

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	29 September 2021
Executive Member:	Cllr Gerald Cooney – Executive Member (Housing, Planning and Employment)
Reporting Officer:	Jayne Traverse – Director of Growth Gregg Stott – Assistant Director, Investment, Development and Housing Growth
Subject:	TAMESIDE REGISTERED PROVIDER COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP
Report Summary:	The report identifies that the working relationship between the Council and Registered Providers, the latter who develop, manage and deliver housing provision and housing services in the Borough can be enhanced by re-establishing the Housing Partnership working arrangements. The proposed development of the Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership builds and expands on existing arrangements to achieve a greater quantity and quality of new accommodation and services as identified in the draft Housing Strategy 2021-26.
Recommendations:	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the development and implementation of the Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership Agreement as set out in the report and in line with the aim and objectives as set out in the draft Housing Strategy 2021-26 (ii) Approve the engagement with Registered Providers for the implementation of the Tameside Registered Providers Collaborative Partnership (iii) Subject to the approval and implementation of the Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership approve development and implementation of the Draft Terms of Reference July 2021 with the Executive Member (Housing, Planning and Employment) and the Director of Growth.
Corporate Plan:	The Council's ambitions for the Housing Strategy and associated Collaborative Partnership with Registered Providers are reflected in the Corporate Plan by aspiring to build successful lives, strong and resilient new communities and to invest in a local and vibrant economy.
Policy Implications:	The Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership supports the aims of the Council's emerging Tameside Housing Strategy 2021-26, the Greater Manchester Housing Strategy 2019-24, the emerging joint development plan 'Places for Everyone' and the Council's Unitary Development Plan.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	The report requests approval for the development and implementation of the Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership Agreement, the details of which are contained within the report. Approval of this partnership agreement will strengthen the arrangements to secure appropriate, affordable accommodation

expediently and more importantly, that meet the requirements of our most vulnerable service users across the borough.

The agreement will support the existing cross cutting savings initiative that is underway to identify and source appropriate accommodation to meet the requirements of service users within Adult Services, Children's Social Care and the Homelessness Service.

The initiative is expected to identify and realise savings by sourcing appropriate accommodation at a lower cost to existing accommodation arrangements. The initiative will also help to ensure that the Council has advance sufficiency of accommodation to meet the requirements of new additional service demand, again at a lower cost to previous sufficiency proposals. This will support the avoidance of future levels of increased expenditure that the Council will have been liable for had this initiative not been in place.

Examples of projects that have been recently delivered by this cross cutting initiative are set out in sections 6.3 to 6.5. It should be noted that the projects supporting Adult Services (sections 6.3 and 6.4 refer) have resulted in estimated savings of £0.177m and estimated cost avoidance of £1.150m per annum to date.

These are examples of the positive impact that the embryonic collaborative partnership arrangements has had on the budget position of the Council and improved outcomes for our most vulnerable service users.

Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

The project officers have identified that developing the current arrangements with Registered Providers will not only improve the delivery of services especially by providing in area accommodation for service users but also deliver savings for the Council.

Legal services will provide support finalising the collaboration agreement which it is hoped that the Registered Providers will sign up to. It is not intended that the agreement will be a legally binding document; rather it will codify the partnership working between the Council and the registered providers.

It is hoped that the further development of this partnership working will be a valuable tool for the project officers but care will still have to be taken, especially as and when the Procurement Regulations are updated to ensure that all projects are compliant.

Members may wish to have regular quarterly updates setting out the progress and outcomes of this project particularly in relation to the delivery of services and savings. This report sets out the sort of accommodation opportunities and to support this what is also required is the amount and nature of housing accommodation required so there is absolute clarity where resources are required to scale up to deliver such accommodation and the savings it will achieve as a consequence of having appropriate and vfm provision.

Risk Management:

A project of this size has a number of risks across each of its phases and life.

These initial risks include;

- Not refreshing the Registered Provider working relationship will mean the Council is unable to deliver the ambitions set

out in both the draft Tameside Housing Strategy 2021-26 and the GM Housing Strategy 2019-24

- Registered Providers unable or unwilling to enter into the Collaborative Partnership
- Housing market being depressed due to the competing economic and demand pressures including Covid and Brexit affecting delivery of programmes, capacity and resources.
- Post Grenfell Tower implications on Registered Provider business plans resulting in smaller development programmes from existing Providers, requiring a focus on delivery in Tameside by existing Providers complimented by new Provider entrants in the Tameside market.

Background Information:

Appendix 1: Developing a Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership

Appendix 2: Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership – Draft Terms of Reference July 2021

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 There are 30 Private Registered Providers who own and manage approximately 22,500 units of social housing in Tameside. Approximately 70% are owned and managed by Jigsaw Homes.
- 1.2 Whilst the Council does not own or manage housing stock it still has Strategic Housing responsibilities, including homelessness, allocation, private sector standards and enforcement. In addition the Council is required to have oversight of the local housing offer as a whole by ensuring a balanced housing market is maintained and provision is made for a range of new homes to be supplied to meet demand. This also includes appropriate affordable housing. Currently the Council is reliant on Nominations Agreements with Registered Providers to meet its duties under the Housing Act 1996 Parts VI and VII (as amended) for allocations and homelessness respectively. The Council does not have Registered Provider status to access Homes England funds for development of new Affordable Housing. While the draft Housing Strategy references investigation and exploration in to the possibility of the Council securing Registered Provider status, this will take time to undertake and there is no guarantee that the Council will want to be a provider of housing again. The Council therefore relies on the Registered Provider sector to be the main provider of now affordable homes in the borough.
- 1.3 The Council is seeking to build on existing working relationship with Registered Providers creating a revitalised collaborative partnership to achieve wider economic and social impact in the areas in which they operate and across the borough as a whole. This will support the delivery of the Tameside Council and NHS Tameside & Glossop CCG's Corporate Plan, the Inclusive Growth Strategy and the Council's emerging Housing Strategy.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

- 2.1 The Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership has been in existence for many years through the Strategic Housing Forum, which did not have any legal status but operated on a voluntary co-operative basis between participating parties. However, following the collapse of the Strategic Housing Forum in 2013 and changes in the Registered Provider operations and structures, including Riverside Housing disposal of all its stock in Tameside and New Charter merging with Adactus to form Jigsaw, working arrangements with Registered Providers have diminished and been operating on a very adhoc and informal basis.
- 2.2 Although there has been some continuity of collaborative working relating to housing management functions including allocations and nominations, this is not at a pace or level that can be achieved through a proactive and collaborative Partnership approach.
- 2.3 As noted above, the Strategic Housing Forum ceased to function, Registered Providers are not part of the Council's allocation and nomination process and interaction beyond nominations there has been limited interaction with Registered Providers. The proportion of lettings directly facilitating the Council's ability to provide accommodation through Tameside Housing Advice is seen as limited. Generally Councils would expect to achieve between 50% to 100% nominations and this is clearly an area where the Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership will have an important role to play and achieve a significant improvement. There were 1,783 social housing lettings in 2019/20 in Tameside. Of these 1,407 were general needs lets and 376 were supported housing lets mainly in sheltered housing for older people. Despite the number of lettings, only 194 households were accommodated via the Council's housing register through a nomination by a Registered Provider, representing just 11% of the total lettings.

- 2.4 In addition sites or development opportunities are treated on a case by case basis, more recently as opportunities that Registered Providers bring to the table, not a managed programme basis which set out to deliver accommodation to meet identified housing needs and requirements of the Council.
- 2.5 Apart from Homes England grant funded sites where there has been a fluctuating annual provision of affordable housing in the borough, the only other affordable provision has been through recent Planning Obligations/S.106 agreements, most of which deliver home ownership tenures.
- 2.6 There are growing acute needs for housing across Tameside demonstrated by increasing numbers of households who are Statutorily Homeless, and those who are housed in Temporary Accommodation. There is also acute unmet need relating to housing young people leaving care and Adult Social Care service users, which in some cases leads to high cost housing options/ out of borough placements. The 2020 Housing Needs Assessment demonstrates a rise in homes needed for all tenures to 788 per annum for the next ten years, 1,366 units of specialist older people's accommodation are needed in the borough by 2037 and the household projections indicate this is to rise of 8,800 by 2037 also.
- 2.7 The draft Housing Strategy sets the following priorities to help it achieve the aims of the Corporate Plan
- Priority 1- Delivering sustainable housing growth to support economic development and the increasing population
 - Priority 2 - Maximising the delivery of a wide range of affordable housing to meet the needs of all household
 - Priority 3 - Meeting the housing and related support needs of an ageing population.
 - Priority 4 - Ensuring the specialist and supported housing offer meets current and future needs
 - Priority 5 - Improving the quality standards and management of the private rented sector
 - Priority 6 - The prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping
- 2.8 In order to meet the Council's housing needs, and achieve the priorities of emerging Housing Strategy and the Corporate Plan, working in partnership is key and in particular with Registered Providers. Formalising the working arrangements through a refreshed Collaborative Partnership will be conducive to achieving the above.

3. BENEFITS TO THE COUNCIL AND PARTNERS

- 3.1 Refreshing the Partnership with Registered Providers can have immediate positive benefits for the Council. It will bring the Registered Providers together to a single and central point for housing related matters working with the Council with the intent to;
'improve the housing offer in Tameside by delivering the priorities set out in the Tameside and GM Housing Strategies, through a collaborative approach to deliver place based management of existing stock, the development of new homes to meet a diverse range of needs, investing in communities and neighbourhoods to achieve and enhanced social and economic outcomes.'
- 3.2 The Council expects a long term commitment from Partner Registered Providers to invest in housing provision and services which in turn have shown to create social, economic and environments benefits in the borough.
- 3.3 The Council hopes to accelerate the delivery of all housing, including affordable and specialist accommodation, with new mechanisms of delivery and requires partners to work collaboratively achieve this aspiration. The Tameside Registered Providers have a track record of working with the Council and across GM.

The Registered Provider sector have made commitments through the GM Housing Strategy to continue to support and investigate opportunities to deliver new housing and services which contribute to delivering additional improvements in education, training and employment initiatives, Home Improvement Agencies, and also help address long standing issues in the private rented sector including but not limited to empty property initiatives, fuel poverty and poorly managed stock.

- 3.4 While it is envisaged that the partnership will develop new innovative Affordable Home Ownership property to meet the requirements of first time buyers, and this is a major focus of Homes England funding for the next five years, the Council will be seeking through the Registered Providers programmes and individual projects homes to meet needs of the most vulnerable people in the borough, including those currently faced with homelessness, vulnerable adults and children.
- 3.5 The Council can support Registered Provider Partners in bids for Affordable Housing Programme funding and other national and sub-regional funding in a structured and on a co-ordinated basis where Registered Providers working together, bringing a greater resource and 'asset base' in the broadest sense to support the bids and bid processes. The Council may, subject to existing policies, procedures and potential new ways of working, following due process and investigation as set out in the draft Housing Strategy, contribute to and facilitate the unlocking of sites that would not otherwise be considered viable, as well as creating new sites and land packaged deals which can assist in accelerating delivery of new homes and investment in the borough. This in turn can result in the Registered Providers delivering the type, tenure and location of housing accommodation delivered and required in the borough.

4. PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The Council currently has working relationships with Registered Providers who develop, manage and deliver good housing provision and housing services for local residents. This relationship is on a piece meal basis, has many partners and its continued delivery is not effective, efficient or sustainable. The need to build and expand upon these arrangements to achieve one strategic conversation from which, as set out in the draft terms of reference, the vision and direction once agreed and signed up to as a voluntary memorandum of understanding between all parties, will support/ enhance the delivery of homes and housing services.
- 4.2 Creating a collaborative partnership with Registered Providers and the route this may take building on existing practice has been explored. The Legal team working with Growth confirm that in order to assist in the Councils requirements for new homes and housing services, in the broadest sense, the Council can develop relationships through ad-hoc alliancing and collaboration with Registered Providers. This may be undertaken in accordance with Tameside's best value obligations, which are unlikely to give rise to a procurement exercise under the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015. For example these may include arrangements where the Registered Provider builds homes for its own affordable/social rent/ homes for sale/ specialist and supported accommodation and management of physical assets (inc unadpoted public realm/open space in ownership of the Registered Provider or other end users who are not the Council) and housing management services provided as part of tenancy arrangements.
- 4.3 Benefits of the ad hoc alliancing/collaborative approach include, expediency and flexibility, building on existing relationships and access to development capacity of partners and immediate access to Homes England Funding 2021-26.
- 4.4 Where works and services fall within PCR 2015, procurement options are available to the Council to work with Registered Providers. Where works and services required procurement in line with the Council's policy and procedures/ legislative requirements, these will only be

delivered by Registered Provider partners as part of the proposed Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership after such procurement is undertaken.

- 4.5 It is proposed to invite all Registered Provider partners currently working in Tameside, in addition to those Registered Providers who have expressed an interest in partnership working to complete an expression of interest/questionnaire, 'Developing a Registered Provider Collaborative Partnership'.
- 4.6 Set out in appendix 1, Registered Providers are asked to share information about their organisation, including their interest, ability, resources and commitment to working in Tameside and with the Council. Registered Providers collectively will be asked to confirm their commitment by signing up to a Terms of Reference (ToR) document as a memorandum of understanding, a draft of which is shown in appendix 2. The parties to the ToR will work together to develop a joint working agreement for an initial 5 year term. The ToR will be subject to review alongside the timetable for review of the draft Tameside Housing Strategy.
- 4.7 In order to develop and promote an area based approach conducive to place management and utilise the specialism and the strong asset base, the Council is looking for Registered Providers to lead in areas including delivering area based regeneration, developing new housing accommodation/ services and to support the Council delivering initiative such as dealing with empty properties.
- 4.8 As in other Local Authority Partnership with Registered Providers, the lead and operational delivery/support roles can be decided through the Collaborative Partnership working arrangements. Organisations decide based on their strengths, ie asset base and where they are best placed to focus their resources, the roles they are able and committed to deliver
- 4.9 The expression of interest/questionnaire focuses on deliver against the following aims:
- (i) Creating Leaders in our Places
 - (ii) Delivering new homes
 - (iii) Delivering specialist housing
 - (iv) Creating a better quality Private Rented Sector market
 - (v) Supporting homelessness and homelessness prevention
 - (vi) Better Health creation
 - (vii) Supporting social value and a low carbon society
- The Lead Registered Providers will be the main contact with the Council, and have a role to play working closely with other Registered Providers in the operational and delivery function.

5 OPTION CONSIDERED

5.1 Option 1 – Do Minimum

The current working relationship with the Registered Provider sector is on a one to one basis, is not as efficient in terms of staff involvement and the return from the activity in terms of;

- access to housing accommodation to meet the Councils Statutory Housing Function,
- new development to meet housing needs identified through 2020 Housing Needs Assessment and Specialist housing
- the value that can be obtained through inclusive growth strategies and approach building on the strength of a collective and collaborative Registered Provider partnership.

5.2 Option 2- Proceed through Public Contract Regulations 2015

Develop a new partnership approach with the Registered Provider sector through a full procurement process in line with Public Contract Regulation 2015.

This process is required for Contracts and Services which fall within the remit of PCR 2015. In the case for the majority/ broadest sense of the delivery of housing accommodation and services for residents from our Registered Provider partners, there is no requirement to

procure their delivery through PCR 2015. Where procurement will be required, the contracts and Services will only form part of the preferred option if procured/ delivered as required within legal requirements.

The time, cost and other resource implications to set up a PRC 2015 option for both the Council and the Registered Provider Sector, when the majority of the Registered Provider work can be undertaken through a Collaboration Agreement is prohibitive.

The opportunities and availability of programmes for Registered Providers to deliver and especially in the GM area are extensive, and Registered Providers can and do choose which opportunities to pursue and sometimes opt to follow those which are easy to access and provide a good return on resources employed.

5.3 **Preferred Option 3 – Tameside Registered Provider Collaborative Agreement**

This is the preferred option as it is considered to provide for;

- business as usual, and since the changes as set out in 2.1 above, the benefits of a coordinated Registered Provider partnership have diminished and the Partnership working needs to be brought back in a structured manner
- the set up and delivery will be cheaper than option 2 and the administration compared with option 2 will be straight forward with Registered Provider having full involvement and accountability even if only reputational to the partnership
- the housing delivery and services proposed through the partnership working generally do not require procuring through PCR 2015, and if they did a separate route for that work and services will be followed.
- Registered Providers are used to working in this way and already are in Tameside (although not effectively as is possible)
- a quick route to set up and codify how Registered Providers and the Council work together
- will seek to provide better access to existing/new housing stock and enable planned development of accommodation and delivery of coordinated housing services quickly and in line with the Council's Cross Cutting Accommodation Theme as part of the corporate Cost Avoidance and Budget Saving Plan
- provision of quality sustainable accommodation meeting clients' needs and potential financial benefits can be achieved at a greater scale and in a planned way rather than adhoc and informal basis than as at present.

6 **LINKS TO SAVINGS AND COST AVOIDANCE CROSS CUTTING ACCOMMODATION**

6.1 Three projects which have been delivered over the last 2 years working within the current working arrangements with Registered Providers.

6.2 Of the projects noted below, two were secured from Registered Providers by way of opportunities, which were available and suitable with some adjustment for service users of the relevant directorate. The third scheme required extensive work on an individual basis with Registered Providers to identify and secure both existing and new developments to meet the required need. While limited success has been achieved, it is noted that the Council does not have a Homes England funded development programme, the Registered Provider development programme in Tameside is not geared to deliver the type, size and location of accommodation required and the programme is small compared with the needs identified, this route to secure accommodation is not fit for purpose to deliver for the identified need.

6.3 Mount Street, Hyde – 24 new Registered Provider apartments developed and funded by a Registered Provider for affordable rent accommodation. The project nearing completion was switched to a supported housing project, secured through a management agreement for Adult Services. The apartments provide service users, with the right type and sized accommodation for existing clients. The accommodation rent levels are supported by

Housing Benefit. It is estimated that direct savings of £0.177m will be realised in 2021/22. The accommodation creates capacity for new placements to be made in-house, rather than via more expensive contracted provision. It is estimated that the project has also avoided expenditure of £0.900m per annum when compared to the estimated costs of related external placements.

6.4 Dean Street, Mossley – 1 bungalow developed and funded by a Registered Provider, for sale through shared ownership. The project nearing completion was switched to a supported housing project, secured through a management agreement for Adult Services. The bungalow provides the right type and sized accommodation for a particular client and is flexible to accommodate changing needs. Access to this bungalow has enabled the Directorate to avoid estimated expenditure of £0.250m per annum.

6.5 10 Individual properties across the borough for young adults transitioning to independence. Over a 2 year period, the Council working with different Registered Providers has secured one and two bed homes for Children's Services and their service users. Each property is subject to an individual management agreement/ lease with a Registered Provider.

6.6 Accommodation demand across Adult, Children's and Homelessness Service areas

Extensive work has been undertaken by all directorates to identify housing accommodation needs and demand over the short, medium and long term. This work continues to be developed including identification of the potential for cost avoidance and cost saving which can be secured from new provision and relet / recycling of existing housing accommodation in the ownership of Registered Providers to meet needs/demand. Each directorate will identify the cost avoidance and saving from accommodation types and provision as part of their plans.

6.7 A summary of the types of accommodation by directorates identified to date:

Adult Services – accommodation types reported to SCB/ Cabinet including, older persons extra care, older persons bungalows and self-contained homes, shared and self-contained houses and apartments for service users with complex needs and disabilities. The accommodation count in terms of units to be delivered over the next 5 years is 392 units excluding pipeline schemes.

6.8 Operations and Neighbourhoods - Homelessness and General Let accommodation for waiting list applicants. The accommodation types range from one bed apartments to large family houses and specialist accommodation for homelessness. The current annual ask is 130 units per annum for the next five years.

6.9 Children's Service – a range of accommodation types to meet service users' needs from those ready for independent living to more supported accommodation based on person centred needs. Initially for financial year 2021/22 up to 48, one and two bed properties for young adults aged 18+

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The establishment of the Registered Provider Partnership will allow a robust and holistic approach to tackling housing and related issues on a neighbourhood level, as well as meeting the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan, the emerging Tameside Housing Strategy and the GM Housing Strategy.

7.2 The success of the partnership will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis with a view to extending the arrangement beyond the initial 5 years.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 As set out at the front of the report.