

TO: EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017

**ONE PUBLIC ESTATE
AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE BERKSHIRE PROPERTY
PARTNERSHIP
Chief Executive**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ensure that the correct governance arrangements, including the authority and terms of reference for the Partnership, are in place for the Council in the One Public Estate programme [OPE].

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Terms of Reference for the Berkshire Property Partnership, at Appendix A, are agreed.
- 2.2 That, where required, match funding for Bracknell Forest projects is met from existing resources.
- 2.3 That the Chief Executive may delegate to his representative on the working Partnership authority to make decisions supporting the programme delivery in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Chief Executives of the Berkshire Authorities agreed for Wokingham Borough Council to take the lead on developing a joint pan Berkshire bid to join the fourth phase of the Cabinet Office initiative the One Public Estate.
- 3.2 The bid is called Berkshire Property Group and has been successful in its application and awarded £500,000 of funding to support the objectives and projects of the joint bid. A condition of the award is that funding is matched by participants although it can be in cash or consideration. Therefore, authority to participate and invest in the programme is now required.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not to join the programme and continue to operate independently.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Cabinet Office has, through its Government Property Unit, a programme called the One Public Estate. The programme is now in its fourth round of funding applications and Bracknell Forest, as part of a pan Berkshire bid, agreed to participate, with Wokingham Borough Council's Chief Executive taking the lead role in the bidding process. Bracknell Forest Council [BFC] has been represented on the cross Berkshire Working Group by the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer: Property.

5.2 One hundred and fifty nine councils working across thirty six partnerships are set to join the next phase of OPE. Partnerships of councils and the wider public sector have been awarded a total of £7.5m to deliver land and property initiatives, delivering jobs, homes, income and savings.

5.3 Launched in 2013, One Public Estate has grown from supporting 12 councils to over 100, all delivering ambitious projects to meet local need.

Under OPE, existing members are set to deliver over 5 years:

- create 36,000 jobs
- release land for 16,500 homes
- raise £138 million in capital receipts from land and property sales
- save £56 million in running cost savings

5.4 Successful Submission

The Berkshire Property Partnership comprises all the Berkshire Unitary Authorities plus representatives from Health, the Police and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. The three core areas of work under consideration as part of the successful bid case are:

5.4.1 Placed Based Projects

These generally look at a geographic area and map out all public assets and seek collaborative ways to deliver services in that locality to drive asset efficiencies, free up capital assets and create jobs and possibly housing. The first area to be considered under this scope is proposed to be a Slough area project.

5.4.2 Property Based Projects

Under this area of work, each participant authority, suggested sites where projects could be worked up with one or more party for a combined gain. There were around 30 locations identified in the bid, some of which were from BFC and included the former Heathlands site and the Commercial Centre and the Northern Retail Quarter, East.

5.4.3 Shared or Combined Professional Service Unit

The group recognise there is a serious pressure on the public sector's ability to attract, retain and incentivise professional property expertise in the South East. This is due to the opportunities offered in the private sector and the proximity to London. A pooling of resources could be a way of dealing with this challenge and is to be investigated as part of the programme with a view to establishing a shared service working across a number of organisations.

5.5 Governance

The Berkshire Property Partnership Governance arrangements set out a two tier structure with Chief Executives of each organisation meeting as a Board to oversee the work of the Berkshire Property Partnership which will act as the operational

partnership board. Decision making will be in accordance with each organisation's internal governance arrangements.

- 5.6 The detailed draft Terms of Reference (have been prepared by Place Partnership) are attached at Appendix A for agreement by the Executive. Appendix 1, Services and Assets Delivery Plan and Appendix 2, the proposed funding breakdown referred to in the Terms of Reference are available on request but are restricted documents.

5.7 Financial Arrangements

The initial bid for funding was £500,000 and the Partnership were awarded £450,750. The Partnership have now been advised they will receive top up funding to the full £500,000 by DCLG. This is the highest award to any bidder in the funding round.

- 5.8 The terms of participation in OPE requires each partner to match fund the award but this can be either in cash or consideration. It is anticipated that all projects within BFC's area will be match funded by work on existing projects and not require any new specific cash funding. Should additional funding be required, this will be sought in accordance with the usual process for additional capital funds.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Berkshire Property Partnership (BPP) has been established as a collaboration of Public Authorities that have combined to bid successfully from the Government One Public Estate Programme for substantial grant funding towards a joint strategic management programme relating to public sector land and property assets across Berkshire. The creation of a governance framework is a pre-requisite for receipt of the grant and Appendix A sets out the proposed arrangements in this regard.
- 6.1.2 It should be noted that BPP does not exist as a separate legal entity. The Partnership will derive its powers from the constitutions of each of the respective partner authorities. Any decisions that the Partnership agrees relating to Bracknell Forest Council have to be approved in accordance with the BFC Scheme of delegation.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Council is already providing officer time and some feasibility work on projects that would contribute to the match funding requirement so no specific financial contribution is required at this stage.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 N/A

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None in participating in the Partnership. Individual projects will have their own risk register.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 All participating organisations.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Meetings.

Representations Received

7.3 Included in the proposals.

Background Papers

Terms of Reference – Appendix A

Restricted Background Appendices available on request

Berkshire Property Partnership OPE Submission (Restricted) - Services and Assets Delivery Plan – Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference

Berkshire Property Partnership Funding Breakdown December 2016 – Appendix 2 of the Terms of Reference (Restricted)

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