

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019, 7.00 - 9.35pm**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Khaled Moyeed (Chair), Dawn Barnes, Ruth Gordon, Bob Hare, Yvonne Say and Daniel Stone**

### **23. FILMING AT MEETINGS**

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

### **24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Williams.

### **25. URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

### **26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **27. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

None.

### **28. MINUTES**

Referring to Item 16 of the minutes of the previous meeting, Cllr Gordon proposed that the topic of High Road West, which had been raised through the deputation, be taken on by the Panel as a full scrutiny review. Cllr Moyeed confirmed that this would go ahead and that the current intention is for the terms of reference will be submitted to the next meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> November and that site visits to the Peacock industrial estate and the Love Lane Estate would take place within the next couple of weeks.

Referring to Item 18 of the minutes of the previous meeting, Cllr Hare said that comments made by Cllr Williams regarding the way that the content of planning applications are determined before being considered by the Planning Committee should be reflected in the minutes. The scrutiny officer said that the recording of the meeting could be checked and this detail added to the minutes. **(ACTION)**

Cllr Gordon referred to the response from an action point arising from the last meeting about the expected schedule for the redevelopment by Argent in Tottenham Hale. The response noted that there had been an archaeological find on the Welbourne site and that works have halted pending further investigations. Cllr Gordon asked what impact this delay is expected to have on the schedule for the redevelopment. Dan Hawthorn, Director for Housing, Regeneration & Planning, said that further details would be provided in writing. **(ACTION)**

**AGREED: That the Panel proceed with a scrutiny review on High Road West with terms of reference for the review to be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

**AGREED: That, following a minor amend to Item 18 of the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the minutes can be approved as an accurate record.**

## **29. UPDATE - REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT PROCESS FOR CIL**

Rob Krzyszowski, Head of Planning Policy, introduced the report on this item which had been deferred from the previous meeting of the Panel in September 2019 due to lack of time. An overview of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) had been provided to a meeting of the Panel in January 2019 during which it was noted that a review of the management process of CIL was due to be carried out by a specialist consultancy in February 2019.

He said that the review was subsequently carried out by the independent planning consultancy Citiesmode in February and March 2019 which included workshops with senior Council officers and a review of policy and procedure documents. The final report was provided in May 2019 and the Council followed that up with an Action Plan. The report concluded that the Council has *“systems in place which align with the principal legislative and regulatory requirement”*, that *“there are elements of good practice in the Council’s approach”*, that the AD for Planning *“maintains a good oversight of the systems”*, but that *“there are a number of deficiencies that reduce the efficiency, effectiveness and resilience of the service”*.

In response to questions from the Panel, Rob Krzyszowski said:

- Asked about whether the Council had lost money as a consequence of not recording land charge data, he explained that the Council has a statutory role

to keep land charges information so that when properties are bought/sold, a land search can identify whether there are any outstanding payments relating the property. CIL on a development is a land charge so anyone buying the land would have this outstanding charge flagged to them. The CIL report found that the CIL wasn't always recorded directly onto the land charges so were not coming up in the searches, although it was always picked up later in the process. There was no financial loss to the Council as a consequence of this. The process has now been tightened up so the CIL is registered correctly and that this is picked up earlier through the searches.

- With regards to the RICS CIL index, CIL is indexed for inflation so that, in the time lag from when the CIL charge is set and the planning permission is granted, the value is retained. The BCIS index previously used had been problematic as it was not publicly available but the Government has recently replaced this with the RICS CIL index which is publicly available and will be simpler to use. Cllr Gordon asked about inflationary costs relating to the bus station in Tottenham Hale and Dan Hawthorn said that this is likely to be because the scheme is taking longer than originally anticipated rather than because of any miscalculation of inflation but that he would follow up with further detail on this. Cllr Gordon requested that this include details of full costings on what funds have been put into the Tottenham Hale redevelopment overall. **(ACTION)**
- On the back-up of CIL and S106 files, the previous process was to manually copy and paste the database to a separate folder which the CIL report found to be unacceptable. However, IT service colleagues have since confirmed that there is a full daily back-up across the Council so there is in fact a satisfactory back-up procedure for CIL and S106 files.
- Recruitment to a second and more senior S106 and CIL post is ongoing to complement the existing S106 and CIL post. The statutory requirements for S106 and CIL are growing which requires more capacity in the team to do that work. In terms of budgetary implications there should be a neutral cost as the Council can spend up to 5% of CIL receipts on administrative expenses/staff costs. While there had been some minor slippage in the timescale for recruitment to the new post this was not expected to have any significant impact.
- The main objectives of the report and the action plan are to meet the statutory requirements but also to be able to do more work on spending the strategic and neighbourhood CIL elements on the key outcomes of the Council and the community.
- On unspent S106 receipts and future CIL receipts, a summary of the money collected and spent/unspent is published each year in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). Additional detail will be published in future, due to new government requirements, through an Infrastructure Funding Statement and the first of these will be published in December 2020. Cllr Moyeed requested

that the link to the most up to date AMR report be circulated to the Panel.

**(ACTION)**

- Enforcement of S106 agreements, including non-financial monitoring, is part of the review including by ensuring that procedures and training is up to date.

Asked about the Planning review of the S106 agreement relating to the Wards Corner, Dan Hawthorn confirmed that this was close to being finished.

### **30. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMME - HIGH ROAD WEST REGENERATION SCHEME**

Dan Hawthorn, Director of Housing, Regeneration & Planning, introduced the report on this item which had been deferred from the previous meeting of the Panel in September 2019 due to lack of time. He said that, in the context of the wider development agreement between the Council and Lendlease for the High Road West scheme, there was a commitment from Lendlease to commit £10m to a programme of socio-economic interventions in the local area in acknowledgement of the disruptions and opportunities associated with the scheme. This programme is structured around five thematic headings set out in paragraph 2.9 of the report. However, as the development scheme is currently being reworked, the work on the socio-economic programme has been paused so a greater level of detail on how the £10m will be spent is not yet available.

In response to questions from the Panel, Dan Hawthorn said:

- That the use of the funding is expected to spread out over the life of the scheme at roughly £1m per year over 10 years.
- That as this work is paused the Council does not want to make assumptions about what the scheme will look like as the scheme could change.
- That as with any major development scheme there would typically be both significant S106/CIL contributions as well as direct investments in infrastructure and this additional £10m is part of the bidding approach from the developer as well as a recognition of the complex social and economic problems in Tottenham that would benefit from additional investment. It is important that this investment is spent in a way that aligns with the Council's priorities and vision for the area and Lendlease have been happy to accept this.
- The status of the scheme is that the development agreement between the Council and Lendlease has been formally agreed by Cabinet.
- That he was determined that the £10m from the programme shouldn't be used as part of the funding requirement for the extra Council homes on the site and that it should be kept for the purposes for which it was originally intended. That would be to mix the two things up and so the need for new Council homes should be met through the grant from the Mayor of London.

- That it is a fundamental principle of the Council's approach to the scheme is that it should be based on and constantly refined as a result of engagement with residents and the wider stakeholder community while being balanced with the Council's priorities as defined in the Borough Plan. This is a long-term commitment to recognise a range of different perspectives with the 'stakeholder community' including people who are resident in the area, people running businesses in the area and people who use services and businesses in the area.
- That it is reasonable to look at the scheme in the context of the Council's approach to business support and community wealth building and this will need to be an element of the work to ensure that the Council's priorities are reflected in the scheme.
- On how the membership High Road West Community Impact Group was selected he said that details about this would be provided to the Panel in writing. **(ACTION)**

Cllr Barnes commented that the Enabling Healthy Lives theme in paragraph 2.13 of the report refers to the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and entrepreneurship to build self-esteem but should also include cultural subjects. Dan Hawthorn said that he would take this point away to consider.

Cllr Stone said that the Physical Changes theme in paragraph 2.15 of the report refers to setting out the aspiration to ensuring that delivering better socio-economic outcomes is embedded into the to the physical design of the scheme. He commented that these outcomes should be part of the design anyway and questioned what additional benefits the socio-economic programme would bring. Dan Hawthorn said that theme included initiatives such as the refurbishment of the Grange but said that it was a helpful challenge to make sure that this theme is genuinely contributing something additional and that he would take this back to the team.

In response to a question about the low level of CIL (£15 per sq/m) that Lendlease would be required to pay, Rob Krzyszowski, Head of Planning Policy, said that a proposed increase in the CIL rate in the east of the Borough, from £15 per sq/m to £50 per sq/m, was reported to the Regulatory Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It would then be submitted to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The proposal would also have to go out to consultation. Dan Hawthorn added that it is unlikely that the High Road West planning application would not be subject to the new CIL rate.

### **31. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - HOUSING AND ESTATE RENEWAL**

Cllr Emine Ibrahim, Cabinet Member for Housing & Estate Renewal, responded to questions from the Panel on issues relating to her portfolio:

- In response to a question from Cllr Hare about the ongoing problems with maintenance on social housing estates in Borough, Cllr Ibrahim said that she recognises the challenges. Up to last year only 75% of Haringey's social housing met the Decent Homes standard and the communal areas are also a huge challenge. There is a financial commitment to bring 95% of homes up to the decent homes standard by 2022 and also funding has been made available through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to go a step further to work towards Decent Homes Plus which covers the area from the kerb to the property so that communal areas are covered. Members should receive emails about major works that take place within their wards. Members who wish to receive more information about work in their ward can also write to Cllr Ibrahim as Cabinet Member. Cllr Hare requested a written briefing for all Panel Members from Cllr Ibrahim on Decent Homes Plus including details of the expected timescales. **(ACTION)** Cllr Gordon requested that Decent Homes Plus be added as an agenda item to a future Panel meeting. **(ACTION)** Cllr Ibrahim said that she was well aware of the challenges and historic perception about the issue of repairs and that the funds in the HRA must be used responsibly. Some cases come to the attention of Members because a resident has raised it directly with them but it was also important to be conscious of the cases that do not get directly raised with Members or that affect the most hard to reach residents. This includes residents for whom English is not their first language and local authorities do not have the same resources for translation services that they used to. Recently the Council retendered the floating support contracts for local community organisations with a focus on independent housing related advice including those that deliver services for communities identified as having a high level of need. Asked by Cllr Hare how these services are monitored for performance, Cllr Ibrahim said that this falls under the remit of Gill Taylor and a briefing on this could be requested for a future Panel meeting. **(ACTION)**
- On a request from Cllr Gordon for an update on the Broadwater Farm estate, Cllr Ibrahim said that all 90 secure tenants have now moved from Tangmere block and accepted alternative accommodation. With regards to the 24 leasehold properties, 12 properties have been acquired from Newlon Housing Trust, there are sales of 6 further properties expected to complete by November and negotiations are ongoing with the remaining 6 leaseholders. Of those 6 leaseholders, only 3 still live in the block. In Northolt block there were 83 secure tenants of which 54 have now moved. A further 9 have accepted an offer and are expected to move out in the next few weeks. The remaining secure tenants were being supported to bid for alternative properties as they become available. Of the 14 leaseholders there has been 1 completed sale, offers accepted on 3 others with 10

remaining. The decant of the blocks in Broadwater Farm have obviously had a negative impact on the availability of accommodation for others on the waiting list, most notably on the availability of 1-bedroom properties as most of the properties in Northolt block were 1-bedroom properties. With regards to longer-term plans for the Broadwater Farm estate, a report on this is expected to go to Cabinet in December on the procurement of the architects.

- Asked by Cllr Gordon about the delay to the work on the Red House site in Tottenham, Cllr Ibrahim said that the originally anticipated timeframe had been to have everything ready to go by the end of this year and this is still on target.
- Asked by Cllr Barnes about the inefficiencies that could arise through HfH customer services included cases raised with Members such as repeated problems for residents in registering their details, which end up wasting Member and officer time, Cllr Ibrahim said that she is happy to raise that concern and response by email in more detail. **(ACTION)**
- Asked by Cllr Moyeed about the high cost of temporary/emergency accommodation and whether savings could be made, Cllr Ibrahim said that this is a big challenge and that what temporary/emergency accommodation looks like has changed over the last 30 years. In the 1980s this meant homeless families being placed in B&B accommodation but in later years there had been examples of landlords charging a nightly rate and describing the accommodation provided as bed and breakfast although it was actually just a flat or house with breakfast items being delivered once a week. The experience of residents also varies depending on whether they are housed within the private sector or within publically owned temporary accommodation such as those on the Love Lane estate where are certain repair standards. The Council's participation in the Capital Letters scheme, a pan-London programme involving 13 boroughs, should help to improve the quality of temporary accommodation and also reduce costs. The scheme helps to reduce competition between boroughs for accommodation thereby preventing prices from being driven up. The Cabinet had also agreed about a year ago to set up a Community Benefit Society as an independent charity in which the Council is a minority shareholder. The Council will lease former Right to Buy properties that the Council is acquiring to the charity for seven years for them to be repaired and managed as temporary accommodation and then returned to the Council after which they can be used as Council housing.

## **32. HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE**

Alan Benson, AD for Housing, presented the reports for both items 10 and 11 together as they were linked. He said that the Council's current Housing Strategy had been published in December 2016 and had been due to run until 2022.

However, there have since been changes in national housing policy, in regional policy from the Mayor of London including funding to build Council housing, and in local priorities as the Housing Strategy still refers to the Haringey Development Vehicle and does not include the housing targets that are included in the new Borough Plan. The Housing Strategy will therefore be rewritten with the top priority being the target to build 1,000 new Council homes and will also include homelessness, rough sleeping and the quality of the existing housing stock. There is a Members engagement process which takes place before publishing a draft of the new Housing Strategy, and this involves a Members steering group chaired by Cllr Ibrahim which has met three times already. The aim is currently to bring the draft Housing Strategy to Cabinet early in the New Year, which will then be published for consultation.

On the delivery of new Council homes, Alan Benson said that the report focuses on the Council's progress towards delivering its target of 1,000 new Council homes. Council housing hasn't been built on this scale in Haringey since the later 1970s/early 1980s when there were around 22,000 Council homes. There are now only 15,000 Council homes in Haringey as a result of the Right to Buy programme. However, the Mayor of London has recently allocated funding to enable the building of new Council homes across London. The new Haringey Cabinet agreed in 2018 to set up a Wholly Owned Company (WOC) to deliver new Council homes as this would enable borrowing outside of the government restrictions imposed on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing. However, later that year, the Government lifted the cap on HRA borrowing so the WOC route was rendered unnecessary.

Alan Benson continued by saying that the report covers the three main areas required for the delivery of Council housing which are land, funding and capacity within the Council's team. There are 60 sites that have been identified for development in the first stage and work on these is underway. Another group of sites will soon be identified and reported to Cabinet, probably in January. Significant funding of £62.8m has been provided to Haringey from the Mayor of London although this is not enough in itself to finance the building programme and so further funding will be required through HRA borrowing. There has been extensive staff recruitment to support the programme and there are now 18 people in the Housing delivery team. The Council is currently on track to deliver to its milestone target which is for 500 Council homes to have planning approval and for 350 Council homes to have started on site by May 2020.

In response to questions from the Panel, Alan Benson said:

- That most of the 60 sites are quite small, the smallest with only one unit on it but with 190 units on the largest but the majority are in the range of 20 to 50 units. There are some larger sites which are expected to be brought into the programme in future.

- That growing the team of staff in future makes sense as there is an assumption that after the first 1,000 Council homes are built the Council will want to continue building more in order to work towards recovering the 7,000 Council houses that were lost through Right to Buy.
- That with regards to the two sites on the Appendix 1 list showing zero for the estimated number of Council homes, on the Muswell Hill site this is because it is a historic scheme which is designated for shared ownership, and on the Bounds Green site this is because there has not yet been an calculation made of how many Council homes could be built on the site.
- Asked about Islington Council's presentation of its Council housing schemes in a clear way on their website, some boroughs are further ahead and Islington started their programme a few years ago although their target for building Council homes is lower than Haringey's. There are plans to improve this part of the Haringey website.
- With regards to the environmental standards of the new Council homes, the Council is aiming to ensure that they are all carbon neutral, have exemplary quality of design and that the mix of units will include family sized-homes and not just 1-bedroom flats.

In response to questions from the Panel, Rob Krzyszowski, Head of Planning Policy, said:

- That the draft London Plan has been going through its process for some time and was recently examined by the independent Planning Inspectorate. The recommendations are now public and is awaiting a response from the Mayor and then from the Secretary of State before approval by the London Assembly which would lead to the new London Plan being formally adopted. This is likely to happen sometime early or in the spring of next year.
- The draft London Plan specifies that Council's should set affordable housing tenure targets of a minimum of 30% low cost rented homes (which can include affordable rent and social rent), a minimum of 30% intermediate products (which can include London living rent and shared ownership) with the remaining 40% being left to the discretion of the individual Borough.
- Haringey Council's Local Plan would have to be in conformity with the London Plan and a consultation on the Local Plan will begin in the spring of next year which will include questions on the affordable housing target and affordable housing tenure. Evidence on need is required to justify any future affordable housing targets.
- That the Council's self-build register, which is required by law, had around 300 people who had indicated an interest in delivering self-build or custom-build properties. There are now criteria recently approved by Cabinet that have to be met to be on the register including a £144 administration fee as well as a financial resources test and a local connection test. This has reduced the number of people on the register from 300 to just 1. However,

the register is just an indicator of demand for self-build properties and, with 300 on the register, the planning service would have had to allocate enough land to meet the demand that could otherwise be prioritised for affordable housing. However, this doesn't prevent anyone from going ahead with self-build development on private land.

In response to questions from the Panel, Cllr Emine Ibrahim said:

- That Community Land Trusts are an innovative way of delivering affordable housing. Cllr Ibrahim said that she will always prioritise Council Housing at Council rents. She said that security of tenure is important as well as the rent levels and Council tenancies are the most secure form of tenure.
- That consultation is key and there has been some confusion about plans for the Crownwood site so there have been some issues with communications. She said that she is planning to meet with some of the tenants soon to help improve this.

### **33. COUNCIL HOUSING TEAM CAPACITY BUILDING**

See item 32. The Housing Strategy item and the Council Housing Team capacity building item were taken together.

### **34. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar 2020

CHAIR: Councillor Khaled Moyeed

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....