

Notice of NON KEY Executive Decision containing exempt information

This Executive Decision Report is part exempt and Appendix A is not available for public inspection as it relates to exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is exempt because it refers to salary data and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

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| Subject Heading: | <i>GLA Land for Council Homes Revenue Fund Bid</i> |
| Decision Maker: | <i>Neil Stubbings, Director of Regeneration</i> |
| Cabinet Member: | <i>Councillor Graham Williamson – Lead Member for Development & Regeneration</i> |
| SLT Lead: | <i>Neil Stubbings – Director of Regeneration</i> |
| Report Author and contact details: | <i>Kirsty Moller – Head of Programme & Support (Regeneration)</i> |
| Policy context: | <i>Grant funding will support Havering’s ambitions to provide more genuinely affordable homes for local people</i> |
| Financial summary: | <i>The report seeks permission to bid for £399,515 in GLA revenue funding to fund projects that aim to unlock suitable future Council affordable housing developments.</i> |

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Communities making Havering | [X] |
| Places making Havering | [X] |
| Opportunities making Havering | [X] |
| Connections making Havering | [] |

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Regeneration, authorise the submission of a bid to the Greater London Authority (GLA) for £399,515 revenue funding from the Land for Council Homes Revenue Fund as set out in this report.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

In accordance with the Council's constitution - 3.3 Powers of Members of the Senior Leadership Team

(c) Financial Responsibilities:

In consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to apply for, accept and manage external funding up to a limit of £500,000 per grant in support of any function within their Directorate provided that any financial contributions by the Council are made from within existing budgets.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Greater London Authority (GLA) introduced Land for Council Homes Revenue Fund in 2022 to support local authorities to unlock land for ambitious projects to build more affordable homes and to help upskill their housing, planning and regeneration teams. The GLA will make up to £4M available for Councils to spend across 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25. This will help councils build the good quality, affordable homes Londoners need and establish a pipeline of new projects for the next decade and beyond.

The provision of affordable homes for local residents can help offset Council general fund budget pressures, including out-of-borough social care costs and homelessness costs. It is recognised that good quality, affordable housing improves outcomes for residents; housing delivery is therefore a key priority for the Council.

Regeneration is key to bringing forward good quality, affordable homes and provides suitable homes for residents with additional needs. Havering has a Regeneration pipeline which could deliver over 3,000 new affordable homes but it is recognised that due to population changes, cost of living challenges and national housing shortages, more genuinely affordable homes will be needed in the future.

Regeneration projects are time-consuming and complex, requiring a range of skills and resources to deliver new homes, as well as upfront revenue funding to fund studies and site investigation work. A successful revenue fund bid would support the Council with these activities to allow viable development sites to be brought forward for Cabinet's consideration.

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The Council's bid will support the second priority of the GLA's fund - to build in-house skills, resources, and capacity to enable larger and more comprehensive land interventions to become commonplace in the future.

A successful grant funding bid will contribute towards land studies and master planning work to identify and unlock future Council affordable housing developments within the borough. The fund would also support Council training and development objectives through part-funding the professional development of an officer, at degree level.

The deadline for submitting bids for funding is 6pm on Friday 2nd September 2022 and each London borough may submit one bid up to £400,000 or consortium bids with other providers for up to £750,000. The GLA will consider bids on an individual basis and may negotiate with applicants once all bids are received.

The Council's proposed projects can be found in Exempt Appendix A. Project delivery will be subject to external grant funding being awarded.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5.1 Do Not Bid for Funding

We would be missing a significant opportunity for much-needed revenue funding for the development of future affordable housing. This would allow essential work to take place without placing further pressure on Council revenue budgets.

5.2 Bid for Less Funding

The preference would be to maximise opportunities for external funding, reducing pressure on Council budgets. A smaller bid would fund less of the activity required to bring forward new developments, decreasing the overall development pipeline in Havering.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

There is no requirement for statutory consultation; however, informal consultation will take place with the Greater London Authority, SLT and the Lead Members for Housing and Development & Regeneration.

The projects outlined in Exempt Appendix A are considered commercially sensitive and will require further consultation with lead members in the event that grant funding is awarded to support those activities.

Any new schemes to deliver further affordable housing in the future will require full Cabinet consultation and approval.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

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Name: Kirsty Moller

Designation: Head of Programme & Support (Regeneration)

Signature: 

Date: 24th August 2022

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to consider housing conditions in its district and the needs of the district with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation.

6.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. The recommendations in this report are in keeping with this power and the Council has the power to bid for and receive grant funding.

6.3 It is the responsibility of the Council to comply with the relevant funding conditions under the Contract including applying the relevant match funding to bring the matters to fruition. Any further bids for capital funding to increase the outputs from affordable housing programmes would be subject to the relevant governance requirements of the Council's constitution.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

7.1 The Council's bid is in line with estimated project costs for the proposals set out in Appendix A. Where required, Council match funding is available in existing Housing and Regeneration budgets.

7.2 There are no direct financial implications related to the bid for funding, and acceptance of a funding offer would be subject to the Council's constitution and a further non-key executive decision which sets out the relevant terms and conditions, monitoring and audit requirements.

**HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS
(AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

8.1 Should the funding bid be successful and grant funding formally accepted by the Council, revisions to an existing vacant Regeneration post would need to be made to deliver the development opportunity set out in Exempt Appendix A.

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8.2 The costs used in Exempt Appendix A are based on an existing similar role in the Regeneration service. The grade of the new role to be created will be subject to a HR job evaluation.

8.2 The responsible manager must ensure recruitment is carried out in line with Council policy, ensuring the hiring process is inclusive, fair and transparent.

8.3 The new post will be subject to Council terms and conditions of employment.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

9.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

9.2 Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, sexual orientation.

9.3 The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

9.4 An acceptable grant bid, as set out in this report, would benefit local residents by providing additional capacity to possibly deliver further affordable housing.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

10.1 There are no direct implications relating to the environment or climate change relating to this report.

10.2 A successful grant bid could help the Council develop more affordable housing. As well as providing good-quality, modern homes, the Council's housing developments typically include environmental features such as green and brown roofs, energy-efficient appliances, modern heating and cooling solutions and reduced carbon outputs.

10.3 We carefully consider the environmental impact of our developments and protect animal habitats through maintaining or improving the level of planting and providing bug hotels, bird and bat boxes for local wildlife.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICIES

Appendix A Proposed Projects & Cost Estimates (Commercially Sensitive)
Exempt

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker



Signed

Neil Stubbings
Director of Regeneration

Date: 26.08.22

In consultation with:

Signed:

Councillor Graham Williamson
Cabinet Member for Development and Regeneration

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____