

**Cheltenham Borough Council**  
**Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
**7<sup>th</sup> June, 2007**

**St Paul's Regeneration Project update**

**Report of the Assistant Director Built Environment and**  
**Assistant Chief Executive (Service Delivery) Cheltenham**  
**Borough Homes**

**1. Executive Summary and recommendation**

**1.1 The issue**

Following acceptance of the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA) recommendations, a Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) / Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) regeneration project team has been established to develop proposals for the implementation of the NRA recommendations. An implementation plan (copy available on request) has been developed to support the delivery of the St Paul's Regeneration project. Within the scope of this plan it should be acknowledged that there is a need for comprehensive and integrated regeneration initiatives to tackle the concentration of deprivation and social exclusion in St Paul's. The NRA recommendations emphasise the need to improve the appearance and layout of the estate, its housing and environment, in order to improve its attractiveness as an area in which to live and invest. Partnership initiatives are also required to help service providers focus and target resources on people most in need, so that the cycle of deprivation can be broken

**1.2** Progress with respect to decent homes investment, needs assessment, decant framework and property survey is highlighted in addition to an outline of the successful partnership activities which have been delivered to date. The range of initiatives delivered to young people has been of particular note. Progress has been supported by comprehensive and consistent communication and consultation with residents.

**1.3** The purpose of this report is to

- update committee since this was last presented to Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006
- detail ongoing resident involvement and communication

- detail project progress to date and to outline project activities planned until March 2008

**1.4 I therefore recommend that Committee:**

**1.4.1 notes the contents of the report and progress made to date.**

**1.4.2 notes the activities planned until March 2008.**

**1.4.3 provides any feedback that it would wish to see considered by cabinet as part of the ongoing decision making and project planning processes..**

**1.5 Summary of implications**

**1.5.1 Financial**                      None arising directly from this report – there will however be significant financial implications in implementing the recommended options and this is likely to necessitate funding for both works and staffing resources in addition to that currently programmed.

## 1.5.2 Legal

More detailed legal implications will be included on the specific recommendations which will in due course be set out in the Cabinet report. However, we wish to draw Committee's attention to the following;

### Privately owned dwellings

If the council cannot agree to purchase those privately owned dwellings recommended by the consultant to be demolished, it will need to instigate compulsory purchase procedures and adhere to the due legal process. The process could take about 2 years to complete.

For those private dwellings which require decent homes standards works internally and/or externally, the council has a Health and Safety Grant which could be made available if the owner is eligible under the council's policy.

That grant will not be available for 'transformational' improvements and there is no obligation on the owners to carry out these works. If the council wishes the works to be undertaken, it will need the consent of the owners to do the works at the council's own expense.

### Council owned dwellings

Once the council has firmly decided which of its dwellings are to be demolished, Initial Demolition Notices and Final Demolition Notices should be served on its secure tenants in accordance with the provisions and requirements of Schedule 5 and 5A of the Housing Act 1985 as amended. Once an Initial Demolition Notice is served, the council does not have to accept a tenant's application to purchase the dwelling under the right to buy scheme

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## 1.5.4 Human Resources

None arising directly from this report.

## 1.6 Implications on corporate and community plan priorities

**1.6.1** The Priorities Assessment Tool was used to assess the significant extent to which the regeneration of the St Paul's estate will contribute to both community and corporate plan priorities.

**1.6.2 Corporate priority 1** – we will work towards a balanced and sustainable housing market – the proposed regeneration scheme will replace parts of the area which

comprise predominantly social housing currently, giving the opportunity both to provide a wider choice of housing types and tenures to meet the identified needs of the community.

- 1.6.3 Corporate priority 2** – we will reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime in our communities – this project will greatly enhance the feeling of security in this part of St Paul's and reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. The refurbishment and redevelopment aspects of the scheme will follow 'Secure by Design' principles and will be the subject of consultation with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer. Any physical changes to the area are only one aspect of the regeneration process and need to be complemented by on-going support for and involvement of the community.
- 1.6.4 Corporate priority 3** – we will protect and improve the environment of Cheltenham - the project offers the opportunity of enhancing the local environment in a number of ways, for example by improving street layout in the Manser and Hudson Street area by creating cul-de-sacs in place of the existing long terraces. The improvement programme will also look to improve the environmental quality of the area and offers the opportunity of providing more sustainable housing, for example by including high standards of energy efficiency and the incorporation of renewable energy technologies.
- 1.6.5 Corporate priority 4** – we will reduce reliance on the private car and increase the proportion of trips made by public transport, cycling and walking - opportunities for walking and cycling through the area could be improved as a result of the regeneration programme.
- 1.5.6 Corporate priority 5** – we will redress the imbalances in our communities and build strong healthy geographical communities and communities of interest – the project needs to be a co-ordinated approach to tackle the social, economic and physical regeneration of the identified area of St Paul's.
- 1.7 Statement on Risk**
- 1.7.1** A risk assessment for the project accompanied the previous report to Cabinet in December 2006 and will be regularly updated as project risks change.
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## **2. St Paul's Regeneration Project Update**

This report captures the activities and developments which have occurred in St Paul's since Committee was last updated on 30th November 2006, details progress to date and outlines project activities planned until March 2008.

### **2.0 Resident Involvement & Communication**

- 2.1 Urban Design** – a consultation plan has been developed to ensure that residents and young people will have an opportunity to be involved in the selection of the designer and the development of options for the regeneration of the estate
- 2.2 Demolition** – development of a contractor's code of conduct in June 2007. Residents and young people are being asked to share their concerns with regard to the potential disruption caused by the phased demolition approach so that, as far as

possible, these can be alleviated by an agreed code of conduct. The consultation will be in the form of door to door surveys and a drop-in event at the Community House. It is intended that the outline plans developed through the urban design process (with costs) will be presented to CBC Cabinet in October 2007

- 2.3 Decanting Policy and Procedure** – a framework has been developed to clearly communicate the decanting process. This includes the process through which residents will be allocated alternative accommodation and the compensation and other support available to residents who have to move.
- 2.4 Newsletters** – CBH is committed to ongoing communication with residents and St Paul's Moving Forward issue (26) (copy available on request) has just been hand delivered to every resident in St Paul's neighbourhood.
- 2.5 Home visits** – all residents affected by the redevelopment proposals have received at least one home visit to provide an opportunity to raise queries and concerns and share information.
- 2.6 Drop-in events** – the project team have continued to use drop in events as the most appropriate community involvement approach. This ensures that all residents have an opportunity to access information and communicate their point of view. For example, the contents of the St Paul's Regeneration Implementation Plan and Urban Design Brief were communicated to residents through a drop-in event.
- 2.7 Daily surgeries** - the project team have continued to deliver daily surgeries from the Community House in St Paul's and the team's daily presence will increase to 11am – 3pm daily from June 2007.

### **3. Progress to date**

The following activities have progressed since the project team was established in February 2007:

- 3.1** Delivery of Decent Homes works to properties in Aldridge Close – 26 properties have been surveyed, an open day was held at the Community House in March 2007 and works are expected to be completed by the end of June 2007.
- 3.2** All of the empty properties in Manser & Hudson Street have been surveyed and repairs have been scheduled – 20 properties have been surveyed to facilitate the re-housing of residents from areas affected by redevelopment.
- 3.3** Completion of Crabtree Place Needs Assessment visits – 17 residents have received a home visit, completed a needs assessment and expressed their re-housing preferences.
- 3.4** Decanting of Crabtree Place residents has commenced - 15 of the 17 residents have received offers of alternative accommodation and many have been involved in choosing paint colours, kitchen and bathroom finishes for their new homes.

- 3.5** Home visits - all 29 residents in the central area of Manser and Hudson Streets affected by the redevelopment proposals have received a home visit to provide an opportunity to raise any concerns about the regeneration process on an individual one to one basis.
- 3.6** Clarification of the definition of the concept of transformational improvements introduced in the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment has been agreed with CBC Leader and Cabinet member – Quality of Life. This has confirmed that these improvements will focus on external, environmental improvements in the area. As a result, the process of delivering Decent Homes works to the properties to be retained in Folly Lane, Manser and Hudson Streets will commence in June 2007.
- 3.7** Individual Needs Assessment visits in Manser and Hudson Streets are planned for June 2007. Initial information suggests that most residents wish to remain in Manser and Hudson Streets and will be re-housed in the available empty properties. The decanting of these residents will commence in July/August 2007.

#### **4. Community Activities**

CBH have continued to deliver a wide range of community activities in St Paul's.

- 4.1** The profile of St Paul's Junior Wardens and Youth Forum has been successfully raised as the projects received a "highly commended" award from the National Federation of ALMOs.
- 4.2** Young people in St Paul's have participated in the Cheltenham in Bloom "Bloomin Wild" art competition. Their work will be included in a regional art competition organised by Heart of England.
- 4.3** The St Paul's neighbourhood will be included as part of this years Cheltenham in Bloom entry. Residents and young people will be included in a range of activities which will improve the appearance of the neighbourhood and increase a sense of community pride.
- 4.4** St Paul's Junior Wardens and Youth Forum continue to meet weekly and have been involved in a diverse range of activities. These have included a community radio project and a project to provide litter bins in St Paul's sponsored run in partnership with CBC.

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## 5. Background Papers

Report to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Estate Regeneration – Implementation Plan – 17 April 2007

Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment for the St Paul's area: Report for Cheltenham Borough Council prepared by PPS Ltd – November 2006

Report to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Regeneration' - 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2005.

Report to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Estate Regeneration – Update on Option Appraisal' - 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2005

Report to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Estate Regeneration – Progress Update' - 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2006

Information paper to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Estate Regeneration – Progress Update' - 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2006

Report to Cabinet entitled 'St Paul's Estate Regeneration – Progress Update' - 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2006

Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment: Guidance Manual 2004, ODPM

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### Accountability

Leader of the Council

### Scrutiny Function

Social and Community