



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Policy and Resources Committee 27 July 2015

### Garden Communities proposal for North Northamptonshire

#### Purpose of report

This report updates the committee on developments since the decision to support the garden communities initiative was taken by the committee on 16 February 2015.

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 On February 16 2015, the committee gave approval in principle to support the potential designation of Rushden East as a garden community and for the council to participate in the establishment of a Joint Delivery Committee and Joint Delivery Unit (JDU) to assist in the delivery of all the sustainable urban extensions (SUEs) in North Northamptonshire, in both of which some of the council's functions and responsibilities may be vested.

#### 2.0 Report

2.1 Following a similar decision by all four North Northamptonshire councils a proposal for capacity funding to assist delivery of the SUEs was submitted to DCLG. The bid was successful in securing funding of £750,000 during 2015/16 payable in two tranches. The first tranche of £300,000 has now been paid to Kettering Borough Council who are the accountable body, and confirmation has been received that the second tranche of £450,000 will be released once two agreed milestones have been met. These are:

- Key posts for the Joint Delivery Unit being appointed, either using interim or full time appointments
- Consultants being appointed to undertake cross-scheme assessments for which funding is sought

No funds are currently committed for 2016/17 and beyond, although it is hoped that DCLG will recognise the importance of ongoing capacity funding in due course.

2.2 Given the lack of ongoing funds, it has been necessary to pursue secondments to the JDU rather than permanent appointments, and Adrian Arnold currently with Kettering Borough Council has recently been appointed to the post of JDU Manager. Further supporting posts will now be seconded to the JDU team.

2.3 It is likely the JDU will be located at Wellingborough Council Offices.

2.4 No ENC posts are currently proposed to form part of a co-located JDU team until its modus operandi are established although this will be kept under review.

2.5 The initial piece of consultancy work envisaged, the preparation of an overall Delivery Plan for the North Northamptonshire Garden Communities, has now been let to a consortium of consultants following a procurement process. The consultancy team will be led by Simon Turner of Aspinall Verdi, who co-incidentally are advising this council on the employment aspects of the Rushden East development.

2.6 The first meeting of the Joint Delivery Committee, which will be accountable for the overall initiative (although not planning decisions relating to the individual schemes) will be held shortly. The council has decided its representatives will be the same as those for the Joint Planning Committee given the synergy between the work of the two bodies.

2.7 It is therefore considered that the initiative has made a good start and there is no reason why the second tranche of funding should not be forthcoming, and indeed ongoing funding for 2016/17 and beyond.

### 3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

3.1 No equality or diversity implications have been identified at this stage.

### 4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 No legal implications have been identified at this stage.

### 5.0 Risk Management

5.1 The implementation of Rushden East is a fundamental part of the council's planning strategy and the capacity funding will minimise the risk of failing to deliver a satisfactory scheme.

### 6.0 Resource and Financial Implications

6.1 The capacity fund will increase the staff and other resources available to progress Rushden East.

### 7.0 Constitutional Implications

7.1 There are no constitutional implications associated with this report.

### 8.0 Corporate Outcomes

- 8.1
- Good Quality of Life – the proposal will assist delivery of a quality development at Rushden East
  - Good Value for Money – the proposal will increase the resources available to progress the project
  - Effective Partnership Working – the proposal will improve working between the four North Northamptonshire councils
  - Effective Management – the proposal will improve effective management of the Rushden East SUE

### 9.0 Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee note the current position.

<b>Legal</b>	Power:				
	Other considerations:				
<b>Background Papers:</b> Report to Policy & Resources Committee 'Garden Communities Proposal for North Northamptonshire' – 16 February 2015					
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<b>Date: 9 July 2015</b>					
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