provide leadership and guidance to deliver the aspirations of the LP. An officer JLP management board have also been set up. The Urban Fringe Manager will report to both boards.
- 2.3 Sherford is a live housing delivery site within the urban fringe. The Sherford New Community Consortium is made up of Bovis Homes, Linden Homes and Taylor Wimpey. An outline permission for 5,500 homes plus employment, 3 primary schools, secondary and other community infrastructure was granted in 2013. A reserved matters application has been granted for phase 1 of the development for 600, dwellings. We expect a further reserved matters application for a similar number of homes to be submitted to the LPA in Autumn 2018.

- 2.4 The Consortium set out on a Sherford Review last year. The review has updated the Sherford Design Guide and a decision to grant approval was issued in September 2017.
- 2.5 The consortium report to the Sherford Project board on a monthly basis and Homes England have representation on the board, they require progress to be reported in terms of their loan arrangement with the Consortium.

### **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 Delivering large-scale development requires focused resources that that are beyond the business as usual resources of the planning team. This include master-planning, resolving land ownership viability issues, negotiation with developers throughout the scheme's life, and the time and ability needed to strike funding deals to bring forward infrastructure.
- 3.2 It is important to note that liaison with the community, existing and those moving in is also an important part of the work to deliver the community aspirations.
- 3.3 The teams focus in its six months has been to; support the JLP examination, and support the complex delivery of Sherford, including the recently completed Strategic review for Sherford.
- 3.4 The key aspects of the recent Section 73 application include: revisions to the Masterplan and site layout; revised drainage proposals to increase above ground water attenuation; redistribution of the commercial space; increased green space within the urban areas and revisions to ecological mitigation.
- 3.5 The team will focus efforts on maintaining momentum on the Sherford site. Sherford is currently four years into its build programme, significant groundworks, drainage major road schemes and superstructures for over 250 of the first 600 homes phase have been constructed. Approximately 143 properties are now occupied and the Primary School, Sherford Vale, opens in September 2018.
- 3.6 In the last 12 months the team have secured up to £7.1 million of external funding to deliver Deep Lane Junction improvements and bring forward the early delivery of Sherford Main St, the team have also worked closely with the developers to bring forward the first primary school that opens in September 2018.
- 3.7 In summary the Team will:
  - Oversee the statutory planning functions on behalf of both LPAs in a timely and efficient manner

- Support the delivery of major community infrastructure, working with external partners such as the Health Sector, DfE, Highways England, Natural England etc.
- Leverage in funding opportunities by developing shovel ready schemes for acceleration e.g. Phase 2 of Deep Lane improvements and Main St.
- Monitor and accelerate the implementation of S106 Agreements and Planning Permissions
- Provide specific technical advice and opinion on planning decisions
- Support the Sherford Project Board and other Boards as established
- Contribute to the Sherford Strategic Review Programme
- Negotiate and agree the formal and legal basis for the Sherford Community Trust
- Facilitate and contribute to the Skills and Training Scheme management
- Leverage specialist support (matched funding) from their respective Authorities
- Liaison with Local Communities, residents and elected Members to build local relationships with neighbouring communities.
- A further role for the Team at this stage will be to share learning experiences of best practice, both with partner 'New Community' organisations, such as Cranbrook and Southwest of Exeter growth

3.8 The team will also be engaged in the planning of other strategic sites such as the land allocated at Woolwell for 2000 homes in the local plan employment at Langage.

3.9 The team is currently exclusively funded by HCA money which will resource the team to the end of 2019. The team manager is developing a business plan to maintain resources to keep the team operating beyond this.

3.10 The Joint Local Plan team will manage the monitoring and annual reporting of housing delivery.

#### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

4.1 The Council could choose to manage large sites such as Sherford within its normal planning service. However, this would overburden a very busy planning team and would slow down the pace of delivery. In conjunction with Plymouth City Council and Devon County Council the authorities have recognised the specialist intervention and resources that are required for such large housing sites and therefore been successful in securing external funding from HE to provide a dedicated team.

4.2 The strategic review is an exercise undertaken by the Consortium but there has been good stakeholder engagement. There is no 'guide book' that brings forward large housing sites, there is a reliance on the market, housebuilding, need to secure delivery of infrastructure and some flexibility to review and adapt to changing circumstances. A range of skills are required and it will be important that this is resourced properly through the new team. If the strategic review was not engaged with there was a significant risk that this major strategic housing site would stall and possibly halt.

## 5. **Proposed Way Forward**

### 5.1 Proposals:

That the panel support the setup of the new Urban Fringe Delivery Team and welcome the update on the strategic review of Sherford undertaken by the Consortium.

### 5.2 Justification – including fit with corporate priorities

The approach to setting up a Urban Fringe Delivery Team to manage and promote the delivery of housing, jobs and enhance the natural environment fits well with the corporate priorities; Supporting Vibrant Towns and Villages and enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities whilst conserving the natural environment.

5.3 This will have a positive impact in making sure as much as possible that the Joint Plan is capable of delivering its five year housing supply and contribute positively towards the housing supply and creating of new jobs in the urban fringe.

5.4 The set up a dedicated team provide resources that are able to focus time and energy into unlocking complex large sites such as Sherford and bring that experience into the wider team.

5.5 The strategic review builds on and enhances the vision for Sherford to make it a desirable new town where its community can thrive.

5.6 Negative impacts are that the review could be perceived negatively by the public as a simple cost saving exercise. This has been mitigated by a number of strategic workshops with key stakeholders over the last 12 months and through public exhibitions.

## 6. **Implications**

| Implications     | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address                                     |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Legal/Governance | N                         | The report provides an update on the role of the Urban Fringe Delivery team. |

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|--|---|---|
|  |   | <p>The report needs to clearly set out all the legal implications of the decision including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The legal background to and legal authority for the decision</li> <li>• Whether the proposal is a mandatory or discretionary service</li> <li>• Whether it meets existing/new statutory obligations</li> <li>• Whether there are legal or governance issues that need to be addressed.</li> </ul> <p>Where the above is an integral part of the main body of the report reference to the relevant sections should be made.</p>  |
| Financial                                    | Y | <p>The Urban Fringe Delivery team are funded by HCA funding which provides £559,500 to set up a team for approx. 2 years.</p> <p>The report needs to clearly set out all the financial implications of the decision including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revenue expenditure, capital expenditure, staffing and income by financial year,</li> <li>• any savings/additional income expected,</li> <li>• the budgets to be used to fund the expenditure,</li> <li>• any tax (including VAT) or interest implications of the decision,</li> <li>• any financial risks arising from the decision including estimates of possible losses and the probability of these,</li> <li>• any assumptions made in arriving at the numbers presented, and if significant,</li> <li>• any cashflow implications arising.</li> </ul> <p>Where the above is an integral part of the main body of the report reference to the relevant sections should be made.</p> |
| Risk   | N | <p>The report provides an update and does not require a decision.</p> <p>The report needs to clearly set out all the significant risks associated with the decision. Significant risk can be defined as the chances of something going wrong that has a material impact on the Council.</p>   |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications |   |   |

|                                      |  |   |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Equality and Diversity               |  | The delivery of new housing and jobs require sound community planning to make sure the needs of all people are taken into account. If this is not done there is a risk of excluding sectors of the community. |
| Safeguarding                         |  | There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.  |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder |  | There are no Community Safety and Crime and Disorder implications arising from this report.   |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing         |  | Health, Safety and Wellbeing considerations are made in the Masterplanning of new sites and throughout its delivery.  |
| Other implications                   |  | None  |

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

None

#### **Background Papers:**

None