

BENHILL RESIDENT STEERING GROUP FORMATION MEETING (No.4)

Venue: Salvation Army, 45 Benhill Avenue, Sutton SM1 4DD

Date: Monday 29th October 2018

Time: 7.00pm - 9.00pm

Attendees: 21 residents from the following blocks: Woodville House, Hazelwood House, Clevedon House, Homedale House, Newlyn House, Chesterton House & Stancliffe House

Regen Team: Ian Sellens (LBS), Michael Hunte (LBS), Simon Pickles (LBS)

SHP: Lara Amato (SHP Housing Manager)

Observers: Cllr David Bartolucci, Cllr Richard Clare, Colin Hawkins (SFTRA)
Beverley Brigden (SLA), Margaret Phillips (SLA)

Apologies: Cllr Ali Mirhashem, Pat Bridgman (Roundshaw resident): Tessa Thala: Vikram Singh

Chair: Clive Lynch (Resident)

1.	Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping & Aims	Action Owner
1.1	Clive was introduced as the Residents' Steering Group (RSG) Chair.	
2.	Matters Arising	
2.1	Simon Pickles (SP) offered one to one visits to all residents by Ian, housing regeneration project coordinator. The purpose is to find out more about the individual needs and preferences of residents, as well as a way of gauging the overall mood of the estate, providing an opportunity for residents to share their views, ask questions and make suggestions which can help shape future proposals for the estate. It was explained that the one to one meetings are different from the RSG meetings, and provides an opportunity for residents to talk to officers openly and in private, rather than in a public setting. It is also an opportunity to identify the concerns of residents, including those that don't attend the RSG meetings. The offer was taken up by a number of households	IS

<p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p>	<p>and interviews will be arranged to take place over the next few weeks</p> <p>A question was raised about how and where the list of resident likes and dislikes about the estate had been drawn up. SP explained that approximately 25 households had attended 3 public drop in session in the Autumn of 2017 and that the likes and dislikes feedback had been gathered from those meetings. Some residents, including the Chair, felt that some of the feedback was negative and did not reflect what people thought about the place.</p> <p>SP went through a list of actions and updates compiled from the last RSG meeting. This list was prepared as a summary update for the the Chair (and will be circulated to all attendees).</p> <p>Update on estate lighting: Following this issue being raised at the last meeting, SP updated the group that the estate lighting programme had been placed on hold as SHP's Fire Risk Assessor had felt that the installation of additional lighting elements was not necessary to meet the requirements for fire safety, resulting in the proposed works being halted. SP committed to getting more information on this and will report back to the group in due course.</p> <p>Update on estate tenure breakdown: MH distributed a summary breakdown table and pie chart of the estates tenure mix (as of February 2018). Another copy of this information will be circulated again with the notes of the meeting.</p> <p>There was no feedback or examples provided by residents about residents potentially feeling forced to sell their home to the Council under the Council's Property Acquisition Programme(The Property Acquisition Programme is a voluntary scheme for leaseholders interested in selling their property at market value to the Council).</p>	<p>IS</p> <p>IS</p> <p>SP</p> <p>IS</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Regeneration Update</p>	
	<p>SP explained the the Estate Regeneration Rehousing & Compensation Scheme report had been approved by the Council's Housing Economy & Business (HEB) Committee on 15th October 2018. The scheme includes the proposed range of commitments and offers to residents on estates where regeneration may be considered by the Council, to ensure residents are protected and treated fairly. It was agreed that the HEB report and accompanying papers would be circulated to RSG members.</p> <p>SP explained that we are in the process of developing a fact sheet for residents, otherwise known as a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions). In time the FAQ fact sheet will be circulated to the group for comment and then placed on the website, which is also</p>	<p>IS</p> <p>IS</p>

	<p>being developed by the team.</p> <p>SP advised that a Resident Charter will be prepared in collaboration with residents and will include the Council's offer and commitments to residents.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that residents should convene their own residents' only RSG meeting, before the next full RSG meeting. This pre meeting would allow residents to come together without the Council to review a number of the documents circulated by the Council, such as the ITHA specification and RSG Terms of Reference, and then be able to come back to the Council with one voice - sharing their collective views and to discuss any further issues with the Council at the full RSG meeting. It was agreed that the residents only meeting would meet a week before the full RSG meeting. SP agreed that the Council would help arrange the venue and would meet the cost of this.</p> <p>SP highlighted that as there are separate offers under the Estate Regeneration Rehousing and Compensation Scheme according to the different tenure types across the estate (ie Secure Tenant, Resident Leaseholder and Non Resident Leaseholder) then it could make sense for the different tenures to have their own meetings to discuss issues relevant to their tenure. Some concerns were expressed about this approach, that it could potentially lead to a split in the wider group.</p> <p>SP reiterated the importance of filling the other roles of the RSG (ie Vice Chair and Secretary), as this would help to make the RSG stronger in talking to the Council.</p>	IS
4.	Resident Concerns Raised and Council Responses:	
4.1	<p>Qu 1. Why is the cost of removing fly-tipping included within the leasehold service charge?.</p> <p>Ans 1. LA from SHP explained that there had been 2 fly-tipping prosecutions in the local area. In addition, the bins at Homedale House had been moved to minimise fly tipping. One resident suggested it would be cheaper and more effective to have CCTV installed on the estate to combat fly tipping.</p> <p>BB from SLA explained that the SHP Home Ownership team could provide a breakdown of how service charges are calculated.</p> <p>CL also explained that questions like this and other housing management issues should be raised in the residents only RSG meeting or ideally the Resident Association meeting.</p>	

	<p>Qu 2. Has the Council moved any further forward in recruiting a ITHA?</p> <p>Ans 2. This question picked up under the next agenda item.</p> <p>No further questions.</p>	
5	Role of the Independent Tenant and Homeowner Advisor (ITHA)	
5.1	<p>MH confirmed the draft specification had been circulated prior to the meeting. MH also advised that the team were initially proposing to set up a panel of 4 independent advisers from which residents could work with the Council to select the most suitable ITHA for their estate. It was intended that the panel of ITHA's would also be available to other estates being considered for regeneration. MH advised that there are a small number of companies that deliver this service and that it is a very specialised area of work.</p> <p>MH explained that due to the increased pace being set by the RSG group, the Council was now intending to accelerate the process of appointing an ITHA for Benhill. The timetable being proposed included going out to Tender (ie inviting ITHA's to bid for the contract) at the end of November. Therefore the team required feedback from the RSG in order to finalise the specification and evaluation criteria.</p> <p>Once the invitation to tenders has been issued any interested organisations will submit their response to the specification in the form of a Method Statement and price. Following this, a panel of residents and officers will evaluate the tender bid, with a view to determining the most suitable ITHA for Benhill. The scoring criteria to determine the winning bid will be based on a mixture of quality criteria and price.</p> <p>The feeling from the group was that quality should be a priority in determining who the adviser will be. The split between quality and price is still to be decided in partnership with the RSG.</p> <p>It was explained that this process is a standard approach to procurement, although it could be tailored to accommodate some of the specific requirements of the residents.</p> <p>The chair (CL) suggested that potential ITHA's be required to submit a film as part of their bid, showing how they would provide their service to Benhill residents alongside examples of case studies where they have successfully delivered a similar service elsewhere. A request was also made to meet with ITHA companies interested in working on Benhill in order to show them around the estate.</p>	

	<p>MH explained that the Housing Regeneration team had already carried a 'soft marketing' meeting with 4 established providers in September, in order to better understand the role of an ITHA and to obtain feedback on the specification prepared. This process has been very helpful in formulating the specification, which has also been informed by feedback from SHP, SLA and SFTRA. The specification was in turn circulated to the RSG members in order to gain feedback and help make it more Benhill specific.</p> <p>A number of residents raised concerns over the the language used (in general terms) and asked that it should be much more resident friendly for people new to this experience (ie too much 'gobbledygook').</p> <p>Cllr David Bartolucci commented that there will always be some 'legalese' and hard to understand language, but hopefully over time residents will become more familiar with the style and terminology of some of this language, and the need to use it.</p> <p>A resident asked how much it would cost the Council for an ITHA for Benhill. SP explained that based on feedback from the 'market testing' meetings in September, that the cost would likely cost between £35k - £50K per year depending on the size of the estate.</p> <p>CL again expressed his keenness to include what residents want, including a visit to Benhill as part of the process. CL recommended that the next "resident only" meeting be used to discuss the ITHA specification and what residents want from their ITHA. As such, the timetable for appointing an ITHA will need to change to take account this change in approach to enable residents sufficient time to provide feedback and help shape the process further.</p> <p>A question was raised about the numbers of properties expected on a regenerated estate. SP explained that the intention of the Council is to improve the quality and number of new or improved homes on Benhill although it is not yet in a position to provide a definitive numbers should regeneration proceed.</p> <p>CH of SFTRA explained that the Council needed to get the paperwork out quicker. He added that we will never know exactly what the council strategic demands are but the role of the ITHA is key in bringing clarity and in supporting residents' needs. The role of the ITHA will be the voice of the residents and to support residents in asking the questions they want answered.</p> <p>A resident inferred that the demand for more homes was being driven by the Mayor of London. Residents also raised concerns that more homes could mean less green space and parking.</p>	
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	<p>CL said we should expect more homes but they need to be of a similar quality and not for the area to be 'yuppified.' His expectation was that there would be a similar split in the future as now between leaseholders and tenants, alongside more accessible home.</p> <p>One resident admitted it was not easy to absorb or understand everything that was going on, but they had to go through the process to get the answers needed to reach a conclusion. She felt the residents were being rushed into making a decision and felt time was needed to make the right decision and assimilate the information.</p> <p>CL stressed that it would be better for residents to be in charge of the regeneration rather than it being imposed. Over time residents questions will have to be answered. SP said that officers would work at the pace set by the RSG..</p>	
6.	Review of the RSG Terms of Reference (ToR)	
	<p>SP asked if there were any volunteers to take on the roles of Vice Chair and Correspondence Secretary. It was explained that these roles are important roles in providing more structure to the group. No volunteers stepped forward to take up either role, although residents were encouraged to reconsider and express their interest by contacting one of the Housing Regeneration team members.</p> <p>It was also agreed that it was too early to decide on how many members were needed to be in attendance to make the group valid for decision making, particularly while good numbers are currently attending.</p> <p>CL advised that he is willing to use the old caretaking office on Newlyn House as a point of contact for residents to meet with him to discuss any issues they have, which can then be fed back to the Council. SP said Housing Regen Team and SHP would support CL to make this happen, but that there was not a toilet in this office.</p>	

Summary of Actions

No	Action	Owner
1	Council officers to continue to record minutes of the meeting and circulate in advance as early as possible.	Regen Team
2	Date of next RSG meeting will be Monday 10th December at 7.00pm. (Venue to be confirmed)	Regen Team

3	The “residents only” meeting will take place on Monday 3rd December (Venue to be confirmed). Please note that both meeting will depend on the availability of a suitable venue)	Regen Team
4	The ‘residents only’ meeting will be to discuss the draft specification for the ITHA and if they have any further requests to be included. The meeting will be used to discuss the specific needs of Benhill residents the details of which will be fed back to the next RSG on 10th December.	RSG members
5	An offer of 1-2-1 meeting to all residents, in particular residents members of the RSG, who could help fine tune the survey questions. Members to contact Ian.	Regen Team
5	Copy of the Chairs ‘Actions and Progress Update’ summary to be circulated to RSG members.	Regen Team
6	Residents to consider taking up the role of RSG Vice Chair and Correspondence Secretary.	RSG Members
7	Circulate the Benhill Estate tenure breakdown summary.	Regen Team
8	Circulate the Estate Regeneration - Rehousing & Compensation Scheme report that was approved by the Council’s Housing Economy & Business (HEB) Committee on 15 October 2018.	Regen Team
9	Add page numbers to handout documents and prepare a Glossary of key terms.	Regen Team
10	The next meeting to focus on the ITHA role and the website	Regen Team & RSG members

Useful links:

<p>Homes for Londoners - Mayor of London publication: Good practice Guide to Estate Regeneration. See following link: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/better-homes-for-local-people-the-mayors-good-practice-guide-to-estate-regeneration.pdf</p>
<p>Estate Regeneration National Strategy - Resident Engagement and Protection - DCLG publication. See following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/estate-regeneration-good-practice-guide</p>

Mayor London's new funding condition to require resident ballots in estate regeneration. See following link:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_cfg_section_8._resident_ballots_-_18_july_2018.pdf

15th Oct HEB: Estate Regeneration Rehousing and Compensation Scheme:

<https://moderngov.sutton.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=40537&PlanId=0&Oprt=3#AI39427>