

COMMITTEE

Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

DATE

12 January 2010

LEAD HEAD OF SERVICE

Dr Margaret Bochel

DIRECTOR

Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT

Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative

REPORT NUMBER:

EPI/10/013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise committee of the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI), the process, the benefits and the next steps.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That committee note the SSCI process.
- 2.2 That committee agree participation of the relevant Council services in the forthcoming Charrette.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 As part of the Council's contribution to the SSCI there will be a requirement to cover the cost for venue hire. The Charrette event venue hire will cost in the region of £5600. Additional venue hire will be required for the evening presentations and community events. The costs of venue hire will be met from the existing Design Campaign budget.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 4.1 The Charrette outcome will be a masterplan which includes affordable housing, good accessibility, improved sustainable transport. The main aims are to develop a distinctive place and address issues of climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gases in new developments.
- 4.2 It relates to Single Outcome Agreement 2: We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people. 10: We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. 12: We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. 14: We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production. 15: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

- 4.3 An Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment was scoped and will be in accordance with Aberdeen City best practice. This will be an ongoing process throughout the Charrette and Masterplanning Programme.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This report seeks agreement from committee to instruct personnel from a variety of services (listed in 6.9) to be involved in the Initiative.

6. REPORT

The Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI)

- 6.1 The SSCI is a Scottish Government Initiative which aims to create developments of high quality design which are distinctive, innovative and create outstanding communities which can be used as examples of best practice. They must also meet the needs of the communities, protect and enhance the unique built and natural heritage and contribute to a more sustainable future. The Initiative aims to achieve more homes of mixed tenure, that are built to a higher environmental and design standard.

The SSCI criteria states that development should:

- Contribute to meeting housing need in the area,
 - Demonstrate a level of innovation and quality of design that will create successful places and be inspirational,
 - Make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions both in construction and throughout the communities life,
 - Minimise pollution,
 - Create opportunities to live healthier, active, environmentally responsible lives,
 - Show it is possible to deliver high quality sustainable developments in a reasonable timescale,
 - Provide monitoring mechanisms of the outcomes so that best practice example can be produced and used in the future.
- 6.2 Of the 68 SSCI submissions received by the Scottish Government, 11 were awarded recognition, confirming that they are working towards 'Creating a Scottish Sustainable Community'. One of the successful proposals was Grandhome and Whitestripes in Aberdeen City.
- 6.3 The main focus of the Initiative is developing the proposals via partnership between the public and private sectors. The successful sites will also have access to advice and support in developing their proposals. There is no direct financial support from the Scottish Government for the SSCI.
- 6.4 Due to its scale and stage in the process, the Grandhome and Whitestripes proposal will benefit from a national Charrette. The Charrette concept is an interactive public design workshop which creates draft masterplan options for the site through new public engagement and design techniques. The

Charrette will include both large presentations to the public and smaller focused discussions with special interest groups.

- 6.5 The Charrette programme includes 3 sites across Scotland at Lochgelly in Fife, Ladyfield in Dumfries and Grandhome & Whitestripes in Aberdeen. The Charrette programme will be led by Turnberry Consultants and Duane Plater-Zyberk (DPZ) in collaboration with the the Scottish Government in March 2010. The Grandhome and Whitestripes Charrette has been planned for the 17th to 23rd March 2010 and will be run by Turnberry/DPZ in collaboration with the Grandhome Trust and Aberdeen City Council. An opening presentation is due to take place on the 17th with an Interim pin-up of ideas on the 20th and a closing presentation on the 23rd.
- 6.6 It is important to get the best result out of the SSCI Charrette by addressing as many issues as possible early on in the process. The Grandhome Trust and Aberdeen City Council are currently preparing a detailed brief for the Charrette.
- 6.7 The brief will provide:
 - Important context and policy – given the external nature of the supporting Charrette team,
 - Aspirations in terms of uses, activities and early ideas on townscape form,
 - Guidance on movement, infrastructure and energy/sustainability issues.
- 6.8 Elected members, local community councils and other groups, together with appropriate city wide groups are expected to be actively engaged throughout the Charrette process. The Grandhome Trust Team will brief the local community prior to the event. Elected Members should note that the approved Aberdeen Masterplanning Process encourages their involvement in masterplanning stages such as this Charrette, and should not prejudice any Member's position in consideration of the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan or in determining future planning applications. This is an inclusive and learning process with suggestions and input being welcomed.
- 6.9 This process will also require input from a number of other council sources. Functions that may be involved include:
 - Masterplanning and Design.
 - Development Planning.
 - Development Management.
 - Building Standards.
 - Infrastructure Strategy and Programmes.
 - Leisure and Recreation.
 - Education.
 - Roads (access, links, transport, wider impacts, requirements).
 - Economic Development.
 - Housing (Mixed tenure, Housing Need).

- Sustainable Development (inc flooding, drainage, SUDS, etc).
- Biodiversity.
- Core Paths.
- Energy.
- Community Planning.

6.9 It should also be noted that there will be a number of external agencies involved in the process including Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Water, Robert Gordon University, NESTRANS, Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority and Architecture + Design Scotland.

6.10 Service representatives will be expected to contribute supporting information and participate in pre-arranged sessions at the Charrette. This may involve, for example, 2 days research and briefing prior to the Charrette and 2-3 days participation during the Charrette. The follow up will likely require a day's review.

6.11 SSCI Benefits

A number of benefits will be achieved from the SSCI process including:

- Coordination of all agencies at the beginning of the process.
- Examine each stage of the planning process.
- Examine best practice and efficient methods of engagement.
- Public awareness and confidence early in the process.
- Explore the value of engagement with Architecture +Design Scotland.
- Detailed and objective independent review of the whole Charrette process to afford a meaningful lessons learned report.
- Raise awareness of design and development in Aberdeen

6.12 Policy Update

6.13 The Grandhome and Whitestripes site is identified in the Aberdeen City Main Issues Report, as having the potential to contribute towards the numbers within the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan that was approved in August 2009. The Main Issues report is currently out to consultation running from 16 October to 11 December 2009.

6.14 The Grandhome and Whitestripes proposal is very early in the planning process with timings that match in with those set out in the Development Plan Scheme for the Aberdeen City Local Plan. The Charrette process will not prejudice or interfere with the planning process and will produce supplementary planning guidance to be brought forward through the Local Development Plan.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Refer to any sources used in the writing of your report. Please note that it is a statutory requirement that any papers that are listed must be made available to the public on request.

Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative Charrette Series