



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 2.2

Affordable Housing Programme Loans Update

To:	Housing and Communities Committee
Meeting Date:	9 March 2022
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Councillor Lewis Herbert, Lead Member for Housing and Communities
From:	Roger Thompson, Director of Housing and Development
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Recommendations:	The Housing and Communities Committee is recommended to: Note the current position in respect of outstanding loan repayments required to fund the 2021-2022 Affordable Housing Programme.
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members present and voting

1. Purpose

1.1 This report seeks to inform the Housing and Communities Committee of the current position concerning receipt of loan repayments that are required to fund the 2021-2022 Affordable Housing Programme.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Devolution Deal, the Combined Authority secured funding from Government to deliver an affordable housing programme that ended in March 2021.
- 2.2 The Combined Authority's Housing Strategy approved by Board in September 2018 divided the funding into two parts. £60M was allocated for traditional grant funding and £40M was to be used for the former Mayor's plan for a revolving fund to support the delivery of additional affordable housing.
- 2.3 The revolving fund initiative committed a total of £51.167M through five loans to development companies to fund delivery of 53 affordable units. In August 2020, the Combined Authority's Board approved loan extensions and interest free periods to reflect the detrimental impact upon delivery of projects caused by the Covid pandemic.
- 2.4 In March 2021, Government conditionally agreed to a new affordable housing programme for 2021-2022 on the basis that all loan repayments were allocated to support the delivery of additional affordable housing through grant funding.
- 2.5 In January 2022, the Combined Authority's Board agreed to a further three-month extension of one loan at the default interest rate of 6% above base rate to reflect a further detrimental impact on project delivery resulting from the Covid pandemic.
- 2.6 The table below shows the headline detail of each loan:

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Borrower</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Affordable Units</u>	<u>Loan Amount</u>	<u>Redemption Date</u>
Former MoD site, Ely	ECTC	92	15	£24.4M	31 Mar 2023
West End Gardens, Haddenham	ECTC	54	19	£6.5M	31 Mar 2023
Alexander House, Forehill, Ely	Laragh Developments	25	4	£4.84M	7 May 2022
Linton Rd, Gt. Abington	Laragh Developments	15	5	£5.78M	24 May 2022
Histon Rd, Cambridge	Laragh Developments	27	10	£9.647M	7 May 2023

2.7 The financial balance sheet showing an outstanding balance of the loans can be found at Appendix 1.

2.8 The status of the former MoD site project at Ely is reported at Section 3 below.

- 2.9 The project monitoring report for West End Gardens, Haddenham forecasts repayment of the loan by March 2023, and that some plots have been reserved at prices above anticipated appraisal values.
- 2.10 In January 2022, the Combined Authority's Board agreed a further 3-month extension for the loan made in connection with the project at Alexander House, Forehill, Ely due to the further impact of the Covid pandemic on progress. The scheme consists of 21 market units and at 28th February 2022 13 units were exchanged, 7 were reserved, and one agreed sale had fallen through, so the loan is expected to be repaid on time.
- 2.11 The loan for the project at Linton Rd, Great Abington was repaid in January 2022. This was earlier than the redemption date of May 2022.
- 2.12 The project at Histon Mews, Cambridge is progressing. The independent monitor suggests the project should be complete by March 23 and the agreed redemption date of the loan facility is 7 May 2023.

Significant Implications

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Loans are repaid as a proportion of sale proceeds from each housing unit on completion of sale. The Combined Authority retains an element of control through its requirement to approve each sale prior to completion, and each development is monitored by officers. The financial balance sheet showed an outstanding balance of £35,527,594 on 28th February 2022 and this can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The largest loan of £24.4M was made to East Cambs Trading Company Ltd (ECTC) to refurbish 92 former MOD homes in Ely for use as private homes and this initiative funded delivery of 15 affordable units. As can be seen from Appendix 1 the balance of this loan on 28th February was £21,522,510.
- 3.3 In August 2020 the Combined Authority's Board authorised an extension to this loan and at that time the forecast balance for February 2022 was £12,141,813. It should be noted that approximately £5.78M is due from units that are under offer, and £2.5M is expected in May 2022 from the transfer of 15 affordable units to a Community Land Trust.
- 3.4 The most recent monitoring report advises that the cash flow is £2M behind forecast, there is a high probability that the cash flow will not be achieved, and that the loan repayment by March 2023 is at risk.
- 3.5 Officers were informed that £410K has been removed from the construction project to reflect properties that are now to be "sold as seen" to accelerate cashflow. Additional options available to ECTC to avoid default include re-financing, portfolio transfer, accelerating the volume of sale with a block investment sale or utilising company reserves to clear the balance of the loan when it determines. ECTC have been asked to confirm they are considering further contingency measures and what they might be. Officers shall continue to monitor the situation and provide update reports to Housing Committee.

3.6 Members are advised that the borrower has until 31 March 2023 to repay the loan and no direct intervention can be taken by the Combined Authority unless default occurs on 31 March 2023.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The recommendations accord with CPCA's powers under Part 4 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017 (SI 2017/251) and with the Committee's Terms of Reference as set out in CPCA's Constitution Chapter 10 para.3.2.9(b).

5. Public Health implications

5.1 The report recommendations have neutral implications for public health.

6. Environmental and Climate Change Implications

6.1 The report recommendations have neutral implications for the environment and climate change.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Housing Loans Activity Schedule

8. Background Papers

[Combined Authority Board Report 5 August 2020](#)

[Combined Authority Board Report 26 January 2022](#)