

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 16 October 2023

**Subject:** Victoria North – Strategic Business Plan Refresh

**Report of:** Strategic Director (Growth and Development)

---

**Summary**

The report provides a high level summary of the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan. The report includes updates on progress made since the Strategic Business Plan was approved by Executive, and scrutinised by this Committee, in February 2020. This includes an update on progress made in delivering the 988 homes covered by the Initial Development Area Business Plan, in addition to a look ahead to the next Development Area Business Plan, together with a summary of the high level opportunities, challenges and risks associated with the overall programme.

Appendix 1 provides a general overview of the Victoria North programme. This will be shared with North Manchester Ward Councillors.

**Recommendations**

Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee members are requested to:

1. Note the summarised content of the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.
  2. Endorse the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.
  3. Note the general programme update as reflected in Appendix 1.
- 

**Wards Affected:**

Piccadilly; Cheetham; Harpurhey; Miles Platting and Newton Heath

**Environmental Impact Assessment** - the impact of the decisions proposed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The Northern Gateway (now Victoria North) Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) established clear low-carbon principles in recognition that future development within the area will need to respond to the City Council's zero-carbon target and will be expected to move towards this aspiration through the active utilisation and deployment of leading building technologies.

The planning of Victoria North has been actively developed to facilitate the radical change in the current patterns of energy generation, distribution and use. New developments will incorporate a range of sustainability measures including SuDS, biodiversity net gain, reuse of brownfield land, improvements to green and blue infrastructure, and active travel.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

An inclusive, accessible, and diverse engagement process has been developed to inform the Master Planning process for future development.

The future development of the Victoria North neighbourhoods is capable of providing significant new residential space and associated commercial space and community infrastructure, creating jobs and opportunities open for all residents. As set out in the SRF, the site would be made highly permeable, connecting neighbouring streets and communities with high quality and fully accessible open spaces and public realm. Any future phases of development proposals would be considered through future planning applications with full public consultations. It is considered at this stage that the proposals do not impact any protected or disadvantaged groups.

<b>Our Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Contribution to the strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Victoria North initiative will expand the City Centre in a northern direction establishing sustainable mixed-use neighbourhoods including new jobs and employment opportunities.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The Victoria North initiative will provide direct employment opportunities and also meet the demand for housing from residents who wish to live close to the skilled employment opportunities located in and around the Regional Centre.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Development of the Victoria North area offers the potential to deliver on the objectives of the Manchester Housing Strategy and meet the growing demand for high quality new housing in the city.

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Victoria North development opportunities will support the delivery of new residential developments in a sustainable location, using low carbon principles and a destination of choice through the promotion and integration of a new 40 hectare City River Park.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The master-planning of new neighbourhoods within Victoria North will include traffic and transport planning, ensuring that various modes of transport (car, bus, rail, Metrolink, cycling, and walking) are provided for. Active travel and public transport routes will be prioritised as the dominant means for residents to travel to the City Centre and connect to adjacent neighbourhoods and the wider conurbation.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

#### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

None

#### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

None

#### **Contact Officers:**

Name: Rebecca Heron  
Position: Strategic Director (Growth and Development)  
Telephone: 0161 234 5515  
E-mail: Rebecca.heron@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Ian Slater  
Position: Assistant Director, Major Regeneration  
Telephone: 0161 234 4582  
E-mail: ian.slater@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Matt Doran  
Position: Victoria North Strategy and Coordination Lead  
Telephone: 0161 234 4263  
E-mail: matthew.doran@manchester.gov.uk

**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- The Regeneration of Collyhurst – Update, Executive, 26 July 2023
- The Regeneration of Collyhurst – Update, Executive, 22 March 2023
- Victoria North – The Proposed City of Manchester (Thornton Street North Collyhurst Village Compulsory Purchase Order, Executive. 16 March 2022
- Northern Gateway Progress Update Report, Economy Scrutiny Committee, 22 July 2021
- Northern Gateway: Progress Update & Delivery Arrangements for Collyhurst Phase 1, Executive 17 February 2021
- Northern Gateway: Progress Update and Housing Infrastructure Fund, Executive, 29 July 2020
- Northern Gateway Strategic Business Plan and First Phase Development Area, Economy Scrutiny Committee 6 February 2020, Executive 12 February 2020
- Strategic Acquisitions in the Northern Gateway: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee 18 June 2019, Executive 26 June 2019
- Northern Gateway: Implementation and Delivery, Executive, 13 February 2019
- Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework, Executive, 13 February 2019

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Victoria North area (formerly known as Northern Gateway) comprises approximately 155 hectares of brownfield and under-utilised land extending in a north-eastern arc from Victoria Station on the northern edge of the city centre and takes in the areas of New Cross, the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst up to Queen's Road. The area provides the opportunity to deliver residential-led regeneration at scale, with ambitions for 15,000 new homes providing the single greatest contribution to Greater Manchester's housing targets and those of the City's Housing Strategy, over the next 15 – 20 years.
- 1.2 The initiative is being delivered via a 50/50 Joint Venture (JV) partnership between the City Council and Far East Consortium (FEC). As set out in the JV legal agreements, it is a requirement of the Development Manager (FEC) to produce a Strategic Business Plan. The purpose of the Strategic Business Plan is to set the strategic context for the operation of the initiative, based upon an overarching Financial Model and to set the parameters for the subsequent Development Area Business Plans, which will be brought forward, setting out delivery proposals for each phase of development on the expectation that each development phase will comprise at least c1,000 homes.
- 1.3 The February 2020 meeting of the Executive approved the JV's Strategic Business Plan, together with an Initial Development Area Business Plan based upon the provision of 988 new homes within the neighbourhoods of Collyhurst, New Cross and New Town. The Strategic Business Plan is intended to be updated annually to ensure that it takes account of any changes in national and local policy, market sentiment or wider economic implications and is to be used as a mechanism to monitor the progress of delivery. Due to the impacts of Covid, however, together with a focus on delivery of the initial phases of development, the Strategic Business Plan is now being refreshed for the first time.

## **2.0 Governance, Decision-making and Scrutiny**

- 2.1 The Joint Venture vehicle is owned equally by FEC Northern Gateway Development Limited and Manchester City Council. The operation is governed by: (i) a Shareholders Agreement, (ii) an Operational Agreement, and (iii) the Articles of Association, all of which were entered into or adopted on 26 April 2017.
- 2.2 The day to day management of the JV is vested in its Board of Directors. The Board, which functions in accordance with the Board Terms of Reference, consists of three Directors from the Council and three Directors from FEC. The Council's Directors are: Councillor Gavin White, Executive Member for Housing and Development; Carol Culley, Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer; and Rebecca Heron, Strategic Director (Growth and Development). Officers from both the Council and FEC attend Board meetings to provide support.

- 2.3 Day to day internal staffing resources to the programme are provided via the Major Regeneration service, part of the Growth and Development directorate. Since the inception of the JV, FEC have invested significantly in staff resources with the team in Manchester growing from one individual in 2017 to thirty eight members of staff today across a range of skill sets which include surveyors, planners, accountants, project managers, commercial managers, human resources, social value, sales and marketing.
- 2.4 The primary purpose of the JV vehicle is to secure the redevelopment of the whole of the Victoria North area for high quality housing and ancillary development and in order to achieve this, the following strategic documents have been produced:
- A Masterplan (Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF)).
  - A Strategic Business Plan.
  - Development Area Business Plans (informed by the Masterplan).
- 2.5 The SRF was approved by Executive in February 2019, following an extensive public consultation exercise carried out throughout 2018. The SRF provides a vision, together with an illustrative spatial masterplan, alongside a clear set of objectives and design and development principles with the aim of delivering a series of seven vibrant, sustainable and integrated residential neighbourhoods to the north of Manchester City Centre.
- 2.6 The Strategic Business Plan was presented to the Economy Scrutiny Committee as a Part B item a year later in February 2020. At the meeting of 12 February 2020, the Executive approved the Strategic Business Plan and delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Member to approve the full Initial Development Area Business Plan, comprising the first 988 homes to be delivered.
- 2.7 A further update was brought to the November 2021 meeting of the Economy Scrutiny Committee. The report and presentation provided members of the Committee with an update on progress against the Initial Development Area Business Plan objectives, including the first phase of new homes in Collyhurst, New Cross and New Town, as well as a summary of the progress to date in utilising the £51.6m of grant funding secured through Homes England's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF).
- 2.8 The HIF grant was secured to support with the delivery of a broad package of infrastructure works designed to create a development platform capable of delivering circa 5,500 new homes across the neighbourhood to be known as Red Bank. The core package of infrastructure works proposed includes bulk earthworks and remediation required to: repurpose the former Red Bank carriage sidings site – a 25-acre brownfield site; the acquisition and demolition of the former Creamline Dairies site; new and reinforced utility networks for electricity; and improvements to St Catherine's Wood and the banks of the River Irk, which will form the first phase of the City River Park. This was the subject of a report to Executive in July 2020.

### **3.0 Strategic Business Plan – JV Progress to Date**

3.1 A huge amount of progress has taken place since the formation of the Joint Venture in April 2017, and the approval of the first Strategic Business Plan. A summary of the key achievements are listed below:

- Approval by Executive in February 2019 of the SRF, which is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- Approval by Executive in June 2019 of an £11million loan facility to FEC to support strategic land acquisition.
- Approval by Executive in February 2020 of a Strategic Business Plan for the Victoria North JV, including Financial Model.
- Approval under delegated authority in February 2020 of an Initial Development Area Business Plan for 988 low carbon homes, which incorporates 26% on-site affordable housing provision and significant investment in new public realm, retail and commercial space.
- The acquisition by FEC of over 30 acres of key strategic land holdings within Victoria North at a cost of over £30 million.
- Approval by Homes England of £51.6 million in Housing Infrastructure Fund grant for strategic infrastructure to activate development at Red Bank, and subsequent approval by Executive in July 2020 to enter into a Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England.
- Approval by GMCA of £2.085 million of Brownfield Land funding to FEC to support new homes for sale in Collyhurst.
- The identification of three Registered Providers (RPs) - Guinness, Trafford Housing Trust and Great Places - to support the delivery of affordable housing at Red Bank.
- Contractual arrangements between the Council and FEC agreed for the joint delivery of Collyhurst Phase 1 (including MCC investment of £35.475m for 130 social rented homes, demolition works and shared infrastructure costs including the first phase of a new park).
- Collyhurst Village Compulsory Purchase Order authorised by Executive in March 2022.
- Progression of strategic transport projects including the promotion of a new Metrolink stop at Sandhills.
- Tangible social value interventions and outcomes which are supporting some of Manchester's most deprived communities.
- Completion in spring 2023 of the first 80 homes for sale in the New Cross neighbourhood.
- Delegated authority granted by Executive in July 2023 for the undertaking and finalisation of a formal, competitive procurement process to identify an Affordable Housing Delivery Partner to support the regeneration of Collyhurst.
- Planning Consent in August 2023 for 1,551 new homes in detail and 3,250 homes in outline in the Red Bank neighbourhood, including new primary school, health centre and public realm, retail and commercial spaces.

## **4.0 Refreshed Strategic Business Plan – Key Themes**

### **Neighbourhood-led Regeneration / Planning Strategy**

- 4.1 The area covered by the Victoria North programme is home to a number of existing communities and characterful neighbourhoods that reflect the area's rich industrial heritage and unique natural assets. New development will re-enforce existing communities and establish a series of dynamic, sustainable and integrated neighbourhoods in North Manchester. The SRF describes seven interconnected neighbourhoods, each with their own individual character.
- 4.2 This is likely to be a 15-year programme, and over the next decade the Council and FEC will focus much of their attention on the three neighbourhoods of Red Bank, Collyhurst and Sandhills/Vauxhall Gardens. The refreshed Strategic Business Plan provides sharper focus on the promotion of development in three core areas of neighbourhood-led regeneration as follows:

#### **Red Bank**

- 4.3 Underpinned by the £51.6 million of HIF investment secured by the Council, FEC have now received planning for consent for a total of 5,435 new homes across the Red Bank neighbourhood. This includes 634 homes currently under construction as part of the Victoria Riverside scheme, in addition to detailed consent for 1,551 homes and outline consent for a further 3,250 homes, including a primary school and space for a health centre, community and commercial uses, and public spaces.
- 4.4 The key benefits of this hybrid approach to planning are that it ensures a holistic approach to various strategic matters, such as net zero carbon, sustainability, affordable housing, place making, public open space, estate management, flood risk, climate change and sustainable movement, to be developed on a neighbourhood basis, rather than on a piecemeal site by site basis.
- 4.5 In addition, it also allows greater coordination and integration with the HIF infrastructure investment programme. Capturing all the land controlled by the JV within the outline element of the planning application will enable the proposed HIF infrastructure works to respond to tangible housing development proposals which will optimise the benefit of the Government investment. This, in turn, will de-risk the site from a planning perspective and will create an investible proposition for future grant funding opportunities, as well as allow for clear phasing of development delivery for FEC, whilst driving time efficiencies and reducing costs.
- 4.6 Looking at the neighbourhood holistically with a clearer understanding of phasing will allow the JV to plan appropriately for the social infrastructure needs of the area i.e. open space, health and education provision, and engage

with relevant stakeholders and Government agencies from an early stage to explore opportunities for additional grant support to deliver these key pieces of infrastructure.

- 4.7 The 1,551 homes for which detailed planning consent was secured in August will form the basis of the next Development Area Business Plan. The development, within the Cheetham ward, comprises a series of residential buildings to be built between Dantzic Street and the railway line, extending from the under construction Victoria Riverside scheme up to Dalton Street. A further detailed report will be presented to a future meeting of Executive including recommendations relating to any Council decisions required to facilitate implementation of this Development Area Business Plan.

### **Collyhurst**

- 4.8 Running concurrent to the delivery of the 274 new homes as part of Phase 1, which has now commenced on site, and includes 130 new homes for social rent, FEC will progress with plans to masterplan future phases of Collyhurst for up to 3,000 new homes. A report to the March 2023 Executive advised that a masterplan team had been selected to prepare a detailed masterplan for the Collyhurst Village and South Collyhurst neighbourhoods. As part of the masterplan development, a phasing strategy will be developed to inform and enable more detailed engagement with residents around implementation and the changes to their neighbourhood. The masterplan exercise will be supported by a planning strategy where the intention is to follow similar principles to that established in Red Bank i.e. submission of a detailed planning application and a wider outline planning application.
- 4.9 A further report to the July 2023 Executive set out how these detailed proposals will be informed by strong community engagement and consultation with elected members. It should be noted, has been made clear from the outset of the programme, that this will inevitably include proposals for demolition and replacement, where required, of existing Council tenanted homes and properties acquired through Right to Buy.
- 4.10 The Phasing will reinforce the principle of a Single Move Strategy to provide clarity on when development will take place and wherever possible, if existing residents do need to move home to facilitate development, that this is done through a single move to a suitable home within Collyhurst.
- 4.11 The development programme will provide the means for a significant increase in the overall number of homes within the Collyhurst masterplan area. The intention is that new affordable homes, above and beyond the levels of any replacement of existing council homes, will be delivered subject to viability, leading to a net increase in the amount of affordable housing in the area.
- 4.12 The delivery of affordable housing in an appropriate mix of tenures at the scale envisaged will require involvement of an Affordable Housing Delivery Partner which could come in the form of a Registered Provider, an Investment Partner, or a combination of the two. Council officers are working with their counterparts

in FEC to consider the options and potential process to identify, evaluate and select a suitable partner alongside the respective roles and responsibilities of MCC and FEC in the process.

## **Sandhills**

- 4.13 The SRF identifies the potential for an integrated transport hub at Sandhills with direct connectivity to Metrolink via a new stop, and wider connectivity to public transport services within the area. A centrally located integrated hub will ensure that nearby existing and future homes are provided with enhanced accessibility to sustainable modes of travel. The potential for an integrated transport hub, including Metrolink, presents an opportunity to facilitate the delivery of high-density housing in highly sustainable location only one stop from Victoria, improving fast and reliable connections to employment and leisure opportunities across the entire TfGM public transport network.
- 4.14 The Council and FEC are continuing to work with Homes England and TfGM to promote a new Metrolink stop in the Sandhills area, which would facilitate the creation of a new local centre including community uses and the potential for a further 2,500 homes built to a medium-high density. This figure is purely indicative at this stage, and local residents and Members will be fully engaged as part of any future masterplanning process at the appropriate time.
- 4.15 In total the JV can deliver 10,000 new homes across these three neighbourhoods over the next ten to fifteen years. Proposals for the three neighbourhoods are at varying levels of maturity, however it is envisaged that by the beginning of 2025, the majority of the projected housing outputs could be planning secure, with the next phases of delivery in Red Bank well underway.

## **5.0 Affordable Housing**

- 5.1 Subject to viability, the aspiration is for the Victoria North programme to deliver 20% affordable housing across all neighbourhoods and across a range of tenures. The Strategic Business Plan has been updated to reflect the progress made as part of the first phase of new housing delivery and also the strengthened arrangements intended to deliver affordable housing above and beyond that which is delivered through the formal Planning system.
- 5.2 The Initial Development Area Business Plan includes a total of 988 homes of which 26% meet the definition of affordable housing. This includes 130 homes for social rent in Collyhurst and 128 homes for Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy as part of the Victoria Riverside scheme.
- 5.3 Across the wider Red Bank neighbourhood, FEC will seek to utilise the existing Registered Provider (RP) panel of Great Places, Trafford Housing Trust, and Guinness Trust, which it previously procured for Victoria Riverside. As with Victoria Riverside where FEC are delivering 20% affordable housing provision, FEC will work with their appointed panel of RP's to increase affordable housing delivery in excess of the 5% secured at planning. The

ambition is to deliver a 20% provision outside of the confines of the s106 which will allow access to grant funding.

## **6.0 Strategic Investment Plan**

- 6.1 The Strategic Business Plan, as approved in early 2020, was clear about the significant constraints, linked to the legacy of former industrial uses and lack of core infrastructure, that presented a challenge to the financial viability of the overall Victoria North development proposition.
- 6.2 Since this time, the JV partners have endured a series of economic shocks such as the impacts of Brexit and COVID19. The current economic outlook is challenging with a cost of living crisis resulting from increased energy prices, higher interest rates affecting mortgages, and the war in Ukraine affecting inflation and day to day living costs. Added inflationary pressures in the construction market coupled with skilled labour shortages are making project viability even more challenging.
- 6.3 In addition, the cost of reprovision of existing Council housing stock in Collyhurst did not form part of the original viability proposals or financial modelling, nor were the routes to its funding and any implications around stock transfers or Registered Provider involvement, all of which now need to be addressed (as detailed in reports to the Executive earlier this year).
- 6.4 The Joint Venture partners have already secured over £53 million of Government investment to date through HIF and Brownfield Land funding, however significantly more will be required to deal with the abnormal costs identified in the future work programme.
- 6.5 Additional revenue support of £250,000 has been secured from Homes England for the next financial year to support: further work on business case development for the Sandhills Metrolink stop (£100,000); Collyhurst future phases work (£50,000); and a Strategic Economic Case (£50,000) which can help articulate the future pipeline of development activity, articulate the viability challenges and highlight the key investible propositions. By being able to articulate the neighbourhood-led regeneration strategy in the refreshed Strategic Business Plan, the JV hopes to develop these investible propositions in order to lobby Government for additional grants to address some of the identified challenges that will lead to a series of tangible outputs.
- 6.6 Consolidation of the relationship with Homes England and a closer working relationship with GMCA to better understand the potential benefits of existing and future devolution deals are key actions reflected in the refreshed Strategic Business Plan. This will be important along with continuing engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the departments for Education, Health and Transport.

## **7.0 Infrastructure Interventions and Delivery Strategy**

- 7.1 The HIF investment was secured to deliver the required enabling works and infrastructure interventions to facilitate residential development in the Red Bank neighbourhood. Like many construction projects, the programme has experienced a number of delays and impacts from the pandemic, cost inflation and labour and supply chain instability as well as previously unidentified contamination being found onsite. In addition, the Council and our contractors will be unable to prosecute in channel flood resilience measures as originally envisaged within the project programme, which will result in on plot solutions being required that will materially increase project delivery costs for residential development schemes as they come forward in the future.
- 7.2 This has led to a re-programming of works to be undertaken within the HIF funding envelope. Deliverable elements of the HIF planning application have been identified and prioritised, to ensure that the objective of facilitating and achieving tangible housing outputs are prioritised with the remaining funding.
- 7.3 Since the commencement of the HIF programme the following works have been completed:
- Enabling works planning application approved in December 2021.
  - Main works planning application approved in July 2022.
  - Completion of ground investigations, including the River Irk ground investigations.
  - Completion of the enabling works including tree and vegetation clearance.
  - Acquisition and demolition of Creamline Dairies to create a new access point onto the Red Bank Plateau, and the creation of a temporary haul road.
  - Clearance of the former Gypsy and Traveller site within the HIF red line boundary, and contiguous to the HIF infrastructure works planning boundary.
  - Progress against the discharge of pre-commencement conditions related to both planning applications.
- 7.4 However, as a result of working at a greater level of detail within the Red Bank neighbourhood to support the HIF works, the masterplan and future planning applications, FEC have identified significant additional abnormal costs. These additional abnormal costs sit across a range of facets including land remediation, open space costs, new health and education facilities, on-plot flood mitigation etc. Potential means to address some of these costs are being assessed, however this will place additional viability pressures on the overall development.

## **8.0 Delivering Social Value**

- 8.1 At the time when the Strategic Business Plan was approved, the approach to securing social value was still a work in progress. The social value strategy section of the refreshed Strategic Business Plan has been updated to reflect the strengthened collaborative arrangements that have been put in place since then.

- 8.2 Since the Strategic Business Plan was approved, FEC have appointed a dedicated in-house Community Liaison Manager to establish social value commitments in line with not only FEC's business priorities, but the local priorities for North Manchester. FEC have worked in collaboration with officers from the Major Regeneration and Work and Skills teams, together with the NHS partners leading on the North Manchester General Hospital programme, to co-produce the North Manchester Social Benefits Framework.
- 8.3 Launched in 2021, the North Manchester Social Benefits Framework articulates the key priorities, opportunities, and the outcomes to which activities related to the major North Manchester regeneration programmes could contribute towards. The Framework covers five key themes:
- Education, employment and skills
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Community resilience
  - Digital
  - Zero Carbon
- 8.4 The Framework provides the high-level context against which more detailed social value action plans, aligned to key themes, can be produced (such as through procurement exercises). Progress reports, collated on a quarterly basis, pull together all of the social value activities and outputs being delivered across the major North Manchester regeneration programmes. The latest report contains the following highlights for Victoria North:
- 1,029 jobs have been reported across the Victoria North developments in total since 2021, these include newly created and retained roles.
  - 17% of all jobs have been taken by North Manchester residents.
  - 58% of all jobs have been taken by residents of North Manchester wards, All Manchester, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Salford.
  - 29 Apprentices have been employed to date.
  - 100% of employees across all projects are paid the Real Living Wage.
  - 649 hours volunteering time provided to support local community projects.
  - 210 hours spent on local school and college visits supporting pupils including delivering career support, literacy support and safety talks.
  - 155 hours of support to unemployed people through career advice and mentoring, mock interviews, CV advice.
  - £9k of devices and connectivity provided to North Manchester residents to increase digital inclusion.
- 8.5 FEC also produce a quarterly and annual infographic report highlighting their social value achievements.

## **9.0 Social and Community Infrastructure Strategy**

- 9.1 One of the key principles set out within the SRF for Victoria North is the delivery of social and community infrastructure. High quality social

infrastructure is important in the successful establishment and longevity of the neighbourhoods; contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of residents. The inclusion of education, healthcare and community facilities has therefore been considered within each of the development proposals to date. The Red Bank outline planning application identifies a location for a new primary school and health care facilities within the neighbourhood.

- 9.2 As part of the development of these plans the JV partners have engaged with appropriate authorities, operators, funders, and providers of education/health care facilities. This has included the Local Education Authority (LEA), Department for Education (DfE) and NHS bodies including GM Integrated Care Partnership and others. Through this engagement officers have begun to develop a detailed understanding of the existing provision of facilities within and around Victoria North, and the potential future need for the area. The intended output of a holistic strategic approach with key delivery partners is to ensure that the provision of social facilities not only meets the needs of the emerging Victoria North residents but compliments wider city initiatives. A partnership approach will also enable the joint venture to identify and benefit from funding opportunities, provide high quality facilities and react to changes in policy/practice.
- 9.3 From a healthcare perspective the JV partners have explored the short and long term opportunities with health commissioners to provide much needed health care facilities within the area, given the lack of existing available capacity. Feedback has also been gathered on FEC's emerging design proposals for Red Bank and Collyhurst together with the wider programme of development delivery with regard to anticipated population growth.
- 9.4 From an education perspective the partners have discussed in detail with the LEA the routes for delivery of the proposed Red Bank primary school and the general education strategy for the wider Victoria North neighbourhoods. In August, the DfE announced approval of a Free Schools Funding bid submitted by Dixons Academy Trust for a new secondary school to serve the Victoria North communities. Officers are working closely with FEC and the LEA to identify a suitable site and delivery plan for this new school.

## **10.0 Contributing to a Zero Carbon City**

- 10.1 The need to expedite a move to a zero carbon economy including zero carbon development, in line with national and local policy, necessitates an innovative approach to building technologies and energy use. The Victoria North initiative provides an opportunity for the delivery of new homes close to the centre of the Greater Manchester conurbation and major employment locations. The Transport and Movement strategy set out within the SRF is geared around the provision of good quality active travel (i.e. walking, cycling and wheeling) routes and accessibility to public transport networks, including a proposal for the provision of a new Metrolink stop at Sandhills and improvements to key bus routes.
- 10.2 Proposals for development are based around a fabric first and thermal

efficiency approach to minimise heating requirements and with a focus on electricity rather than gas. Opportunities for renewable energy sources via the use of ground source and air source heat pumps are being explored as a means of delivering zero carbon in-use low rise housing, together with the use of photo-voltaic cells on roofs. The challenge of delivering embodied zero carbon in high rise development is more acute, due to currently more limited structural solutions.

- 10.3 As has been reflected throughout the report, there remain viability challenges across the programme as a whole given planning requirements for affordable housing, high design standards and quality of materials, high quality public realm and amenity space, taken together with the volatile costs of labour and materials as a result of the challenging economic climate. The JV partners will however continue to work collaboratively together to find solutions to the viability challenges by optimising the use and deployment of each of its resources where possible.

## **11.0 Concluding Remarks**

- 11.1 The Victoria North programme remains one of the largest national regeneration projects and one of the most ambitious residential-led development programmes in a generation and is well placed to be a key driving force in delivering transformational change in the communities north of the city centre. The realisation of this ambitious programme is not without its challenges, the nature of which have been summarised within this and previous reports and which are addressed at a high level through the Strategic Business Plan and at a more detailed level within the Development Area Business Plans.
- 11.2 In spite of these challenges, good progress has been made in establishing a development platform for circa 10,000 new homes to be delivered in the coming years. The refreshed Strategic Business Plan consolidates the progress made to date, and the strengthened approach to future development as part of this journey. With this key document updated, the Development Manager (FEC) can bring forward the next Development Area Business Plan as a legally necessary next step in unlocking delivery of the next 1,551 new homes at Red Bank.
- 11.3 The Strategic Business Plan will continue to be refreshed as appropriate to ensure that the overall long-term vision remains a viable and achievable proposition and so that Development Area Business Plans may be brought forward for subsequent future phases.

## **12.0 Recommendations**

- 12.1 Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee members are requested to:
1. Note the summarised content of the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.
  2. Endorse the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.

3. Note the general programme update as reflected in Appendix 1.

## **13.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Victoria North update for North Manchester Members.