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| TITLE | Tape Lane |
| FOR CONSIDERATION BY | The Executive on 28 May 2015 |
| WARD | Hurst |
| DIRECTOR | Stuart Rowbotham, Director of Health and Wellbeing |
| LEAD MEMBER | John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways |

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The replacement of 6 defective homes to be replaced with new homes, subject to planning, at affordable rents. The replacement homes will contribute to meeting housing needs in the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive :

- 1) approve the demolition of 21 – 26 Tape Lane, Hurst;
- 2) approve the decanting of tenants to temporary or permanent homes;
- 3) approve funding of £2m consisting of £1.4m from the HRA and £600k from the retained Right to Buy receipts, which is currently available within the HRA;
- 4) delegates authority to the Director of Health and Wellbeing to submit a detailed planning application for the redevelopment of 21 – 26 Tape Lane.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

On 25th September 2014, the Executive approved the strategic purchase of 23 Tape Lane Hurst. This purchase allowed Wokingham Borough Council to take ownership of 21 to 26 Tape Lane with a view to looking at options for the site.

Any proposed development of the site will take account of feedback from planning colleagues as to what would be acceptable. Feedback will also be sought from Hurst Parish council.

The Head of Housing is requesting approval to commence a project to replace these defective homes, subject to planning. It is proposed the scheme is funded using HRA resources and a proportion of retained right to buy receipts, information on the use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts can be found in part 2 of this report.

Background

21 – 26 Tape Lane consists of six two and three bedroom Swedish timber homes, these properties were constructed after the 2nd World war and were seen as a temporary housing solution at the time.

Given the construction type, it would not be an effective use of resources to invest in homes that do not meet, and will not meet in the future, the decent homes standard due to their poor thermal performance; however it must be noted that some tenants living in them are very happy with their homes.

Wokingham Borough Council served demolition notices on the tenants of 21/22/24/25/26 Tape Lane in October 2014. This halts the Right to Buy process and allows the council to evaluate its options for these homes.

Given there are only 5 homes occupied it is planned to work with tenants affected by this proposal on a one to one basis. It is proposed that all tenants if they so wish will have an opportunity to return to Tape Lane after the replacement homes have been built.

If Executive permission is granted It is envisaged that a planning application for the redevelopment will be submitted in the summer of 2015, with a start on site prior to Christmas.

Analysis of Issues

Tenure

It is planned that the replacement homes would be funded from, and the asset would sit, in the HRA and thus be traditional council housing; this development will offset some of the homes lost by right to buy since Wokingham Borough Council purchased the stock in 2012.

A Local Lettings Plan for allocations to the new properties will be developed to meet local housing need and allow tenants who wish to return to Tape Lane to do so. Additional social housing in Hurst would be a valued community asset and meet the aspirations of a number of households on the housing register.

The replacement homes would be charged at a social rent, this would be at the same level Wokingham Borough Council charges for existing council homes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

| | How much will it Cost/ (Save) | Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall | Revenue or Capital? |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Current Financial Year (Year 1) | SEE PART 2 SCHEDULE | | |
| Next Financial Year (Year 2) | | | |
| Following Financial Year (Year 3) | | | |

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| Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision |
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| See Part 2 Schedule |
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| Cross-Council Implications |
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| The replacement of these 6 defective homes seeks to provide good quality, sustainable homes that will have a positive impact on Wokingham Borough Councils housing stock and will provide decent homes that families want to live in. |
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| Reasons for considering the report in Part 2 |
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| The report contains references throughout to commercially sensitive information that would compromise Wokingham Borough Council in procurement of contractors. These references have been removed from this report and are provided in a separate Part 2 schedule. |
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| List of Background Papers |
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| Right to Buy Receipts information from DCLG Wokingham Borough Council Executive Report Acquisition of 23 Tape Lane 25 th September 2014 |
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| Date 18 May 2015 | Version No. V1 |

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