



Supported Living Initiative 180 Culver Road, Basingstoke

Cllr Tristan Robinson, Cabinet Member for Homes and Families

Report to:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	9 March 2021
Ward:	Brookvale and Kings Furlong
Key Decision:	No
Appendix 1:	Site Plan
Appendix 2:	Location Plan
Appendix 3:	Adjoining BDBC land and public highway
Appendix 4:	Photo of existing property
Appendix 5:	Plan of proposed site and building layout
Appendix 6:	Indicative Floor Plans
Appendix 7:	Indicative Street Scene
Appendix 8:	May Place House – Cost benefit analysis/outcomes
Appendix 9:	May Place location plan
Appendix 10:	Visual 3D projections of new building
Papers relied on:	None

FORWARD

Cllr Tristan Robinson, Cabinet Member for Homes and Families

Helping the most vulnerable people in our Borough is a key priority for this administration, and the delivery of a new, purpose built supported living facility at 180 Culver Road will help us achieve our aims of abolishing rough sleeping in Basingstoke and Deane by 2024.

Through active collaboration, the Council has worked closely with Hampshire County Council and Two Saints Housing to bring forward this exciting new project which will make a tangible difference to the lives of those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. This paper sets out how the council will use its resources to help provide further purpose-built housing accommodation for the Borough's most vulnerable residents, in line with the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- Endorses the work undertaken by officers to date and the partnership approach taken as set out in this report
- Approves the revision of council's covenant at NIL value on the property at 180 Culver Road Basingstoke, to support the delivery of a supported living scheme as detailed in this report. This accords with S123 of the Local Government Act 1972 where any covenant revision which may be at less than best consideration, can proceed where social, economic and environmental benefits can be achieved.
- Delegates the detailed terms and conditions associated with the revision of the covenant, and related documentation, and any other supplementary legal or other agreements that may be required to facilitate the delivery of the scheme to the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Executive Director of Residents Services and the Head of Law and Governance.
- Endorses the proposed next steps and actions as set in this report, to facilitate completion of a scheme of development for supported living, subject to the grant of planning permission.

Background, corporate objectives and priorities

This report accords with, and directly supports Council Plan priorities of supporting our most vulnerable residents by working in partnership to reduce homelessness and exclusion, and planning for the future with well-designed and well built homes. It also accords with the priorities set out in the council’s Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2020-2024), by preventing homelessness and supporting the eradication of rough sleeping.

Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
‘BDBC’ or ‘the council’	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
HCC	Hampshire County Council
2SH	2 Saints Housing
SIP	Social Inclusion Partnership

Main considerations

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with details of a proposed supported living scheme to be delivered at 180 Culver Road, Basingstoke (see location plan at Appendix 2) and which is to be undertaken by Two Saints Housing (2SH) as a specialist provider in the field of supported housing and homelessness. It seeks endorsement to the work undertaken by officers to date, working in partnership with 2SH and Hampshire County Council (HCC) as the current owner of the site, to deliver a new and exemplar supported housing facility. The proposal is the culmination of innovative strategic enabling work undertaken by the Council’s property and housing services in order to deliver tangible improvements and markedly improved services for our most vulnerable residents.
- 1.2 It seeks authority for the council to revise its user covenant on the site to enable the use of the site to include a supported living facility (for people who are homeless or those at risk of homelessness) upon the grant of planning permission for the proposed scheme of development. Upon the grant of planning permission, the ownership of the site will be transferred from HCC to 2SH, and 2SH will demolish the current building and construct a new, purpose built building subject to obtaining any necessary funding. This report is in accordance with the council’s disposal procedure for land and property.
- 1.3 Working in partnership with 2SH and HCC, it is intended that the council will revise its covenant at nil value, which has been the case with similar recent affordable or specialist housing schemes where there are considered to be significant housing and social benefits to the town and particularly vulnerable residents. This report details the matters that have to be taken into account in considering the proposed scheme and covenant revision, when working in partnership directly with HCC and 2SH.

- 1.4 Details of the proposed scheme are included in this report and the intended benefits that would result from the new facility, with the proposed building considered to represent the most suitable design option having been considered by officers representing the relevant partners involved. The new building is intended to maximise the quantum of accommodation that can be made available given the opportunities and constraints represented by the site, whilst ensuring that it is of a quality and sustainable design, and respects as far as possible neighbouring property and its wider surroundings.
- 1.5 This report includes details of the council's user covenant to be revised and the legal, planning and financial matters that are to be considered to facilitate delivery of the scheme. The significant partnership work that has been undertaken, and which is ongoing to support the delivery of the project is set out in this report.
- 1.6 If successful, the use of the council's enabling role in partnership, to develop and steer this project could reap significant outcomes for BDBC in relation to:
- Spotighting the council's reputed partnership work on homelessness prevention and promoting the council's reputation as a trailblazing authority within the field
 - enhancing progressive cross-authority and partnership working with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Two Saints Housing (2SH)
 - securing significant inward investment, resource and support from partners into our wider community asset base.

2 The Proposal

2.1 The Property- 180 Culver Road, Basingstoke

2.1.1 180 Culver Road is owned by Hampshire County Council, on a site of about 0.10ha/0.247 acre (see site coloured blue on the Plan at Appendix 1 and photo at Appendix 4) and located within the Kings Furlong and Brookvale Ward in Basingstoke. The existing building has a gross internal area of about 404 sq m (4,350 sq ft) with a 2 storey frontage to Culver Road and single storey elevations to the rear.

2.1.2 The property is understood to have been constructed in the 1960s and is situated in a residential area of dwellings of a similar age. It is located within 1 mile of the town centre, and is accessed via Winchester Road and then Culver Road (see location plan at Appendix 2). The Basingstoke ring road (A30) is situated to the south east. Along the southern perimeter of the property is an access spur leading to a block of garages serving nearby residential properties. Along the northern perimeter is an estates footpath with housing beyond. The Borough Council own nearby areas of open space which form part of the general layout of the estate. The BDBC owned areas and the extent of the public highway are shown on the plan at Appendix 3, coloured pink and hatched blue respectively. It is noted that another Housing Association, Sovereign HA, own a significant quantity of the nearby housing stock.

- 2.1.3 The property's layout reflects its bespoke design for the provision of day care and administrative support for children's services. It is understood the property has been vacant for at least 7 years, apart from the more recent but temporary occupation by the Basingstoke Foodbank who have since vacated to alternative premises (see 2.1.5). The building requires considerable upgrading and modernisation and considered no longer fit for purpose.
- 2.1.4 The property is surplus to the requirements of HCC and was last marketed in 2013 based on the current D1 use (non-residential institutions) but with the possibility that the property might be suited to other potential uses, subject to planning, given its location in a residential area. However, negotiations with a prospective purchaser following marketing discontinued, and the property has not been marketed since.
- 2.1.5 The property was previously let on a temporary basis to the Basingstoke Foodbank, and the Foodbank formerly used the property for storage of food and distribution. The Foodbank have obtained alternative accommodation in the Hound Mills area of the town, but it is anticipated that they may require additional accommodation to support their activities into the longer term.

3 The council's covenant

- 3.1 BDBC sold the property in 1965 to HCC, and included a covenant that the property be used for the purposes of the Children's Act 1948 and for no other purpose. After the property became vacant, discussions took place during 2014, between the respective council's legal teams as to the implications for the existence of the covenant, given HCC's intention to dispose on the basis of other possible uses.
- 3.2 Whilst historically the enforceability of the covenant has been the subject of discussion between the respective councils, moving forward it was considered by both parties, that it would be appropriate to work in partnership, in order that a suitable proposal could be agreed for the future use of a property in public ownership, and given that it would be sensible that this long vacant property could be put back into a productive use.
- 3.3 These discussions with HCC, included initially, the possibility that the site could be disposed of by HCC, 'off market' to a housing association for an affordable housing or specific needs tenure, and on the basis of a subject to planning based contract. Given that such a disposal would most likely result in BDBC gaining the benefit of seeing the site delivered for a form of affordable or specific needs tenure and given potential nomination rights, it was agreed subject to respective council approvals, that the BDBC covenant might be revised at NIL value.
- 3.4 As part of these discussions, the ongoing and significant shortcomings of the homeless accommodation at May Place in terms of physical attributes of the building and unsuitable location were acknowledged. These matters are set out below.

4 May Place House

- 4.1 MPH (see location plan at Appendix 9) is currently owned by London and Quadrant (L&Q) Housing Association and managed / operated by Two Saints Housing (2SH). It provides 20 single bedrooms with shared facilities and 24/7 waking cover.
- 4.2 MPH provides good quality housing related support with measurable outcomes (see Appendix 8) and is the vital front-end component contributing to the overall pattern of single homeless service provision within the borough. The support service provided by 2SH is commissioned by BDBC through the devolved social inclusion funding arrangement with Hampshire County Council, whereby HCC provides a grant to BDBC to commission local social inclusion services directly.
- 4.3 The building has been used as a homeless facility since circa 1995. It is not ideally located given its top of town location and proximity to local hotels and drinking establishments. There has been negligible capital investment in the building since 1995 and there are significant issues with the physical layout of the building which impede its ability to maximise outcomes and benefits, including:
- Availability of only one large-scale industrial kitchen, requiring all meals to be taken communally
 - Restricted assessment and reception provision
 - Availability of 4 bathrooms, shared between the 20 residents
 - No outside private space
 - Lack of any scope for emergency bed provision eg during severe weather
 - Lack of secure accommodation and separate provision for males/ females
 - Lack of suitable communal space which could otherwise facilitate community work as well as safe 121 work with vulnerable clients
 - Minimal ground floor / accessible rooms or rooms for couples
 - A restrictive design and site, making refurbishment and retrofit options virtually non-existent
- 4.4 The impact of the physical shortcomings and risks posed by the building have been amplified during COVID 19 and lockdowns.
- 4.5 A newly designed service based on psychologically informed principles could design out and “future proof” these physical service delivery issues, whilst providing a safe / COVID secure environment
- 4.6 The emergency access element of the new service could also be relocated away from the current “hotspot” at MPH, but in a way that is motivated to ensure vulnerable homeless needs are addressed more suitably.

5 Recent partnership work to date

- 5.1 As the current supported housing provider at MPH, 2SH were notified by BDBC Housing Services that an alternative site might be available (180 Culver Road). Following discussions initiated by BDBC officers, HCC agreed that BDBC officers could explore with 2SH, the possibility of a supported living facility being provided at the Culver Road site, and which might therefore

involve a possible direct sale by HCC to 2SH, and upon revision of the council's covenant.

- 5.2 The focus of recent discussions has been to conclude a 'subject to planning' conditional contract for the sale of the property by HCC to 2SH, and the subsequent delivery of a supported living facility by 2SH; and to be facilitated by the modification of the BDBC covenant to permit this use. It was acknowledged by HCC and BDBC, that if the planning application was unsuccessful, there remained scope to dispose of the site (again, subject to planning) for other forms of affordable housing.

6 New supported living scheme- details and planning considerations

- 6.1 In consultation and with guidance from BDBC officers, 2SH and their architects (and with input from ward members), have completed a design and layout for the new building, and which has been the subject of a pre-application, submitted in November 2020 and which was responded to in January 2021 (see 11.3).
- 6.2 It is intended that the building will be in a traditional build format (as opposed to a modular design) over part two and part three storeys. Please see illustrations and images at Appendix 5, 6, 7 and 10. The design attempts to maximise floor space whilst addressing the opportunities and constraints represented by the site (to include addressing overlooking, privacy and separation distances to adjoining dwellings). The current building is not considered as suitable for retention and refurbishment, given its bespoke design and poor condition and is thus intended to be demolished.
- 6.3 The new purpose built building, equates roughly to the size of the current building footprint, albeit it is partly over two and three storeys with an overall increased floor area to maximise the opportunities for increasing floor space and bedroom numbers. The overall floor area will be approximately 944 sqm GIFA.
- 6.4 The proposed internal layout is shown at Appendix 6. It includes approximately 23 private bedrooms of about 16.8 sqm each mostly for single occupants but with potential to accommodate couples. It includes communal kitchens and dining areas, in three distinct clusters per floor and tailored for specific requirements (ie disabilities). There will also be a small quantum of about 2 rooms on the ground floor for those seeking emergency accommodation.
- 6.5 Externally, there will also be outside enclosed spaces, intended to be designed with reference to mental wellbeing, and which May Place does not have. Pet retention will be permitted. Car parking will be reduced in number from the present allocation. Cycle storage and electric charging points will be included. Boundary treatments will respect the privacy of adjoining properties whilst ensuring appropriate degree of privacy for the occupants. It should be noted that the scheme design is intended, as far as cost constraints allow, to be of sustainable and low carbon construction in accordance with the auspices of the council's climate emergency agenda. The importance of

addressing the climate emergency has been impressed upon the parties from the outset.

- 6.6 The new building will include 24/7 waking cover via on site management, and with a management suite on the ground floor and with appropriate space to enable on site services as required.
- 6.7 2SH have completed supporting surveys at their own cost, to include topographical, tree, ecology and design work. Ken Scadden Associates (KSA) are 2SH's architectural consultants supporting 2SH in their work on the scheme and future planning application.
- 6.8 Following discussions with officers within Housing and Property Services, 2SH have confirmed that most of the occupants could be relocated from May Place given the shortcomings of the accommodation there. The new scheme at Culver Road (apart from a small quantum of emergency accommodation) would be 'stage 1' supported accommodation where occupants stayed while their long term accommodation and other needs were assessed; and before potentially, moving to stage 2 accommodation (like that which is offered at Mary Rose Court and additional managed HMO's in the community)
- 6.9 Occupants would typically be offered a form of licence and not a tenancy. There would be 24/7 on site management and with the typical length of stay being four to six months, to enable completion of any relevant needs assessment. It is not intended however that there be a fixed maximum period of stay.
- 6.10 It should be noted that the work around the potential delivery of accommodation at Culver Road can be supported and informed by the work being undertaken with the support of the Department of Psychology from the University of Southampton and Outcome Homes, and which will also help inform the council's strategic approach to homeless services.

7 Corporate implications and council policies

- 7.1 This supported living initiative accords with a number of the council's policies and corporate objectives. The provision of supported living is inherent within, and supports a number of priorities within the Council Plan, (2020 to 2024) to include providing accommodation to support the Borough's most vulnerable residents, working with a range of partners to reduce homelessness, exploiting new and innovative models to provide housing, whilst ensuring that new buildings are sustainable.
- 7.2 The council has a legal responsibility to prevent homelessness in accordance with its duties under the Housing Reduction Act 2017. A new, bespoke building will be pivotal in addressing this responsibility and support a range of key priorities set out in the council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2020-2024), to include the prevention of homelessness and the eradication of rough sleeping. This proposal will help ensure that the most vulnerable will receive the accommodation service and support they require, and with the Strategy stating that we should progress effective partnership working (in this

case with HCC and 2SH) and explore opportunities to develop new housing schemes and develop emergency accommodation.

- 7.3 The council's partnership work, and the proposed revision of the council's covenant, thus supports a range of Council Plan objectives, the priorities of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy as well as helping to meet the council's statutory duties. The HHS sets out that the council should make best use of its resources which includes land and staff assets (in this case the covenant variation and the work and skills of officers as part of a partnership approach).

8 Property and contract matters

- 8.1 HCC and 2SH, in consultation with BDBC officers, have agreed that the most appropriate way forward would be for 2SH to enter into a conditional contract with HCC, and for 2SH to purchase the property at a fixed price. The contract would be on a 'subject to detailed planning' basis with completion of the sale taking place upon the grant of a satisfactory planning permission for the facility and successful application for Homes England grant.
- 8.2 Heads of terms have been agreed in principle between HCC and 2SH, but subject to the respective party's committee and board approvals. The sale documentation will be conditional, so that the property may only be used for the purposes of a supported housing facility for the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless.
- 8.3 On the basis that the site would be used for the provision of a supported housing scheme, the council's covenant would be modified (as opposed to being removed) to enable this specific use. The council's covenant would be revised simultaneously with completion of the sale.
- 8.4 Whilst BDBC owns areas of open space in the immediate vicinity of the property (see Appendix 3), these areas are considered to be of insufficient size and juxta position, to warrant being included within any wider development proposal. In any event, the Culver Road site is considered sufficient to provide the level of accommodation anticipated to be delivered by 2SH.
- 8.5 It is understood that the garage block adjoining the western boundary of the site is within the ownership of Sovereign HA. However, the garages are understood to be subject to various occupational arrangements. To consider the inclusion of these garage blocks within a wider development scheme, could unnecessarily complicate the project due to delays over land assembly.
- 8.6 SHA have been informed of the intended scheme as part of the ongoing SHA partnership work, and are fully supportive of this initiative. SHA will continue to be included in dialogue with residents (which includes some of their tenants in this locality) and as a key stakeholder.

9 Funding considerations

- 9.1 2SH would fund the land purchase and construction using a combination of their own funds and also with the intention of receiving Homes England grant. 2SH have already had a number of discussions with Homes England who have confirmed their support in principle for the proposal. An application for grant would be made upon the obtaining of planning permission, but before completion of sale. This has been acknowledged and accepted by HCC, although there will be a long stop date in the contract by which time 2SH must complete the sale. Whilst there is a risk that HE may ultimately decide not to fund the project, the discussions to date would indicate that there is a good prospect of any grant application being successful.
- 9.2 An alternative funding option drawing in potentially available funds from key providers in our area who have Strategic Investment Status with Homes England appears a further viable option which is also being considered. 2SH have also been asked to clarify the split of costs between the HE funding and their own financial contribution to the project and to include future running and maintenance.
- 9.3 It is not anticipated that the council will provide any direct financial support for the land purchase by 2SH, or for the construction of the new building.
- 9.4 Appendix 8 provides further details of the current funding arrangements to include May Place but also assesses the implications of providing alternative accommodation such as bed and breakfast. The delivery of a new facility at Culver Road would be a long term, cost effective solution to support single person homelessness and continue to support into the long term, the measurable outcomes of May Place as set out at Appendix 8.
- 9.5 Subject to the project progressing, further detailed consideration would need to be given to any procurement and social inclusion commissioning matters arising from the new supported housing arrangement.

10 Financial Implications

- 10.1 The 2020/21 budget for May Place is £0.35m, and this could transfer to the new facility at Culver Road. Please also see Appendix 8. However it should be noted that this budget is funded through a social inclusion grant received from Hampshire County Council which is still to be confirmed for 2022/23 and future years. Should this grant not be extended then the council will need to consider if this budget is of a high enough priority to be funded with its own resources.
- 10.2 As set out in this report, it is not intended that BDBC will make any direct financial contribution to the purchase of the property by 2SH or the construction costs and maintenance.
- 10.3 Whilst the council does have the benefit of the restrictive covenant, for which it might request a financial sum for an alternative use, it is considered that the social benefits from the delivery of this scheme, far outweigh any financial sum that might be negotiated. Further, the delivery of the facility supports the council's responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The

covenant would only be modified to enable the supported housing facility to be delivered, as opposed to the site being delivered for a market or profit led development. Given these circumstances and the fact that the council does not own the site, it is considered a S123 valuation is unnecessary, as any undervalue of the council's interest for the covenant revision for the proposed, and restricted change of use for a non-profit based user, would not be significant.

- 10.4 There are no VAT implications for the council in the delivery of this project, as it involves revision of a covenant only at NIL value, and without any direct supply of services by the council from the proposed facility
- 10.5 The council's reasonable legal costs will be reimbursed on completion of the covenant revision.
- 10.6 Therefore, given the details set out on this report, the change of venue to deliver this service is therefore not expected to have any financial impact on the authority.

11 Planning Considerations

- 11.1 In summary, the property at 180 Culver Road has a low level of policy constraints. It is not within a Conservation area and the existing property is not listed. There are no TPOs within the site although it is intended to keep the existing mature tree within the site. The property is not within a flood risk area. There are no public footpaths across the site. The site has been confirmed as being of low ecological value. Part of the site falls within the public highway (see Appendix 3) but any proposed development will be outside of any highway areas.
- 11.2 Officers within Property and Housing, have met with the council's Development Managers to discuss the principle of delivering a supported living facility at the site. It was considered that the principle of a new supported living facility could be acceptable on the site. It lies within the settlement policy boundary where there is a presumption in favour of development. The property is within, but on the edge of, a residential area. Planning permission would be required for both a change of use and for redevelopment of the site. It was acknowledged that the site is currently occupied by a long standing derelict building which is no longer fit for purpose.
- 11.3 A pre-application was submitted by 2SH for the supported living scheme in November 2020, following discussions with the planning authority, HCC, ward members and the project group. The response by the planning authority in January 2021, advised that the proposal should be acceptable in principle but acknowledged that further design work should be considered in terms of the new buildings overall massing and scale and relationship with nearby properties. 2SH will work through the comprehensive feedback received and undertake any 'fine tuning' of their design and layout for the purpose of the formal planning application submission in Spring 2021.

12 Town Centre Strategy

- 12.1 Should the development of the Culver Road site for a supported housing facility be successful, the longer term future of May Place would need to be assessed in consultation with the services managers at the property (2SH) and the owners, L&Q. Officers within Housing and Property Services have initiated discussions with L&Q in consultation with 2SH, now that there is more certainty about the project.
- 12.2 Given the location of May Place within the town centre, it is appropriate that conversations around the future of May Place should give consideration to any proposed strategy for the top of town and the town centre generally (the location of May Place in the context of the council's surrounding ownership is shown at Appendix 9). It should be noted however that the primary focus of the project will remain on delivering a facility at Culver Road.
- 12.3 Informal discussions on the future of homeless accommodation have previously taken place with L&Q Housing Association, the Camrose Centre and the YOU Trust. These parties were all keen to support and participate in a modernised remodelling / relocation of homeless provision. More detailed discussions will continue with these parties as the project moves forward.

13 Ward Member discussions (Brookvale and Kings Furlong ward)

- 13.1 The officer project team have had several meetings with 2SH and the ward members. The proposed supported living facility, the accommodation services to be provided, the form of management and the anticipated design have been discussed in detail, and the ward members observations taken into account. It is acknowledged that the property had been vacant for many years (apart from the recent temporary occupation by the Foodbank) and that it was an underused public asset.
- 13.2 The ward members have confirmed they support the principle of a supported living facility for those who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. They will be kept fully informed and consulted with regard to the planning application and communication with residents. The communications aspects are dealt with at 17.
- 13.3 The portfolio holders have been kept updated of progress and the work of officers and 2SH. They support the principle of the delivery of a supported living facility and their comments echo those expressed by the ward members, that attention to the building's design and future management should be key considerations and the impact on local residents. The future of May Place should be given consideration as part of a holistic approach to the project and in due course, its potential contribution to the town centre strategy.

14 Equalities Implications

- 14.1 The proposal to vary the covenant at Culver Road to help facilitate the proposed supported living facility has been reviewed to consider the implications for the Public Sector Equality Duty and potential impacts on the protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010). This concluded that it will be positive for a range of individuals who are, or are in danger of,

experiencing homelessness and those who have no access to suitable residential accommodation.

- 14.2 Revision of the covenant would assist in the facilitation and delivery of a much needed supported housing facility to potentially replace and /or support the services being offered at May Place, which has accommodation shortcomings. It was noted that, while Culver Road is on an edge of town location, it is still within walking distance from the town centre. Furthermore, the location of May Place near to pubs and restaurants has given rise to anti-social behaviour; and which would be less apparent for the location at Culver Road.
- 14.3 In accordance with the 2SH proposals, it is intended that the Culver Road building be replaced with a bespoke building supported accessible living facility for homeless 'stage 1' and some emergency accommodation. The provision of this facility will meet a number of Council Plan, Housing Strategy and Corporate objectives. The council will not be disposing of any land which might be used for another valuable purpose, and is only modifying an existing covenant. In particular, it will promote equality for those who are, or at risk of, experiencing homelessness and go towards addressing the significant disadvantages, and difficulties accessing services, that are faced by this group.
- 14.4 The provision of new facilities at 180 Culver Road could also have other potential benefits and wider social outcomes. Additional support services and accommodation assessments would form part of the overall service going forward. The residents at 180 Culver Road would be continually assessed to ascertain the suitability of their accommodation requirements into the future according to their individual needs. There would be 24/7 on site management and residents would be expected to agree a code of conduct as part of their occupational agreement. These homelessness initiatives form and will develop, cross partnership working with HCC, 2SH, You Trust, and other partners working in this specialist field. This includes the work being undertaken in co-operation with the University of Southampton psychologist teams to include support with mental health. The equalities implications of this project will continued to be assessed at regular stages of its development.
- 14.5 It was also noted that the proposed supported housing facility would be situated in an established residential area. The design and layout of the proposed building will be subject to careful consideration in terms of privacy, overlooking, parking, and day to day management. The property will include outdoor but private open spaces which are not available at May Place.
- 14.6 If the proposal to move May Place progresses, a further, more detailed equalities assessment should be undertaken to inform final decision making and a communication and engagement plan with May Place residents and the Social Inclusion Partnership will be developed and implemented.

15 **Climate change**

- 15.1 This decision would have a **positive** carbon impact, in that the new building will be more energy efficient than the existing building.
- 15.2 Given the council's climate emergency declaration, BDBC officers are working with 2SH and their architects to investigate as far as possible and within the cost constraints, scope for the new building to include forms of low carbon construction and sustainable materials.
- 15.3 The new building will be an improvement on the current energy inefficient building, and will also involve reduced car journeys to and from the property. Cycle storage facilities and an electrical charging point are intended to be included. A new, purpose built building would have regard to current building legislation and the availability of improved construction techniques and use of sustainable materials. 2SH have employed a specialist consultant to look specifically at sustainable construction techniques, energy reduction and thermal insulation. Given the nature of the proposed use, it is considered important that costs of services and upkeep are kept at a sustainable level into the longer term.
- 15.4 There is significant scope to make outside spaces environmentally friendly and guided by mental wellbeing principles. 2SH have employed a specialist landscape architect to create a balanced outside space and which will include planting areas and permeable surfaces. The mature tree within the property will be retained.

16 **Risk Management**

- 16.1 There is a possibility that planning permission may not be granted for a supported living facility at Culver Road, in which case the disposal of the property to 2SH by HCC would not proceed, and the council would not revise the covenant. In that event, there would be no move of the occupants from May Place and other long term accommodation arrangements or sites as a potential replacement for May Place, would require identification.
- 16.2 In the event that Homes England did not provide funding upon the assessment of 2SH's grant application, 2SH would either have to fund the shortfall, or if they were unable to do so, seek alternative funding sources.
- 16.3 In the event that the scheme did not proceed, there would be no financial implications for the council, as the revision of the covenant does not involve transfer of a valuable land asset or impact on property income. The council would not be constructing the scheme, so there will be no financial risk to the council associated with completion of the development. Nonetheless, over the longer term, there may be financial implications for the council in the event that May Place were to close (ie on the basis that it was considered no longer suitable to accommodate homeless persons) given that the council has a duty to intervene to prevent homelessness; and if the social inclusion grant from HCC were to discontinue.

- 16.4 In the event of 2SH not proceeding with the purchase, HCC would still wish to sell the property. Given the council's decision not to purchase a similar property 'Adelphi House' it is unlikely that justification could be made for the council to purchase Culver Road. There remains the possibility that HCC could still dispose of the property to another party, albeit HCC would still have to consider the council's position as beneficiary of the covenant.

Ongoing revenue funding to provide the support is subject to future decisions HCC may take (post 2021/22) regarding the devolved grant funding arrangement. However whilst this proposal does not pose any added risk to a future grant arrangement, it does, in fact, strengthen the justification for continuing the unique provisions and retaining funding at current levels at the very least.

17 Communication and consultation

- 17.1 As set out in this briefing note, the ward members have been consulted and their comments and observations included in working up the scheme designs. Sovereign HA, as owner of nearby affordable housing units have been consulted and are supportive of the proposal. HCC, as owner of the property, remain committed to the sale of the property to 2SH, subject to contract. The planning authority were consulted at an early stage of the project and have responded to 2SH's pre-application.
- 17.2 Led by Two Saints Housing, an initial letter was sent out to immediately adjoining residents and key stakeholders in December introducing them to the scheme. A wider community engagement, again to led by 2SH, with the community is to commence shortly. This engagement is to be as wide as possible to include a range of social media, press release, video link, face book, dedicated officer and 2SH contacts, and webpage. This will be in addition to any statutory consultation undertaken by the planning authority following submission of a planning application.
- 17.3 A joint engagement plan has been drafted to ensure residents and key stakeholders are made aware of the plans and have the opportunity to ask questions and comment on these in advance of the submission of the planning application. As part of this engagement plan, an initial letter was sent out to immediately adjoining residents and key stakeholders in December 2020 introducing them to the scheme. Information was also distributed through a range of channels including websites, emailers, social media and the local media. Further engagement with the community is taking place and will provide further opportunities for people to speak to officers and find out more information about the scheme. This will be in addition to any statutory consultation undertaken by the planning authority following submission of a planning application.
- 17.4 Initial feedback has been positive from the wider Basingstoke and Deane public. Feedback received from local residents has been mixed with some concerns raised but these people have engaged with officers and full answers have been supplied to the questions received. These answers have also been placed on Two Saints' website and the council's. The next phase of the

engagement plan will provide further detail on the plans and enables additional questions to be asked directly to officers.

18 HR Implications

The work undertaken by the council in partnership with HCC and 2SH, has been and will continue to be via the contribution of in-house personnel, and subject to any COVID restrictions there may be in the future. It is noted that the council has not necessitated the use of consultants to support this project.

19 Proposed Next Steps and timescales

- 19.1 Officers discussed the proposals with SMB in December 2020, and SMB's comments and guidance have formed the basis for the continuation of officer's work to date.
- 19.2 Next Steps
 - 19.2.1 Following receipt of the pre-application response, 2SH will complete their design and survey work detailed within this note and submit a planning application for the scheme. The plans intended to accompany the proposed application will be circulated to the ward members, and the respective Portfolio Holders, in advance for comment. An outcome on the planning application would be anticipated in Spring 2021.
 - 19.2.2 As set out at 17.3, and led by 2SH, a wider engagement with residents and stakeholders will continue after an initial introductory letter in December. This engagement will be part of an ongoing process during the period of the planning application, and potentially beyond it.
 - 19.2.3 2SH will continue their dialogue with Homes England, in consultation with BDBC officers, as to the continued and likely availability of grant funding, and the level of funding required, and to keep officers updated on any likely changes in funding circumstances. 2SH will advise officers of the estimated scheme costs once these are known.
 - 19.2.4 Officers will develop discussions with the 2SH/L&Q/Camrose and any other key stakeholders in the field, and in consultation with the ward members and portfolio holders, as to future service provision and which includes the proposed provision of accommodation at Culver Road. These discussions are to continue during 2021.
 - 19.2.5 It is anticipated that, subject to any further internal approvals required, HCC will enter in to a 'subject to planning' contract with 2SH during Spring 2021.
 - 19.2.6 The determination of the planning application is anticipated after Spring 2021. An application for grant funding by 2SH would then follow. On the assumption that planning permission is granted and grant funding is provided, 2SH would then complete the sale with HCC, and the BDBC covenant would be revised at the point of sale. The build programme is estimated to be 12 months to an occupational standard.

20 Conclusion

Summary and reasons for the decision

- 20.1 The proposed scheme to be delivered for supported housing will provide additional accommodation for homeless persons and those at risk of becoming homeless. The proposal meets a range of objectives in the Council Plan and key priorities in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, including housing some of the Borough's most vulnerable residents. The new building will significantly improve the current provision at May Place, and provide purpose built and bespoke accommodation with some 25 bedrooms in total, to include a small quantum of emergency accommodation.
- 20.2 The proposal represents an excellent example of partnership working with a specialist in the field of supported housing, and progressive and cross cutting work across Local Authorities. The replacement of the currently obsolete and vacant building will enable its replacement with an asset that can directly contribute to the economy, and which will have wider reaching benefits associated with social wellbeing.
- 20.3 Cabinet are requested to endorse the partnership work being undertaken, the next steps set out above and the revision of the council's covenant, on 2SH obtaining planning permission for the scheme.

The options considered and rejected

- 20.4 The alternative option would be that the property at 180 Culver Road could remain vacant and not make any contribution to the town as a public asset. The council could elect not to work in partnership with HCC or 2SH, which could compromise the delivery of a suitable and valuable form of service delivered from the site. Apart from the covenant, the council has no legal interest in the site, and an opportunity to influence the future use of the site could thus be missed. Given the opportunities represented by the site and its location, the proposed supported housing scheme is considered the best outcome for the council, its partners and for the intended occupants who are at risk from homelessness.

Date: 9 March 2021
Decision taken by: Cabinet

Lead officer	Executive Director of Residents Services
Report authors	<p>Jason Christou, Principal Surveyor (Housing, Regeneration and Infrastructure) Telephone: 01256 845295 Jason.christou@basingstoke.gov.uk</p> <p>Kate Randall Head of Housing and Social Inclusion Telephone: 01256 845392 Kate.randall@basingstoke.gov.uk</p>
Version	For Cabinet
Dated	9 March 2021
Status	Open
Confidentiality	It is considered that information contained within this report (and appendices) do not contain exempt information under the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and therefore can be made public.