

Ebury Bridge Community Futures Group – Meeting 8
14th March 2018, 6pm – 8pm
Regeneration Base, 15 – 19 Ebury Bridge Road, Ebury Bridge Estate

MEMBERS ATTENDANCE:

- Teresa Wickham [TW] Chair
- Mohammed Eisa [ME]
- Rachel Riley [RR]
- Fiona Quick [FQ]
- Tammy Dowdall [TD]
- Waleed Shaath [WS]
- Sheila Martin [SM]

APOLOGIES:

- Stephen Rusbridge [SR]
- Rhoda Torres [RT]
- Mike Smith [MS]
- Charlotte Pragnell [CP]

WCC OFFICERS AND CONSULTANTS:

- Jodie McCarthy-Mills [JMM] – Senior Regeneration Project Manager
- Martin Crank [MC] – Communications and Engagement Manager
- Gelina Menville [GM] – Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team
- Abdus Ahmed [AA] – Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team
- Louis Blair [LB] – First Call Housing (Independent Resident Advisor)

NOTES: *This document provides a summary of the discussions which took place during the meeting including questions and respective responses that were raised during the session.*

Welcome and Introductions from Chair

TW opened the meeting by welcoming everybody and invited SM to introduce herself to the group as a new member.

1. Minute of the last meeting

Following a review of each page, no amendments were made and the minutes agreed as written.

FQ requested that the RAID Log be updated.

2. Action Points

The action list (dated 8th March) was reviewed item by item. All items had been completed except:

- Item 5) TW would like to visit Carly Taplin following her exit from the group.
- Item 9) The newly established RA can have access to 1 Wainwright House. A set of keys can be collected from the Regeneration Base as required. SM requested that the Residents' Association (RA) be given a permanent set of keys to that space. JMM to investigate.
- Item 11) MC explained that the detailed scenarios packs are being created and will be produced as boards showing the facts based on each tenure. JMM explained that this is in response to the request of the CFG. TW added that it was important for residents to have a set of documents to refer to.

- Item 15) Natasha White has been brought in as a dedicated CityWest Homes (CWH) resource based full time in the Regeneration Base to help with repairs on site and will attend the estate walkabout arranged with Jonathan Cowie on 19th March 2018. This item led to a range of conversations related to CityWest Homes (CWH):
 - RR updated the group on the feedback from the RA meeting that took place on Monday (19th March) and emphasised the strong feeling of residents in relation to the performance of City West Homes. A clear structure chart has been requested to help residents understand who is responsible for the services being provided to the estate [ACTION].
 - FQ Section 20 notices need to be handled in a more sensitive way and stated that how residents are currently feeling about the services provided by CityWest Homes is a major risk to the regeneration project and should be added to the RAID log.
 - TD explained that calling into the call centre is the main problem with the service.
 - TW said that she hoped by having a dedicated CWH working with the Community Engagement Team, would encourage more resident to come into the Regeneration Base and engage with the team.
 - GM has been working with Chris Parry (CWH) to identify 'quick win fixes' that can be undertaken in a Leap into action day (12th April 2018).
 - LB asked if there was an agreed set of estate walkabouts for the estate that residents can take part in. JMM suggested this should be something that the RA should request and pick up.

3. Project Update, feedback from Workshops

JMM explained that workshops were well received by residents and a productive discussion around refurbishment was had at both sessions. FQ pointed out that the workshops took place before the RA meeting took place.

JMM confirmed that the Arup costing of £98 per square foot is the figure would achieve a bare minimum refurbishment option.

LB asked if there was any indication on the service charge levels in a refurbishment option?

JMM explained that any recharge to leaseholders would be subject to a statutory Section 20 process based on each block.

JMM informed the group that a meeting with the planners had taken place to get feedback from a planning perspective on each of the scenarios. JMM also explained that the planners will be as robust as possible when acting as the planning authority for an application put forward by the Council.

ACTION: JMM to feedback on the discussion with the planners

JMM explained that a Soft Market Testing (SMT) exercise will be undertaken to further test the assumptions being made for each scenario allowing expert feedback on the deliverability of the scenarios. A PIN notice has been issued and this early engagement with the market will help the council ensure that any renewal option can be achieved.

RR asked what happens if a scenario is taken forward based on it being viable now, but is then affected by Brexit and at that point nobody is interested? JMM explain that the formal procurement process will look at this and the financial modelling has contingency built-in both in terms of money and time.

TW made the point that the timetable for recommending the one scenario was very tight and that the group only had 4 meetings to decide, so it is important everyone clearly understood the scenarios and how they would affect the Estate. A more simplified timeline was being produced leading up to the 2nd July and would be circulated to the Group.

ACTION: MC to produce a simple project timeline to show activity up to the recommendation report being reviewed by Cabinet on 2nd July.

TD updated the group on the recent visit to Copley Park, Ealing and said it was interesting and the residents they meet were engaging. TD explained that it was an example of a part refurbished and part redeveloped council estate. This was the first renewal project where the council directly took on the contract to carry out the works.

MC explained that the works were undertaken in phases, which meant that residents had to move twice but within the same estate.

TD stated that the residents still had some issues with the contractors – Mulalley. JMM explained that a ‘clerk of works’ is employed to ensure that all snagging is picked up and resolved. TD said that at Copley the residents got together to form a snagging group to hold the contractors to account.

JMM explained that when looking at both the refurbished and new build flats, the value of the investment on the new build is more visually tangible. The refurbishment option also did not allow for residents to be rehoused based on their housing need.

For Ebury all residents will need to undergo a needs assessment to ensure that we understand the needs of residents and that this would need to be factored into a scenario.

RR questioned if the Housing Needs Assessment would be carried out for leaseholders?

MC confirmed that the council needs to understand the entire estate. Leaseholders will not have a housing needs assessment but the council will need to understand their requirements, in any redevelopment option. In any redevelopment option secure tenants will be rehoused based on need, in any refurbishment option, overcrowded households will be offered the option to be rehoused away from the estate rather than coming back into a property where they would still be overcrowded.

TD asked what about the private tenants in leasehold properties. JMM explained that the relationship with the private tenants is with the owner of the property and that they would have the duty to work with them in the first instance.

4. Presentation of Estate profile

GM gave a presentation to the group detailing the estate profile, engagement activities to date and engagement levels. A copy of this presentation will be made available for the group to be collected from the Regeneration Base.

RR asked for an update on the leasehold consultation which took place last year (closing date January 2018). JMM agreed to get an update and report back at the next CFG meeting.

ACTION: JMM to provide update on the leasehold consultation and timescales for implementation

5. Community Charter

MC explained the purpose and importance of a community charter and the authority the CFG has to implement one for Ebury.

A charter could include: equality of design, moving with neighbours, a list of community expectations, pushing levels of social properties and community facilities for example.

There was some confusion within the group around the Community Charter discussion and the purpose/need for such a document at this stage. Greater clarity was given:

LB explained that in his experience the contents of charters have included: tenants' rights and relocations, leaseholders' rights and relocation, rents and service charges, residents' protection.

MC will circulate to the group some examples charters and arrange for a facilitator to attend the next CFG meeting. TW stated that time will be allocated to discuss the Ebury charter in detailed and facilitated way on 29th March.

ACTION: JMM/MC to arrange a facilitator for charter discussion at next meeting.

ACTION: MC/GM to share electronic versions of example charters. Hard copies of examples charters will be made available for CFG members to collect from the Regeneration Base.

6. Engagement timetable

Copies of the scenario factsheets will be issued to residents, and will be shared electronically with members of the CFG by 22nd March. Hard copies will be available to collect from the Regeneration Base.

MC explained that Purdah will take place from 26th March and that this will limit the amount of new information. Council officers continue to operate business as usual so if you have any questions about the factsheets that have been shared you can come in and talk to us.

RR wanted to formally recognise and thank the Community Engagement Team, namely JMM and MC for their help and support in getting the RA set up.

JMM stated that through the workshops and meetings, we have shown how important it is for the residents to have a formal RA which provides an inclusive balanced voice of residents across the community.

SM asked if the RA could have a permanent premise in any renewal option taken forward, and if they would have to pay rent for it? JMM stated that this could be a commitment in the charter to provide a new space for the RA.

7. Future Workshops

MC explained the next set of community engagement activities will be on 22nd/24th March, where the facts about scenarios will be on display. One to one's will also be available to give residents the opportunity to understand 'what this means for them'.

8. Any other business

The Group needs to consider how the profile of the CFG could be raised within the Community and what each member of the Group could do to achieve this and engage with Estate residents. Ideas suggested included up to date photo up to date photo profiles of each member for future newsletters, use of social media, consideration of a website.

ACTION: CFG to consider ways to raise the profile of the CFG

The estate walkabout with Jonathan Cowie, Chief Executive of City West Homes (CWH) was scheduled for tomorrow 15th March, and was to be attended by both TW and JMM. An update to the group will be provided at the next meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting - scheduled for Thursday 29th March 2018

TW asked if it would help members if the time of the meetings were changed. It was agreed that future meetings would start at 630pm and finish at 830pm.

Future meeting dates:

- Thursday 14th April – 6:30pm
- Wednesday 25th April – 6:30pm
- Thursday 10th May – 6:30pm
- Wednesday 23rd May – 6:30pm
- Wednesday 06th June – 6:30pm
- Wednesday 20th June – 6:30pm