

CABINET

1 October 2003

COMMUNITY PLANNING – FINAL REPORT ON STANMORE & HIGHCLIFFE

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND HOUSING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB521 - November 2002

CAB485 - October 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The report presents the final reports of John Thompson and Partners on behalf of the Council on the community planning exercises held in the Stanmore and Highcliffe estates. The reports, produced with significant community involvement, conclude that a number of sites could be considered for affordable housing development and a series of environmental improvements undertaken.

The reports note the importance of community involvement in the consideration of individual sites and issues. It is suggested that this could best be achieved through the establishment of two informal consultative groups with ward Member, officer and community representation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That

1. Cabinet receives the reports from John Thompson and Partners on the Community Planning Exercise on Stanmore and Highcliffe.
2. Cabinet agrees to the establishment of a joint informal consultative group for each area consisting of local and Cabinet Members, community representatives and officers from the Council and partner agencies, to consider the John Thompson and Partners reports recommendations. In noting the concerns of the community it is suggested that the issues, both housing and environmental and quality of life be

considered on a site-by site, issue-by-issue basis. In considering the reports, it is suggested the groups review, in particular, resource needs, community involvement, relative priorities and timetabling before bringing recommendations to Cabinet for decision.

3. Cabinet notes that the reports consider a number of sites to be not suitable for development and agrees not to investigate these further.

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### COMMUNITY PLANNING – FINAL REPORT ON STANMORE AND HIGHCLIFFE

#### Report of Director of Health and Housing

#### DETAIL:

##### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has received the final reports from John Thompson & Partners (JTP) giving their conclusions and recommendations on the community planning exercises carried out in Stanmore and Highcliffe.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to consider the JTP reports and to suggest how the Council should approach the JTP recommendations. JTP were asked to advise on the delivery of additional affordable housing on the Council's land and the environmental and quality of life issues raised by the communities themselves.
- 1.3 The final reports generally confirm what earlier Cabinet papers had indicated:
  - a) There is some potential for delivering more affordable housing across the two estates, although some options are realisable only in the longer term;
  - b) The environmental and quality of life issues are similar to those raised through the work of the Winchester Neighbourhood Initiative (WNI). Whilst residents' aspirations cannot all be addressed in the short term, they are realistic and are what the Council would wish for all its residents.

##### 2 Stage 2 Findings

- 2.1 The JTP project was undertaken in two stages, with Stage 1 being completed in the Autumn of last year. The findings, reported in CAB521, indicated the potential for affordable housing together with the non housing aspirations that were beginning to emerge.
- 2.2 Once the second stage commenced JTP built upon the findings of the first stage as well as giving the initial results a more detailed analysis. There was additional consultation with the respective communities including questionnaire surveys. This allowed JTP to draw up a series of proposals and subsequently masterplans. They provided fairly clear views on what development the communities would be willing to discuss further and what development would be considered unacceptable. Having taken note of the communities' views JTP then drew up the recommendations in their reports.

##### 3 The Main JTP Recommendations

- 3.1 The full JTP reports on the community planning processes in Stanmore and Highcliffe have been circulated to Cabinet, Group Leaders, Housing Performance Improvement Committee, Chair of Principal Scrutiny Committee and local ward Members and are available in the Members Library. Copies will also be sent to

principal media and key community contacts. The main recommendations as outlined in the Executive Summaries of the reports are shown in Appendix 1.

- 3.2 The reports make clear the importance of the involvement of the communities in taking forward plans for decision on detailed proposals. Great care will be needed in the delivery of the key housing proposals in particular to ensure that factors such as car parking, amenity values, size and space are handled sensitively.
- 3.3 Cabinet is very aware of the sensitivity of the issues raised. By receiving the JTP report it is not agreeing to any particular development. It is recommended now to proceed to further explore the potential of those sites which have not been ruled out by the JTP consultation as well as look at the environmental and quality of life issues.
- 3.4 In order to progress these suggestions it is recommended that an informal member/officer/community representative consultative group be established for each area as a way of engaging local people in setting priorities and agreeing how the issues will be tackled. It is not proposed to specify how the communities will agree who should represent them or how quickly the process should be undertaken. It is proposed to make clear the Council's willingness to engage in dialogue.
- 3.5 However, it is clear also that some of the proposals do not reflect current Council policy, particularly to the use of open space for housing, and it is hoped that the further consideration that is proposed will begin to address the areas where policy and priority conflict.
- 3.6 There are references in both reports to the long term future of sheltered housing schemes in the two estates. This is not expanded in the reports as further work on older peoples housing strategies, in the light of initiatives such as Supporting People as well as local policies on the use of hard to let sheltered accommodation for younger tenants, needs to be carried out by officers in the Health & Housing Department.
- 3.7 Lastly, the Highcliffe report in particular comments upon the matter of the public debate on supported housing and the impact that this has had on public participation. Although supported housing was not a consideration for the review being conducted by JTP, it clearly has had an effect. It is worth noting that regardless of the outcome of the planning application for the proposed supported housing development at Fivefields Road Highcliffe, there are no proposals for the further investigation of supported housing sites in these estates.
- 3.8 At this stage a specific legal examination of the constraints affecting all of the sites has not been undertaken. However, the general legal procedures which apply for further public consultation are relevant apart from any specific title issues affecting a particular site. However, the proposal for the informal Consultative Groups demonstrates that the Council wants to undertake consultation beyond the legal requirements. General legal issues are:-
  - (a) Any disposal of land held for open space purposes (or which has an open space character) has to be advertised in a local paper in two successive weeks and any objections considered before a final decision is made.
  - (b) The land used as allotments is held for Housing purposes and is not held as "statutory allotments". If the land had been appropriated for statutory allotment purposes then Secretary of State consent for disposal would be

required and in the past this has usually been subject to a requirement to provide a satisfactory alternative site for those allotment holders who wanted one. If the allotments are not designated as being "statutory allotments" the Council will need to consider whether it is desirable to take a similar approach to re-provision for existing allotment holders if a decision is made to proceed with the development of any allotment sites. The JTP Report supports this approach.

- (c) The general duty to consult tenants on matters of housing management would normally involve further consultation with affected residents in the adjacent area – which is part of the community planning approach that is being undertaken – and could give rise to further support/objection to proposals at the next stage.
  - (d) Garage occupiers do not have any statutory protection and could be given notice. Previous practice has been to consider re-provision for those who were using garages for proper purposes and a similar approach could now be taken if such sites are affected by the final proposals.
  - (e) The Serco site is subject to a lease to the Council's contractor. Any proposals on its future would have to be agreed with the Contractor. The relocation of the site would have significant financial consequences which may affect the viability of any proposal.
- 3.9 Any proposals affecting garden land or private properties would have to be considered in discussion with the tenants/owners of the land concerned.

#### 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 It is felt that the JTP recommendations are balanced and provide a basis for further consideration of individual sites and service improvements.
- 4.2 As suggested by the JTP reports, the further delivery of work ought to be agreed in informal consultative groups where local community representatives, tenants and ward Members have an influential role. The WNI has already helped to establish a group in Highcliffe and to develop the potential for a group in Stanmore. This could provide the basis for each community to be represented in a continuing dialogue with the Council. The Community Services Department could provide some officer support to the communities and assist in developing structures which would be a development of the WNI process.
- 4.3 The timetabling of work will require planning and will be dependent on budget availability, planning consents and government consents where necessary as well as officer capacity. There is no shortage of will to complete the process but there will need to be considerable thought given to timing and community priorities.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

#### 5 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 5.1 The issues link mainly to the delivery of affordable housing and promoting a healthier, safer and more caring community.

## 6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 There are a number of budgetary implications in this report and accepting the proposals in principle does not necessarily mean that they can be achieved financially. Some limited funding for the proposals outlined in the JTP recommendations is already available from the Housing Revenue Account. The further consideration to be given to the reports recommendations by the proposed working groups will need to include the short and medium term resource implications, the timetable for delivery given the funding implications and the impact any spending might have on other Council commitments and priorities. There may be requirements for supplementary estimates should proposals wish to be pursued this financial year or bids made for future growth for the medium to longer term proposals. There will also have to be consideration given to the split between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account for funding future project proposals.
- 6.2 No details can be offered at this stage of the actual capital and revenue implications but these will need to be reviewed by the informal working groups and any recommendations brought back to Cabinet for consideration and decision.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

John Thompson and Partners Highcliffe and Stanmore Stage Two reports.

## APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Main JTP recommendations

## APPENDIX 1

The main John Thompson and Partners Recommendations:

### Stanmore

The following sites could be considered for the development of affordable housing:

#### **Garage Sites**

Site between Minden Way and Chatham Road

Site between Fox Lane and Stanmore Lane

Drayton Street North

Drayton Street South

Woolford Close

Thurmond Crescent East

#### **Allotment Sites**

Cromwell Road East

Princes Place

Vicarage Gardens adjacent to St Luke's Church

#### **Open Space Sites**

Selected parts of the Valley

The following environmental and quality of life issues have been identified by the community and need to be tackled:

Anti-social behaviour

Better Policing

Facilities for Young People

Better maintenance of open spaces and of open spaces and footpaths

Enforcement of tenancy conditions for the upkeep of homes and gardens

Better public transport

### Highcliffe

The following areas could be considered for the development of affordable housing:

Fivefields Road Garage Site

Gordon Avenue Garage Site

Corner of Milland Road and Vale Road

The Serco Depot

The following environmental and quality of life issues have been identified by the community and need to be tackled:

Anti-social behaviour

Better more visible policing

Improved facilities for children and young people

Improvements to the streetscape – paving, planting and street furniture

Enforcement of tenancy conditions for the upkeep of homes and gardens

Better public transport

Reduction in noise from the motorway