

Meeting:	Executive
Meeting date:	12 th September 2024
Report of:	Pauline Stuchfield, Director of Housing and Communities Sara Storey, Corporate Director of Adults and Integration
Portfolio of:	Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

Decision Report: Delivering Supported Housing for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism at Lowfield Green

Subject of Report

1. Supported housing is a concept that was developed as an alternative to existing care solutions for disabled people. The main principles of supported housing are that disabled people and/or those with autism have control over the support they get, who they live with (if anyone) and how they live their lives. Supported housing assumes that all disabled people and/or those with autism, regardless of the level or type of impairment or medical diagnosis they have, are able to make choices about how to live their lives even if the person does not make choices in conventional ways. Good quality supported housing is vital: providing a safe, stable and supportive place to live can be the key to unlocking better outcomes for disabled people, from tackling poverty and disadvantage to managing crises, rehabilitation or maintaining people's independence.
2. Supported housing supports City of York Council priorities for our population by reducing the number of people who go into long term residential and nursing care as well as reducing the number of

preventable hospital readmissions. It also facilitates timely hospital discharge and enable people to live in a supported environment.

3. Lowfield Green is a new community in the heart of Acomb. The development hosts 140 recently completed homes along with 6 completed self-build homes and a community housing project which is currently under construction. Lowfield Green is an inclusive and welcoming mixed tenure community which aspires to bring generations together. The site delivers a wide range of house types from one- and two-bedroom apartments for over 55s, fully accessible bungalows to large family houses. The development is set around an acre of village green to connect residents with accessible green spaces.
4. The proposal within this paper seeks to complete the community at Lowfield Green. There are currently two undeveloped plots on Lowfield Green; the smaller site is known as **Plot A** and is located at the Dijon Avenue entrance to the site (0.22ha), and **Plot B** (0.44ha) is located overlooking the central green space. These two plots are the final undeveloped areas of the masterplan.
5. This paper presents recommendations for the delivery of specialist housing on Lowfield Green to develop high quality housing provision on Lowfield **Plot A** for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism.
6. The future development of Lowfield **Plot B** has been agreed by Executive in a related report entitled '*Update on the Housing Delivery Programme and the Disposal of Surplus Sites*' which was approved in July 2024.
7. Increasing the specialist housing provision is essential for promoting independence and enhancing quality of life whilst also building a robust housing offer to meet current and future needs and reducing the reliance on out of area placements.
8. Supported housing accommodates people in our communities with significant additional needs; it is therefore essential that it is safe, of good quality, meets residents' needs and fits with the local community. It must also provide value for money for the resident, commissioner, and taxpayer.
9. The quality ultimately determines outcomes – higher quality means individuals are more likely to experience better outcomes, whether that means successfully living independently, navigating and staying out of crisis or managing their health effectively. This not only

results in a better quality of life for residents but can also support more effective use of resources elsewhere for public services and local councils.

10. This paper takes stock of the current housing provision for adults with additional needs within York and sets a vision for supported housing provision in the city to respond to increasing demand and to raise standards.

Benefits and Challenges

11. Creating high-quality specialist housing within the city enhances quality of life for the individuals and their families by ensuring they can stay close to existing support networks within York. The accommodation can be designed and built to meet the needs of the customer group following best practice guidance for supported accommodation.
12. As well as helping to improve people's quality of life by supporting them to live independently, supported housing provides significant benefits to the city and wider partners. Every pound spent on supported housing contributes to positive outcomes for individuals, which can lead to more effective use of resources. This in turn enables these services to deliver better outcomes for vulnerable groups.
13. This paper proposes to utilise Lowfield Green as a first step to providing this new model of accommodation, giving the council greater control of specialist housing provision. The development of Lowfield Green Plot A for specialist housing sits within a wider strategy for increasing supported housing stock across the city which is being developed in response to the future population growth and local needs assessment detailed in paragraphs 40 to 55 of this report.
14. It is proposed that the development of Plot A would be led by the Housing Delivery team utilising the existing skills and resources within the council to expediate delivery and build a council-owned asset which will be available for supported housing in perpetuity. The design of the homes as self-contained apartments will also give flexibility for future use if the demand from emerging cohorts should change. This direct delivery option does require significant financial resource from the council to build the accommodation however the rental income demonstrates that the proposal is indicatively viable and would reduce the future spending on specialist accommodation.

15. The proposal to develop Lowfield Plot A is part of a wider review of the current model of accommodation for adults with learning disabilities in the city. All supported housing for adults with learning difficulties and/or autism within the city is owned by third parties which reduces the council's ability to strategically manage the accommodation options for this cohort. This proposal supports the development of a clear pathway for individuals to access the right accommodation and support at different life stages to promote independence and improve wellbeing.

Policy Basis for Decision

16. The recommendations within this paper intersect with all the core commitments outlined in the Council Plan (2023-27). The development of both plots at Lowfield Green for specialist housing broaden the housing offer for residents who require additional support to provide housing options that promote independence and equality resulting in a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
17. All the homes proposed for development at Lowfield Green Plot A will be developed as recognised affordable housing tenures. The homes will be developed to high environmental standards removing the dependence on fossil fuels and utilising renewable energy to reduce the impact on the environment and reduce the costs to future residents.

Financial Strategy Implications

18. Lowfield Green Plot A is proposed to be delivered directly by the Council and therefore this will require financial resource. The financial viability of the proposal has been modelled extensively to ensure that whilst an initial investment will be required, the development provides a financial return on this investment. To determine viability the appraisal looks at how many years it takes the rental income to pay off the initial borrowing needed to build the properties. The rental income has been stress tested thoroughly and based on the high-level information currently available the project is viable as a housing project.
19. As part of the proposal thorough analysis has been undertaken to understand the current spend on existing provision through third party organisations and the future cost saving that this development

would yield if the housing provision were owned and managed by the council. By clustering the homes in this purpose-built development, the cost of care can be distributed more effectively than it can with the current model where shared houses are located around the city. A clustered accommodation type, as proposed here, brings efficiencies of staffing costs.

20. This paper does not seek a construction budget for the project at this stage, the funding required is to support the initiation of the project and progress the design in order to submit a planning application. A full business case will be presented to the Executive once planning has been submitted.
21. The viability of the proposal will be tested at each RIBA design stage to ensure that as plans develop it is still an affordable proposal. A project team with colleagues from Housing and Adult Social Care will be set up to ensure the design of the project reflects the needs of the future residents and that future residents are engaged in the design process.

Recommendation and Reasons

Executive are asked to:

22. approve the development of Plot A at Lowfield Green for specialist housing for adults with learning disabilities and / or autism utilising the resources of the Housing Delivery Programme working in partnership with Adult Social Care.
23. agree to the allocation of £480k from the Housing Revenue Account for the design development of Plot A at Lowfield Green to carry out design work and allow for the submission of a planning application and note that a future paper will be brought to the Executive to present a full Business Case prior to procuring and appointing a building contractor.
24. approve the use of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Brownfield Housing Fund grant allocation for this site to support the delivery of housing on this plot and to delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Community Services (in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Director of Finance) to enter into the resulting funding agreement.
25. approve the procurement of an external multidisciplinary team to design the homes and submit a planning application for supported

accommodation on Lowfield Plot A and to delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Community Services and the Director of Adults Services and Integration (in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Head of Procurement) to take such steps as are necessary to procure, award and enter into the resulting contracts.

26. Note that officers are considering the options for specialist care providers to deliver support services once the property is constructed and will carry out soft market testing with providers and bring back a recommendation to Executive to accompany the full business case.

Reason: To increase the supply of affordable housing options for specialist housing provision in the City. To mitigate future costs of expensive out of area placements and improve the standard of supported housing in the City.

Background

27. Supported living is a combination of suitable accommodation with some form of care and support on site or in reach. There is usually, but not always a partnership arrangement between the care and support provider and the housing provider or landlord. Care and support can be a condition of tenancy but not always. Essential to the offer is the ability to support people to access quality and affordable housing.
28. The City of York council do not currently hold any stock for the supported living housing offer. Tenancy-based accommodation includes property rented from registered social landlords, not-for-profit and charitable landlords or through private rentals. This is then leased to a care provider, the latter which the authority secure. This leaves the authority with no choice and control should a provider no longer wish to lease this premise, and more commonly should the landlord choose to serve notice in order to return the stock back to general housing needs, some landlords are now considering this is a more secure option.
29. Additionally, the housing offer for supported housing for adults with learning difficulties and/or autism often does not meet the best practice guidance set out in the government's 'National Statement of Expectation' for supported housing as most of the properties in York are shared houses with shared facilities. York's own market position statement tells us that adults with additional needs wish to

transition out of shared houses and into self-contained accommodation as they reach adulthood.

Commissioning model

30. To date, June 2024, there are 41 provisions across nine (9) providers with capacity to accommodate 205 individuals. There are 4 voids across these properties and 32 individuals awaiting a supported living placement.
31. The offer available across York has seen a decline in supported living provisions over the last ten years but more noticeably since the pandemic reducing capacity despite rising demand with little or no plans for new provisions. The last ten years has looked like so;
 - 31.1 In 2013 there were fifty-five (55) premises across nine (9) providers with the capacity to accommodate 188 individuals. The average weekly gross placement cost was £987 per customer.
 - 31.2 In 2018 we saw an increase of both providers and provisions with sixty-three (63) premises across fifteen (15) contracted providers accommodating 225 individuals. The average weekly gross placement cost was £1,391 per customer.
 - 31.3 In 2023, there were 49 provisions across nine (9) providers with capacity of 235, 225 individuals were accommodated within these provisions and there were ten (10) voids on average over the year at a cost of £361k. The average weekly gross payment cost was £1,722 per customer.
32. An ongoing review of our supported living stock and the longevity and sustainability of these as supported living settings suggest that 2 (two) more provisions (5 placements) have given notice to close within this financial year further depleting stock.
33. The lack of capacity within the city has led to costly out of area placements. To date, there are eight (8) OOA placements costing a total of 29k weekly. The last ten years has looked like so;
 - 34.1. In 2013 there were twenty (20) OOA placements costing 15k weekly, an average cost of £750 per individual
 - 34.2. In 2018 there were twenty-seven (27) OOA placements costing 34k weekly, an average cost of £1259 per individual
 - 34.3 In 2023 there were thirteen (13) OOA placements costing 25k weekly, an average of £1923 per individual

35. Given historic trends and emerging cohort data, if no action is taken to increase the provision of supported housing within the city, then the Council will become increasingly reliant on out of area placements. It is predicted that by 2028 the anticipated cost of supported housing could increase by 33%.
36. Though the number of placements has decreased the average cost has increased significantly and this hasn't factored individuals placed in residential services outside of the city as a result of complexity of needs. The decision to place outside the region is usually one with little or no choice given the lack of suitable alternatives within the city.
37. In recent years there has been limited opportunities for providers to develop their services differently towards enabling longer-term, better outcomes and greater independence, and market conditions have limited the ability to effectively steer and shape the market. Ageing tenants and adaptations, age of property and compatibility issues between tenants due to the complexity of needs is causing an increase in the number of voids. The increase in these voids leave providers and landlords liable for the rental costs another deterrent to develop further provisions, the void cost for shared care costs also falls to the authority.
38. The dwelling for any single provision can offer anything from 2-8 bedrooms allowing for capacity of 1-7 individuals. These house types could be considered institutions on a smaller scale none of which aligns with the national published agendas or allows the option of own front door approach. As these dwellings are in fact shared houses this causes a number of issues around compatibility and suitability in such a specific cohort of people.
39. The composition of those living in supported living accommodation has changed over time. There is a greater proportion of those in supported living who are likely to present with more complex needs and require more complex packages of support.

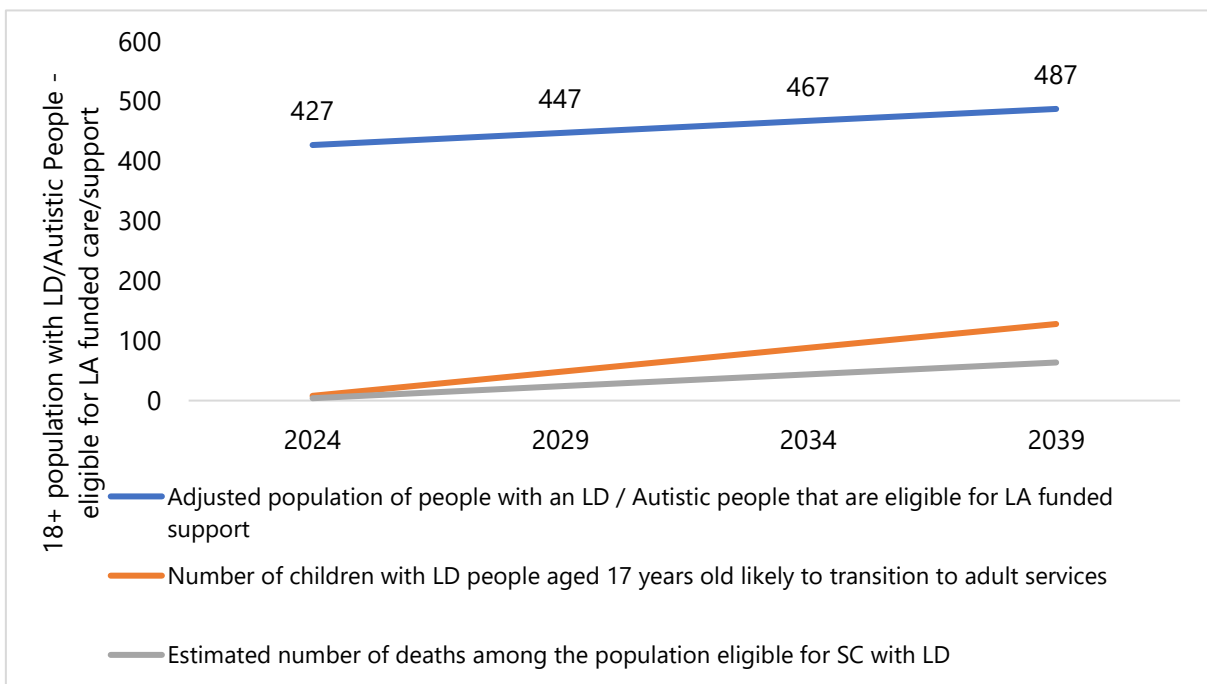
Baseline population and future population estimates

40. To identify the relevant population of people with learning disabilities and/or autism aged 18 and over, who are or who are likely to be eligible for social care and/or health services, the following data has been used:
 - The NHS Short- and Long-term Support (SALT) dataset has been combined with local internal data to provide information on

the number of people with learning disabilities and/or autism aged 18 and over, who are eligible for adult social care support provided by the Councils.

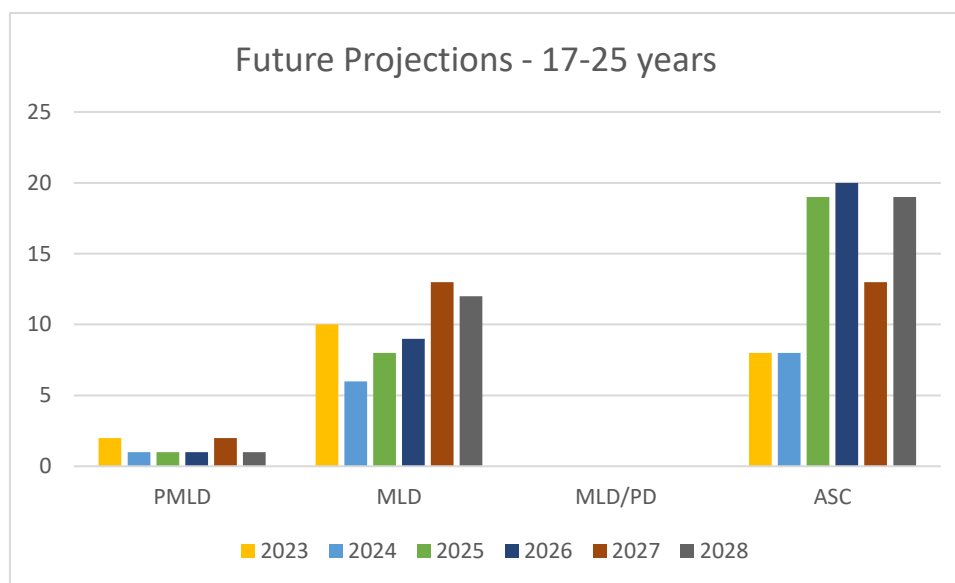
- Internal council data has been provided to supplement figures accessed through NHS SALT data and has been used where more up to date figures are available through the local councils' data.
- PANSI estimates of the population within North Yorkshire aged 18+ with learning disabilities and Autistic people in England and the 2021 ONS census. This is used to estimate the number of people with moderate and severe learning disabilities among the wider population.
- Internal Council data on the number of children and young people with SEN, of which a proportion is likely to have a learning disability and/or autism.

41. Population with learning disabilities and/or autism , who are eligible for council funded care/support in City of York, projected forward to 2039.



42. Based on the evidence considered, the estimated population of people with learning disabilities and/or autism aged 18 and over is anticipated to increase in City of York from 427 in 2024 to 487 in 2039.

43. The chart below shows the needs that are coming through from Education into adult services from age 17-25. These all still have an Education package through their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). Some of these individuals already get support from ASC but this may increase as the Education package decreases. There are already three of these individuals in supported living and a further three needing supported living from September 2024.



PMLD Profound and multiple LD MLD Moderate learning disability
 MLD/PD Moderate learning disability/physical disability ASC Autism spectrum condition

Estimated need for supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities:

- 44. The estimate of need for supported housing and accommodation for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is based on the following approach.
- 45. Projections in relation to population growth and estimated need for supported housing and accommodation are based on the following assumptions/considerations:
- 46. There are an estimated 427 people aged 18+ years with learning disabilities living in York City who are eligible for adult social care accommodation with support.
- 47. The 18+ population of people with learning disabilities is projected to increase by 2039, modelled to change in line with the number of deaths across the population with learning disabilities and the

number of 17-year-olds transitioning to eligibility for adult social care in York. This growth takes into account:

- A growing older population of adults with learning disabilities.
 - Young people with disabilities becoming adults
48. Evidence from the council and its NHS partners that there is a need to develop a housing 'pathway' for people with learning disabilities
 49. The use of residential/nursing care is expected to decrease by c.50% by 2039, from c.14% in 2024 to c.6% by 2039.
 50. Supported housing/supported living is expected to increase due to the increasing overall population including young people who will become eligible for adult social care at 18 years, a projected reduction in the use of residential care and the likelihood of people living with older carers (typically parents) becoming unsustainable.
 51. Need for mainstream housing with a care/support package is expected to increase slightly due to the increase in the overall population of adults with a learning disability.
 52. A modest level of growth has been assumed for Shared Lives.
 53. Living with family/friends/informal carers: based on similar assessments with local authorities elsewhere, it is assumed that the percentage of people living with family carers, particularly older carers will decrease by 20% by 2039 as a proportion of older carers are no longer in a position to be able to accommodate and support their adult children with learning disabilities.
 54. Changes in additional supported housing requirements to meet projected housing need and changes in the types of accommodation/supported housing required are based on applying the assumptions above. This is adjusted for identified population change over time.
 55. Assessment of need for housing and accommodation for people with learning disabilities/autism (with eligible care needs), in summary, it is estimated that:
 - 55.1. an additional 30 units of supported housing and 5 shared lives places are needed by 2029;
 - 55.2. an additional 60 units of supported housing and 7 shared lives places are needed by 2034;

- 55.3. an additional 90 units of supported housing and 10 shared lives places are needed by 2039.
56. Developing self-contained accommodation will not only meet best practice guidance and respond to feedback from current customers, it will reduce the cost of void placements as the accommodation will be purpose built, accessible and residents will not be required to share bathroom and kitchen facilities. Each unit of accommodation can be occupied. The purpose-built accommodation will have flexibility and will be better able to meet the needs of these residents.
57. The location of Lowfield Plot A within a newly established and thriving community of Lowfield Green, where 140 new homes have recently completed, makes for an ideal setting for supported accommodation. The development is within close-proximity of the vibrant community of Acomb which hosts a range of amenities such as doctors, day services, a library, shops and cafes all located a short walk away.
58. To date a high-level feasibility has been undertaken which indicated the plot could accommodate approximately 14 homes. The development would be designed to be consistent with the outline planning approval which is sensitive to neighbouring homes adjacent to the site. These properties would be self-contained one-bedroom flats with communal space for socialising and support along with office space for staff. The homes would be designed to high accessibility standards which is critical to supporting adults with learning difficulties as they age or require additional adaptations because of medical conditions.

Consultation Analysis

59. North Yorkshire Council, City of York Council and Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board are currently drafting a strategic housing needs assessment to provide an understanding of the housing and accommodation needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism in North Yorkshire, in York, and at the HYICB level (covering North Yorkshire and York). It is intended to provide an evidence base to inform future commissioning intentions and market position statements, to shape the local housing market and to allow for long-term planning to meet the housing and accommodation needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

60. This proposal is part of a larger review incorporating views of current supported living landlords, providers and residents as well as analysis of future need for accommodation with support. The review has emphasised that if the current offer is not improved and additional capacity is not created, the lack of provision would continue to lead to individuals being placed in expensive out of area placements or with other expensive community-based support options creating significant additional budgetary pressures. The review has highlighted ageing within the supported living population and the requirement of specialist focussed services. Alongside this, there is no provision for younger people who may, with training in independent living, move on into more independent living with less support.
61. If approval is granted for the development of supported housing on Lowfield Green Plot A then the principles set out in the Housing Delivery Programme's Engagement Strategy would be enacted to work to design the building in collaboration with local residents and stakeholders in the wider community. Communication regarding the proposal will be issued to local residents and if approval is received, a consultation event will be organised to discuss the proposals and the timeline for development.
62. It will be critical to the success of the project to ensure that individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism along with wider support networks such as families, charitable organisations and the future care provider are central to the co-design process and this will be a key area of focus for the project team when developing the design proposals.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

63. A high-level massing study has been undertaken to understand the number of homes that the site could accommodate and it is anticipated that approximately 14 self-contained apartments along with a communal space and staff facilities could be provided on the plot. This provision will aim to provide housing for individuals with mild to moderate care needs. The properties will be designed to high accessibility standards to support individuals to stay in their homes as their needs change.
64. The proposal for 14 dwellings owned by CYC will allow for more certainty of provision than current arrangements as well as

increasing the quality of accommodation available. The proposal will start to reshape and change the offer of supported living within the city. These house types will allow individuals to have their own homes whilst still being able to access regular care and support. The care will be delivered by the provider in a community cluster allowing costs to be proportioned more strategically than it is at present.

65. The new accommodation will be entirely self-contained with no requirement for individuals to share kitchens and bathrooms. This should lead to a reduction in the number of voids across the system as it will make it easier to appropriately place customers. In 2023/24 there was an average of 10 voids in supported living accommodation at any one time, at a total cost to the Council of £361k.
66. An analysis of the current customer base shows that the average cost for individuals in self-contained accommodation is around £31k p.a. less than the cost of individuals placed in shared houses. This is largely due to staffing efficiencies as fewer staff are needed to look after 14 individuals in one setting than would be the case if the customers were placed across a number of smaller shared houses. The new accommodation will allow the Council to place customers at a lower average cost than would be the case if placed in more typical shared house supported living places in York.
67. As outlined in paragraph 31 above the number of available supported living placements in York has fallen over the last year and is likely to reduce further in 2024/25. If no suitable local placements can be found the Council may have to look at placing customers in out of area settings. Currently there are eight customers in such placements, at a total weekly cost of 29k. An analysis of these customers shows that on average the annual cost of placing an individual out of area is £35k p.a. higher than the average annual cost of a customer currently placed in York. Part of that higher cost may be due to the complexity of individual customer needs, however it is reasonable to conclude that the addition of 14 new placements in York will enable the Council to reduce current, and avoid future, out of area placements, and therefore reduce future spend on the supported living budget.

68. The current model is inefficient as properties cannot be filled to maximum capacity due to the requirement for staff areas, for example a 5-bed house can only accommodate 4 residents. Lowfield Green would provide a purpose-built model with separate staff facilities to provide care efficiently at a reduced cost.
69. The proposal has also been subject to a detailed analysis to ensure that this proposal is financially viable based on the rental income generated from the accommodation paying back the initial loan needed to build the property. Supported housing is classed as exempt accommodation and therefore higher rents are charged for these properties compared to general needs stock. Rent in supported housing is higher for a range of reasons for example, the building requires a larger footprint to accommodate communal facilities for support and social activities, the properties and communal areas such as corridors are bigger to allow for adaptations and specialist equipment, there will need to be staff facilities on-site and the specification of homes may be more bespoke to respond to the individuals' needs.
70. The amount of rent payable in supported housing varies considerably and therefore rent levels have been stress tested to ensure that even at lower rental levels the project remains viable.
71. This paper seeks to establish a budget to take the proposal through design stages (RIBA 0-3) and therefore a budget requirement of £480k is requested to cover the multidisciplinary team fees, cost consultant and project management fees, legal costs, surveys and internal staffing costs. These are set out below:

Description	Design Stage costs
Legal Fees	£10,000
Valuation Fees	£1,000
Planning Fees	£6,000
Design team	£230,000
PM Fees	£30,000
QS Fees	£23,000
Staffing Cost	£50,000
Surveys	£65,000
Contingency	£65,000
Total	£480,000

72. This work will allow the submission of a planning application. The funding requirement of £480k will be met using a combination of allocated Brownfield Grant from the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) and s106 affordable housing contributions. To date, £140k of grant from the MCA has been secured on this site in the initial funding round however, this application was made on the basis of general needs affordable housing rather than supported housing. Given the increased costs of building supported housing, an increased bid of £392k has been submitted in the second funding round to support the proposals set out in this paper. The MCA have been supportive of the ambition to deliver housing for adults with learning disabilities and / or autism and it is expected a decision will be made in September 2024. Whilst we believe that is likely we will receive the grant funding from the MCA, in the event the bid is not successful we would seek to utilise additional s106 affordable housing contributions to ensure there is no borrowing requirement for this design work. A full business case will be brought forward to Executive once planning permission has been approved to request a construction budget.

Organisational Impact and Implications

73.

- **Financial**

The 2024/25 net budget for learning disability supported living placements is £13.3m. Total net spend in 2023/24 was £13.6m, an overspend of £508k against the 2023/24 budget.

As shown in paragraph 55 above the number of Supported Living placements needed in York is expected to grow over the next 15 years. Paragraph 31 demonstrates how the price of placements have increased over the last 10 years. The development of new accommodation at Lowfield will help to meet this increased demand. The accommodation will also allow the service to place customers at a lower average cost compared to existing shared accommodation due to efficiencies in staffing costs, and reductions in voids and out of area placements (para 64 to 66 above). The development of Lowfield should therefore reduce the amount of growth that is likely to be required in the Supported Living budget over the next few years to meet the predicted increase in demand.

As outlined in paragraph 20 a full business case will be presented to Executive once planning has been submitted. A more detailed analysis of the impact of the proposed new accommodation on future costs / growth will be included in the business case.

- **Human Resources (HR)**
No implications.
- **Legal**

Planning Law Implications

Any necessary planning permission will need to be obtained for the site referred to within this report (by whoever wishes to develop the site(s)). Each Section 106 affordable housing contribution received by the Council will have to be spent in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Section 106 agreement, which has secured the contribution.

Contract Law Implications

Any grant funding arrangements sought to deliver the proposals set out in this report will need to be reviewed to understand whether the Council's acceptance and use of any such grant funding will comply with the requirements set out within the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Property Law Implications

The Council has power to dispose of its land (including granting a lease of it). The power is subject to statutory conditions if the disposal is of General Fund/non-HRA land at below market value or for any disposal of HRA land.

Adult Social Care Law Implications

The Council's duties under the Care Act 2014 include the general duty to promote individual wellbeing under s1 and a duty under s5 to promote the efficient and effective operation of the market for adult care and support as a whole and with a view to ensuring that any person in its area wishing to access services has a variety of

providers and high-quality services to choose from. It is considered that this proposal is compliant with the above duties.

In addition, the Statutory Guidance to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy includes guidance on local planning and leadership in relation to the provision of services for adults with autism. It is understood that York's new All Age Autism Strategy is currently in progress.

- **Procurement**

Any proposed works or services will need to be commissioned via a compliant procurement route under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and where applicable, the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (soon to be Procurement Act 2023). All tenders will need to be conducted in an open, fair, and transparent way to capture the key principles of procurement. Further advice regarding the procurement routes, strategies and markets must be sought from the Commercial Procurement team.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

The ten-year joint health and wellbeing strategy describes good housing as one of the three key building blocks of health. This paper sets out how the proposed development achieves safe, stable and high-quality supported housing that is near to family members and is designed specifically to meet the needs of people with autism and/or a learning disability.

- **Environment and Climate action**

Efforts should be made to ensure that the development of Plot A at Lowfield Green for specialist housing for adults with learning disabilities and / or autism is delivered in a way that supports the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy.

- **Affordability**

The affordability of housing is a key issue for residents of York particularly those in low-income groups. Whilst rents in supported housing are higher than general needs accommodation, these proposals present lower cost options for supported housing than the current provision within the city.

- **Equalities and Human Rights**

The EIA is attached in Appendix A.

- **Data Protection and Privacy**

Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) are an essential part of our accountability obligations and is a legal requirement for any type of processing under UK data protection and privacy legislation. Failure to carry out a DPIA when required may leave the council open to enforcement action, including monetary penalties or fines.

DPIAs helps us to assess and demonstrate how we comply with all our data protection obligations. It does not have to eradicate all risks but should help to minimise and determine whether the level of risk is acceptable in the circumstances, considering the benefits of what the council wants to achieve.

The DPIA screening questions were completed for this report and as there is no personal, special categories or criminal offence data being processed for the options set out in this report, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA at this time. However, this will be reviewed where required, on the approved options from this report.

- **Communications**

This is a project that will undoubtedly provide an improved standard of supported housing. As with most development schemes, there are several minor associated risks that we will prepare for with a robust communications plan, as well as being responsive to any media enquiries.

- **Economy**

There are no economic implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Risks and Mitigations

74. Rental income generated from the development of Lowfield Plot A: Due to regulation around benefits and the definition of exempt accommodation there is a risk that as a unitary authority it may not be possible for the council to charge the slightly higher rents generally required to make supported housing schemes viable. To overcome this, extensive research has been carried out with other local authorities who develop and own their own supported accommodation along with liaison with sector leaders such as Housing LIN to understand the risk. It is perceived the risk is low however, rental income in the viability model has been stress tested extensively and when combined with the benefits to adult social care budgets the proposal is viable.
75. Rising construction costs: The cost of construction has seen significant increases in recent years and whilst the market has steadied in recent months, there is still potential for cost increases. The high-level design has been costed by an external cost consultant to provide confidence at this stage. Prior to appointing a design team, a clear brief will be written jointly between Housing Delivery and Adult Social Care to set clear expectation around cost per m2. Throughout the design process, cost estimates will be carried out at the middle and end of each RIBA stage to ensure the project remains viable. Gateway reports will be undertaken at the end of each RIBA stage prior to continuing and the contracts with the multidisciplinary team will be structured to allow termination if the project is no longer viable. This reduces the risk of abortive costs.
76. Demand for the service changes: As demonstrated within the report, there is currently a significant undersupply for this type of supported accommodation in the city. There has been analysis of the emerging cohort and this supports that this demand is likely to increase rather than reduce therefore there is minimal risk in that demand will reduce. In the unlikely event that demand for housing for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism reduces, the self-contained design of the building will provide ongoing flexibility so the homes could be used for affordable or supported housing.
77. Consultation with neighbouring community: There is a newly established community at Lowfield Green and ongoing construction work will cause some disruption to both new and existing residents of the neighbourhood and surrounding areas. Early engagement

will be needed to ensure the community feel that their views are incorporated into the design. All future development will need to reduce impacts on neighbouring residents both within the new development and in surrounding residential streets and this will be a primary consideration throughout the design and construction process.

Wards Impacted

78. All

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

Authors

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Background papers

July 2024 - Update on the Housing Delivery Programme and the Disposal of Surplus Sites' makes recommendations on the disposal of Lowfield Plot B Annexes

All annexes to the Decision Report must be listed.

- Annex A: Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Annex B: Red line boundary – Lowfield Plot A