

**Council Meeting – 18 February 2010**  
**Item 7 (i) – item referred from other committees**

CH58

**USE OF GROWTH AREA FUNDING TO SECURE AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Committee considered the report of the Housing Strategy and Planning Policy Manager. Under the terms of the planning agreement enabling Stansted Airport to develop the existing runway, a fund of £2.2 million for the provision of affordable housing had been made available through the Stansted Area Housing Partnership. The area in which this fund could be applied comprised Uttlesford and Harlow districts, and parts of Braintree and East Hertfordshire districts. The partnership had also recently received £1.4 million Growth Area funding to provide an eco exemplar affordable housing development. Uttlesford was the lead authority and had to secure the site and then draw down the funding from Harlow Renaissance. The Housing Strategy and Planning Policy Manager said unfortunately there were no schemes available within Uttlesford, and therefore the report asked Members to authorise officers to seek a valuation for sites for affordable housing in Harlow.

Members asked a number of questions. Regarding checks and guarantees in respect of recouping the cost of the land, officers said a grant agreement, which had been carefully considered by senior officers, had been entered into with Harlow Renaissance, the regeneration body for Harlow. The fund had to be used by March 2011, and a commitment to do so would be required by March this year. The identification of suitable land had been difficult as high values had been asked for land within Uttlesford, including land owned by the County Council. The money could not be used by individual parish councils, as sites had to be shared with the partners.

The sites identified were discussed. Councillor Redfern asked whether the land at Holloway Crescent could be included as a proposal for Growth Area funding. The Housing Strategy and Planning Policy Manager replied proposals had to be completed by the next day but that the site could be proposed as a possible scheme. The Task Group could then discuss the proposal at its first meeting and draw up a development brief.

**RESOLVED**

- 1 officers be authorised to obtain a valuation for the sites for affordable housing in Harlow for the Stansted Area Housing Partnership
- 2 the Committee recommend to Full Council that the sites in Harlow be purchased by this Council for the SAHP development programme for the value determined by the District Valuer, provided that the valuation is satisfactory in terms of the viability of the scheme as an affordable

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housing development, and the payment can be successfully claimed back from Harlow Renaissance, the holders of the Growth Area Funding.

- 3 The Committee recommend to Full Council the transfer of the sites to Moat Housing Group, the SAHP delivery partner for the scheme, for a nominal sum.