

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2022

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF) TASK GROUP UPDATE – 19 OCTOBER 2022

Executive Summary

The Group were advised that a report had been taken to the Executive in July which set out the headlines of the project and the need to carry out a fundamental review. It was agreed that progress would continue on the investigatory works, the planning application submissions and purchase of remaining properties on the triangle site and that a report would come back to the Executive at the end of the calendar year. There was an Executive meeting due to be held in December and a HIF Update Report would be on this agenda.

Officers explained that the issues with the utility diversion costs, site acquisition increased costs, the aggregates yard access solution (which had not been part of the original funding bid) and professional fees of the project scheduling/design cost had all contributed to the increased total. Officers explained that it was reported to the Executive meeting in July 2022 that the total budget for the project had risen by £54m over the original £115m budget, due to the original scope of the project extending with detailed construction design, as well as inflation and increased material and labour costs. For this reason, a fundamental review of the project delivery was required with a pause on certain workstreams until there was greater certainty that the project could be delivered without additional expense to the Council

Officers provided an update:

- The planning applications had been submitted and letters had been sent out to residents.
- A lot of detailed information was still outstanding and the report to the December Executive would provide an update.
- Homes England had commissioned an independent report to check costs and risks on all HIF forward funded projects (not just Woking) and to investigate what extra funding was available. It was noted that Network Rail were not able to risk share.
- The transport modelling works was also being revisited.

Officers advised that the bore hole investigations completed earlier in the year were being reported on. The key outputs from the trial holes was to identify if there were any below ground risks that we were unaware of and to also ensure the soil sub-strata was as expected.

It was agreed that a meeting would be pencilled in on 29 November 2022, just before the Executive meeting, so the Group could receive an update. It was agreed that this meeting would only go ahead if there was something fundamentally different to report.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Housing Infrastructure Fund Task Group Update

Background Papers: None.

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