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| <b>NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT DELIVERY COMMITTEE 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2017</b> |  | Item<br>5 | Page 1 of<br>4 |
| <b>Councils Affected</b>   | All  |           |                |
| <b>Report Title</b>  | <b>JOINT PLANNING AND DELIVERY UNIT WORK PROGRAMME</b> |           |                |

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To keep members informed and updated on progress in implementing the North Northamptonshire Garden Communities Delivery Plan.

## **2. INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In January 2016, the Joint Delivery Committee (JDC) endorsed the North Northamptonshire Garden Communities Delivery Plan, commissioned from Aspinall Verdi, WYG and IBI. This provides guidance on how the Joint Delivery Unit should aid and advise the four local authorities in delivery of the Garden Communities (the principal Sustainable Urban Extensions).
- 2.2 Priorities identified in the Delivery Plan are summarised in Appendix 1. This report provides an update on progress against these and other aspects of the JPDU work programme. This relates to the JDU elements of the programme as JPU work is reported to the Joint Planning Committee. A summary of progress on each of the Garden Communities is provided at Appendix 2.

## **3. DELIVERY PLAN PRIORITIES**

### **i) JPDU Structure and Resourcing**

- 3.1 As set out in the budget report at Item 4, the JPDU has been successful in securing HCA/ CLG resources to provide capacity within the JPDU, partner LPAs and Highways Authority, and to fund consultancy input when required. This capacity support is only provided on a year by year basis, which is not ideal in supporting developments that will be built out over a 10-20 year timescale. The JPDU will continue to press for a longer term Government commitment
- 3.2 The JDC agreed the structure of the JPDU in April 2017. The Delivery Manager post remains vacant but additional staff capacity was secured on a temporary basis over the summer to assist with the preparation of the Housing Infrastructure Funding bids. The Steering Group is now seeking to fill this key post through a 12 month contract. Consideration will also be given to filling the vacant Project Officer post to respond to a growing workload.
- 3.3 The core JPDU team supports/ is supported by the development management officers in the local planning authorities (LPAs), who are leading on the Garden Communities (GCs) and part-funded through the JPDU budget. In addition, a senior manager from WSP has been seconded to Northamptonshire Highways to coordinate highways input on the GCs.

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**ii) Public / Private Sector Collaboration**

- 3.4 Monthly meetings continue to take place between LPA Development Management teams and GC promoters.
- 3.5 The JPDU has worked closely with GC promoters in preparing bids for Housing Infrastructure Funding (see Item 4).
- 3.6 Wider networking with LPAs promoting Garden Communities elsewhere in the country is undertaken through forums organised by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA). There has been particular interest in North Northamptonshire's approach to place-shaping.
- 3.7 It is proposed to instigate annual meetings of the NN Garden Communities Stakeholder Group to bring public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders together to consider progress on delivery.

**iii) Member / Officer Briefing**

- 3.9 The JPDU supports officer networks to share knowledge/ experience and to tackle delivery issues of common concern. This includes the Garden Communities Wider Team (officers from the JPDU/ LPAs/ Highways) which meets bi-monthly.
- 3.10 In the past month the JPDU has hosted a Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) seminar on local government innovation and affordable housing, and a "Right to Build Expo" to promote the potential of custom and self-build housing (see section 4 below).
- 3.11 The JPDU will be arranging a member/ officer study tour in the New Year to review design quality in recent developments (as part of the monitoring undertaken each year and to help in the completion of the Place Shaping SPD).

**iv) Development Viability**

- 3.12 Budget has been set aside for dedicated viability support to advise the JPDU and partner authorities on viability issues. The JPDU has recommended that each local authority sign up to the HCA Technical Consultant Panels in order to have fast and cost effective access to a range of multi-disciplinary consultants including those who could assist in viability matters.
- 3.13 The JPDU is reviewing how a central record of viability intelligence can be assembled and maintained for North Northamptonshire as viability negotiations continue.

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**v) Infrastructure Delivery**

- 3.14 The JPDU maintains an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifying strategic priorities for the delivery of key infrastructure needed to support the implementation of the JCS over the plan period 2011-2031. This has recently been updated in consultation with infrastructure providers and is available on this link: <http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1591>.
- 3.15 HCA/ CLG capacity funding is being used to undertake various infrastructure studies (such as the health study referred to in Item 3, and highway design work) to ensure a coordinated approach and to put North Northamptonshire in a strong position to access any sources of funding that become available. As referred to in the budget report (Item 4), the JPDU spent a large amount of time over the summer working with consultants and the partner councils in bidding for Housing Infrastructure Funding. The JDC will be updated when feedback is received from HCA.
- 3.16 The JPDU represent North Northamptonshire's interests at a strategic level. It has input into SEMLEPs strategic economic plan, including infrastructure priorities and, through the JPC, has recently responded to the DfT consultation on the East Midlands rail franchise.

**4. OTHER WORKLOAD**

- 4.1 The JPDU, guided by the Garden Communities Steering Group (Chief Planning Officers), will continue to progress the recommendations set out in the Garden Communities Delivery Plan. The JDC will be updated on progress.
- 4.2 While focussing on identified priorities, opportunities will be taken to draw in external resources wherever possible. For example, the JPDU is working with the newly established Right to Build Task Force to explore the potential for custom and self-build housing within Tresham Garden Village and the Garden Communities.
- 4.3 The Delivery Plan (para 3.6 on page 22) identifies the promotion of additional development capacity, including custom and self-build housing, as a medium priority. However, by engaging the Task Force early, the JPDU and partner councils have been able to benefit from expertise at a discounted rate and brought the 'Right to Build Expo' to the Castle Theatre in Wellingborough on the 7<sup>th</sup> November. Arising from this, it is proposed that a workshop is held in early 2018 to focus on the developers/ promoters of the Garden Communities. The Task Force wishes to work with the JPDU to pilot a new Custom and Self Build demand assessment tool to help local authorities take a longer-term view of the demand for serviced building plots in their areas to inform their housing and planning strategies. Alongside this, it is proposed to relaunch the partner Councils' demand registers. This will be done in conjunction with the launch of a new JPDU website early in December.

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- 4.4 The JPDU website referred to above will provide access to the strategic planning information (as per the current JPU website) whilst also providing information on delivery issues and urban design.

**10. RECOMMENDATION**

That the content of the report be noted.

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Background Papers:       None  
Title  
Date                         23.11.17  
Contact Officer           Andrew Longley