



**Cabinet**  
22 May 2017

**Report from the Strategic Director  
of Resources**

Wards affected: Northwick Park

**Northwick Park – Memorandum of Understanding**

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This paper requests cabinet approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Partners of the Northwick Park One Public Estate Project.

1.2 Related cabinet approvals

January 2017 **One Public Estate Programme in Brent**, sets out details of Brent's One Public Estate Programme in Brent, which includes Northwick Park.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Cabinet to note the contents, intentions and obligations of the Memorandum of Understanding and agree authority to execute.

**3.0 Detail**

3.1 One Public Estate (OPE), is an initiative delivered in Partnership by the Cabinet Office Government Property Unit (GPU) and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. It supports Local Authorities to work in partnership with other public sector landowning organisations to transform their estates.

3.2 Brent Council were successful in a bid for funding under the OPE initiative for a number of projects in the borough. Northwick Park received the largest allocation of £270,500 for the first two years. £132,500 is the year one allocation and £138,000 is the year two allocation. The bid was for a five year programme and total allocation of £500,000.

3.3 The Northwick Park Project involves collaborative working of four adjacent landowning partners;

- London Borough of Brent
- London Northwest Healthcare NHS Trust
- University of Westminster
- Network Homes Ltd.

The project involves a number of other partners, such as Transport for London, GLA, Network Rail, and London Borough of Harrow. These have associate partner status and are not party to the memorandum of understanding

**3.4** The funding is to procure professional consultancy services, (Project Management, Architects, Highway/transport engineers, Cost consultancy/Legal etc.), to progress the intentions outlined in Brent's bid.

**3.5** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required to set out;

- Key objectives of the project
- The principles of collaboration
- The governance structures the partners will put in place.
- The respective roles and responsibilities the partners will have during the project

The four landowning partners named in 3.3 will be parties to the agreement. The memorandum of understanding is attached as appendix A

**3.6** The London Borough of Brent is the lead Partner. The funding has been allocated to Brent, to appoint consultants on behalf of the partnership.

**3.7** It is the intention that a collaboration agreement between the four partners will be entered into at a future date, once initial studies have been completed.

## **4.0 Objectives**

**4.1** The Northwick Park project aligns with the strategic objectives of;

- The Strategic Property Plan 2015-2018
- Brent's Corporate plan 2015/16

**4.2** Specific aims of the project for the four partners are;

- Generation of capital receipts
- Reduction of running costs
- Creation of jobs
- Creation of homes
- Integration of services.

## **5.0 Financial implications**

It is envisaged the £500,000 OPE grant will cover all cost associated with initial phases of the project. As proposals become more developed it is envisaged a collaboration agreement will be entered into to progress the proposals. A further cabinet paper will be written to update members.

## **6.0 Legal Implications**

Funding is provided under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Memorandum of understanding is not legally binding, but establishes how parties will work together. The Council will need to satisfy itself that it will be able to meet the operational requirements of the MOU.

However, the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with general powers of competency, which means it can do anything that an individual can do in the United Kingdom for a commercial purpose for the benefit of the Council, its area or persons resident in its area. In addition section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides for a local authority to do "anything" which is "calculated to facilitate,

or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions". Accordingly, the Council has wide powers established by statute to undertake the commercial activities highlighted in the MOU.

## **7.0 Diversity Implications**

Officers have carried out an equality analysis (EA) screening (the form is attached at Appendix B) and concluded that a full EA will be required. It is difficult at this stage, however, to assess the potential/likely diversity implications and opportunities arising from the implementation of the OPE as the viability options have not been identified and agreed yet.

When considering the viability options officers will conduct a thorough consultation with key stakeholders and a full EA on the impact on affected service users, tenants and community groups with protected characteristics to inform the final proposals put forward for approval.

## **8.0 Consultation**

Officers have consulted with ward councillors (11 Jan 2017, 3 April 2017, 7 April 2017). At Councillors request, Officers will be attending the Sudbury Court Residents association AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> April, to discuss the Northwick Park OPE initiative.

Notes have been taken of these meetings and issues raised by Councillors will become part of a list of issues and risks to consider as the project proceeds. Key issues include;

- Transport is a significant concern, and the effect of any development on existing infrastructure.
- Harrow Councillors to be involved in proposals
- A thorough assessment of Flooding and drainage is required
- Local schools should be consulted with.

A communication strategy is being drawn up between the partners to establish an effective means of communicating with all stakeholders.

## **9.0 Staffing**

OPE to date in Brent has largely been led by officers from Property Services. Whilst money will be used flexibly to suit the various needs of the programme, it is likely that it will be dedicated to paying for the time of the property team, whilst the existing workload of these officers will be back filled.

### **Attachments**

Appendix A Memorandum of Understanding  
Appendix B Equality analysis screening

### **Contact officers**

Gordon Cooper  
Project Manager  
Resources  
020 8937 1739  
[Gordon.cooper@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Gordon.cooper@brent.gov.uk)

Sarah Chaudhry  
Head of property  
Resources  
020 8937 1705  
[Sarah.chaudhry@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.chaudhry@brent.gov.uk)

Althea Loderick  
Strategic Director of Resources  
020 8937  
[Althea.loderick@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Althea.loderick@brent.gov.uk)

ALTHEA LODERICK  
Strategic Director of Resources