



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITIES

TOPIC – RECOMMISSIONING THE HAMPSHIRE ALLIANCE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING (HARAH) DELIVERY PARTNER.

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Simon Maggs 01962 848203 smaggs@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator: Nancy Graham 01962 848 235, ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

- The Council is a member Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH), which also includes 5 other districts, the County Council, Community Action Hampshire, New Forest National Park Authority and the Homes and Community Agency. The partnership plays a co-ordination role in the delivery of affordable rural housing across the districts/national park, with formal decisions being taken individual partners where appropriate. The HARAH Members Board, made up of the Housing and Planning Portfolio Holders from each district, a County Councillor and the Chair of the New Forest National Park Authority oversee the work of the partnership. It has been cited as good practice by, amongst others, the Homes and Community Agency, Regional Housing and Regeneration Board and the Audit Commission.
- Several years ago the partnership selected HydeMartlett Housing Association to act as a development partner. HydeMartlett act as provider and landlord for new affordable housing. They make a revenue contribution to the partnership,

principally to support the employment of Rural Housing Enablers by Community Action Hampshire. They also bid and secure capital grant from the Homes and Community Agency to fund construction costs. WCC makes an annual contribution of £6,333 to the partnership (total annual contribution from partners is £142,633). Over the period of the partnership WCC/HARAH have secured £2,050,000 of capital funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to provide 35 dwellings within the district (the HARAH partnership has secured almost £10m to provide 148 homes). This has been matched by a similar level of HydeMartlett capital funding.

- The current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), that sets out the responsibilities of partners, is due to come to an end at the end of this financial year. The MoU sets out broad responsibilities of partners, including the levels of financial contributions made by each partner and includes a provision to work with Hyde as the preferred Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partner.
- The HARAH Members Board have agreed that there should be an opportunity for other RSLs to express an interest in acting as preferred provider beyond March 2011. The process will include a review of the revenue contributions that partners make to HARAH and the MoU, though it is not expected WCC contributions will differ significantly from those made at present.
- A team which includes local authority officers, Community Action Hampshire, the Homes and Communities Agency representation, together with the Portfolio Holder for Housing from Test Valley BC will co-ordinate the project. They will report to the HARAH officer group and the HARAH Members' Board, who will make the final selection, subject to any formal decision making processes individual partners need to employ, which for WCC will be a further Portfolio Holder Decision.

DECISION

That in its role as a HARAH partner the Council endorses the invitation of expressions from RSLs with a local presence in the HARAH area to act as preferred provider for a period of 3 years from 2011/12.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Retaining Hyde as the preferred provider for another 3 years without competition has been discounted because it would not be possible to test the market in terms of alternative providers.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Commissioning a HARAH RSL partner has no direct resource implications, although the costs outlined above that are incurred in being a HARAH partner (outlined in bullet point 2 above) will remain.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The process has been debated and agreed at HARAH Officer Group and HARAH Members Board.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

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DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

n/a

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 09.06.10

Councillor Thompson – Portfolio Holder for Communities