



AGENDA ITEM: 5

CABINET: 16 September 2014

Report of: Borough Solicitor

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D Westley

**Contact for further information: Mrs J Denning (Extn. 5384)
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SUBJECT: HRA BORROWING – PILOT SCHEME CABINET WORKING GROUP

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the resolution of Council on 23 July 2014 under the item 'HRA Borrowing' to ask the Leader to establish a Cabinet Working Group to investigate the feasibility of incorporating a pilot scheme using offsite manufactured low-carbon homes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the resolution of Council on 23 July 2014, detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report, be noted and it be noted that, for the reasons stated in paragraph 5 below, the Leader has asked the Findon/Firbeck Cabinet Working Group to look into this matter as described.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 It is for the Leader to appoint Cabinet Committees and Working Groups.

4.0 DECISION OF COUNCIL – 23 JULY 2014

4.1 During consideration of the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration in respect of HRA Borrowing, Council resolved:-

“That the Leader be asked to establish a Working Group of 4 Councillors (2 Conservative and 2 Labour) and 2 tenant representatives, advised by the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration, to investigate the feasibility of incorporating a pilot scheme using offsite manufactured low-carbon homes. These homes produce on average 50% of the carbon emissions of traditional brick build homes and 50% lower fuel bills, reducing the cost both to the HRA and our tenants. These are companies that can supply these highly insulated 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses and bungalows, for which the panels can be erected onsite in just one day and that a report come back to Council within 4 months and appropriate resources be made available.”

5.0 LEADER’S VIEW

- 5.1 The Leader is concerned that delays would be caused to the project if another Cabinet Working Group was established looking into wooden prefabricated homes. He feels that the existing project should go ahead without delay but the existing Findon/Firbeck Working Group could look into the possibility of wooden prefabricated frames as part of planning a further project that can be held in readiness should the Government announce the availability of a new funding pot or further relaxation of the HRA borrowing cap.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The report has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There would be some financial/ resource implications arising from this report should the Leader decide to establish an additional Working Group, which would have to be borne by the HRA.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The Firbeck Revival Project is partly funded from “One for One Replacement” capital receipt funding. There is a requirement for this funding to be spent within 3 years of receipt, or else it has to be paid over to the Government with interest. Consequently there is a need to ensure the project is completed within a reasonable timescale.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

None