

**Minutes of Ledbury Estate Residents Project Group Meeting
28th July 2020**

Attendance

RPG

Sue Slaughter	SS	Nicole Bailey	NB
Patrick Goode	PG	Thomas Ennis	TE
Jeanette Mason	JM	Shelene Byer	SB
Eileen Bassom	EB	Danielle Gregory	DG

LBS

Mike Tyrrell	MT	Abigail Buckingham	AB
Sharon Shadbolt	SSh	Paul Thomas	PT

Others

Charles Hingston	CH	Calford Seaden
Mark Baines	MB	Hunters
Neal Purvis	Open Communities - ITLA	

Apologies for Absence:

Toby Bull

Ian Simpson Open Communities Ferenc Morath LBS

1. Introductions

1.1 Those present introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

2.1 With the addition in 4.2 of *been* between *had* and *very*, The minutes of the RPG Meeting of 3 March were approved as accurate.

3 Update Report from LBS – changes at Ledbury Towers since lockdown had begun in March

3.1 MT reported that the Ledbury Team had continued to work from the Ledbury Office when government guidance had been to stay home and stay safe. To keep residents in the towers safe the team needed to continue to manage the 24 hour waking watch in the blocks.

3.2 The office had to be closed to the public following 2 incidents when people with someone in their family had symptoms of Covid and they came into the office after being advised not to. The office will be fitted with screens in the near future to allow safe working.

3.3 All Councils had to move residents from hostels where the hostels were not self contained, as people living in there could not isolate. 95 homeless families from hostels are now in temporary accommodation in three of the Ledbury Towers. Some of the temporary residents had moved on to permanent accommodation, and have been replaced with other residents who need temporary accommodation.

4 Choice Based Lettings

- 4.1 MT reported that the Choice Based Letting System was not operating at present, but the Ledbury Team see the list of empty homes from the Council each week and have secured offers for Ledbury Tenants during lockdown.
- 4.2 DG asked if the temporary residents had Band 1. MT replied that as they are homeless households, they are in a variety of different Bands.
- 4.3 SB asked if temporary residents would move back to their previous temporary accommodation. MT explained that they could not be moved back to hostels that are not self contained. When the decision has been made on the future of the blocks, when the blocks needed to be empty to carry out the works, if there were any temporary residents left they would get permanent offers or be moved into other temporary accommodation.
- 4.4 AB reported that LBS had bid to the government for funding to convert the non self contained temporary accommodation into something more suitable.

5 Meeting Update report from LBS

- 5.1 MT reported that there had been many spot checks by the fire brigade during the lockdown period. There had been another exercise with the fire brigade at Bromyard and there are two more planned in September.
- 5.2 MT noted that the number of leaks had increased. TE raised an example of a leak outside office hours, that no member of staff from the office had attended, and it had taken 2 hours for an emergency plumber to arrive. He had helped his neighbour to reduce the flow. AB noted that the emergency services have been working throughout the lockdown period and that as there were building contractors on site, that they could help to look at the pattern of leaks to see what could be done to reduce them. **SS to work with Engie to identify pattern of leaks.**
- 5.3 **MT to provide written update report to RPG members.**

6 Option Appraisal for the Towers

- 6.1 MT introduced the Resident Engagement Plan that had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. **MT to apply to GLA for an exemption from the ballot criteria usually applied to make sure that Ledbury Tenants and Leaseholders, and those with the Right to Return, will make the decision on the future of the blocks.**
- 6.2 There will consultation to reduce the options to a single option, and if that option involves demolition, this will be followed by a Yes/No Ballot on the single option.
- 6.3 MT gave an example of consultation that had been carried out in another borough with all residents sent a hard copy brochure, as well as links to the content electronically. There had been telephone contact with all residents to explain the options with a high engagement rate of 78%.
- 6.4 MT made clear that the temporary residents would not be consulted on the future of the blocks, it would be those who have the right to return and the Secure Tenants and Leaseholders in the blocks at present.

- 6.5 The *Whittling Down* consultation will lead to a preferred option, that would then be submit to a ballot (if it involves demolition) before the GLA elections. This would mean it would be completed by March 2021.
- 6.6 TE proposed that the Council investigate what difference it could make to building new homes on the estate if the area occupied by the TRA Hall was included in the Option Appraisal, and that the TRA Hall was reprovided as part of this.
- 6.7 There was a discussion about the pros and cons of this proposal. JM was content, if it was clear that the TRA Hall would be reprovided for residents on Ledbury and that this did not encroach on the low rise homes. DG noted that she was not clear about what this would mean in practice.
- 6.8 **TE to work with MT on which land would be involved, proposal to be circulated to RPG, and when clear MB to bring ideas to next RPG meeting for RPG to consider whether it would be a positive thing for the estate.**
- 6.9 PG asked how 6 months of lockdown had affected LBS Finance and whether it would have any affect on Ledbury? MT explained that the emergency had more of an affect on the General Fund than on the Housing Revenue Account. Some businesses have been granted rent holidays on their commercial premises, and there had been increased costs to house rough sleepers, and move 600 people out of unsuitable temporary accommodation. The sooner there is a decision on the future of the Ledbury Towers, the sooner the works can be carried out and the blocks relet to Secure Tenants, increasing rental income.
- 6.10 DG asked what the next information provided to residents would be. MB explained that there had been limited attendance at the open days before lockdown, and that there would be more information on the layouts and height, and a draft brochure with words on the different options.
- 6.11 TE suggested the essential information needed was on the comparative size and layout of rooms in the current homes, strengthened homes, and new build homes.
- 6.12 TE suggested that the options offered to residents for consultation could be reduced as the enhanced refurbishment and infill option had been chosen in the previous consultation. There was no need to include the strengthening only option in this consultation.
- 6.13 SB and DG were concerned that changing the number of options at this stage felt like changing the goalposts. JM asked if there were ways to reduce the time taken for options so residents would have a clear decision, and be able to return to their own home sooner.
- 6.14 Most resident representatives did not want to change the number of options at this stage.
- 6.15 There was a discussion on the lead in time for works to start. CH noted that 1 year had been allowed in the programme for design.
- 6.16 AB explained that the temporary residents in the block would be bidding for a permanent home and if there were any left in place at the point that a block was needed for work, they could be moved more easily than permanent residents to more suitable accommodation.
- 6.17 MT to include when blocks would need to be decanted on the Resident Engagement Team.

- 6.18 **MT to look at the programme to see if there are any areas where decision and works could be accelerated.**
- 6.19 SS asked if when temporary tenants moved out of the 3 towers now, their place was being taken by another temporary tenant. MT replied this was happening and would continue. **MT to include turnover of temporary tenants in reports to RPG.**

7 Matters Arising from the Minutes of 3.3.20.

- 7.1(3.12) MB had issued updated versions of plans on 13.3.20. and updated following comments from SB on 203.20.
- 7.2(3.15) **AB to organize a meeting with LBS OKR Team, Planners and MB with the RPG. Outstanding.**
- 7.3(7.3) AB to send LBS Employer Requirements for LBS New Build to NP for distribution to RPG. These have been approved. **AB to send to NP.**
- 7.4 (3.16) CH and JH to consider LBS Design Standards in future versions of the Options Report. **-CH to check. He view was that this had been included.**

7.0 Any Other Business

- 7.1 TE asked whether the TRA Hall could be two storey with homes above to make better use of the lifts. MB explained that a TRA Hall could not share a lift with residential occupiers. Planning rules are that they need separate lifts.
- 7.2 DG suggested residents look at the proposals the Council has developed for Bells Gardens TRA Hall as part of developing new Council homes in higher blocks. The details are here
https://consultations.southwark.gov.uk/housing-community-services-department-community-engagement-team/bells-gardens/results/772-bellsgardens-pgm6_lowres.pdf
- 7.3 PT reported that the surveys for the Front Entry Doors replacement to some low rise homes were due to happen in March. He had chased the contractor to get the surveys done to enable this work to happen. **PT to write to all affected residents to keep them informed of progress.**
- 7.4 EB reported she was having to move from the estate and that she would resign from the RPG because she would move early in the New Year.

6.0 Date of Next Meeting

- 6.1 18 August 2020

Neal Purvis 31.7.20.