

PRESENT

Members of the Committee

Councillor Quentin Marshall (Chairman)
Councillor Emma Dent Coad, MA
Councillor Gerard Hargreaves
Councillor Tony Holt (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Sam Mackover
Councillor Robert Mingay
Councillor Matthew Palmer
Councillor Will Pascall
Councillor Marie-Therese Rossi
Councillor Linda Wade
Councillor Mrs Rutherford

Others in Attendance

Andrew Heywood (Speaker for item A14)
Michael Clark (Director of Corporate Property)
Yvonne Birch (Director People and Performance, TMO)
Robert Black (Chief Executive, TMO)
Amanda Johnson (Head of Housing Commissioning)
Roger Keane (General Needs Commissioner)
Jon Medlin (Senior Planning Officer)
Steve Mellor (Group Finance Manager)
Gillian Tobin (Senior Housing Policy Officer)
Jerome Treherne (Governance Services)

A1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been submitted from Councillor Coleridge and Laura Johnson.

A2 MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Dent Coad declared that a close relation of hers had an interest in the Kensal Road Land referred to in Appendix A of B3.

A3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2012

The Minutes of the Meeting of 12 September 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Mr Morse was to be asked to clarify the project to trial a Universal Credit Scheme with Westminster. The Committee understood this piece of work was no longer to take place.

Action: Mr Morse

In response to Councillor Dent Coad's query on affordable housing in A5, Mr Clark clarified that community benefits from Section 106 agreements could legitimately cover a variety of elements not just affordable housing.

A4. REPORT BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND PROPERTY

Ms Amanda Johnson highlighted the main themes of the report. She confirmed that a total of 12 new council homes some of four bedroom size were to be built on TMO estates in the borough. Ms Johnson explained that the community facility on the Stable Way Travellers Site was to be re-located to vacant land and this would release space for another residential pitch.

Action: Ms A Johnson

The Committee noted that some housing associations were looking to dispose of stock as part of a stock rationalisation process and stock was normally sold to other housing associations. Ms Johnson advised that housing associations were seeking to rationalise stock especially in locations where they had few units. She said that when housing associations had a local presence, they normally found it easier to improve management of their units. Ms Johnson confirmed that housing associations were required when making disposals to demonstrate that consultation with the local authority and their tenants had taken place and she noted that disposals were not frequent.

Councillor Wade drew attention to the recent disposal of stock by Family Mosaic during which an email to the Council on the proposed disposal had not been received by the relevant officer in time. Ms Johnson advised that Officers should have responded to this and requested further details from Councillor Wade so that this could be investigated. She advised that in a recent case with Notting Hill Housing Group, it had approached the Council with a proposal to sell a small number of units in this borough to pay for property purchases elsewhere in areas with lower land values and had offered the Council the nomination rights. Ms Johnson suggested a paper on disposals for the next Committee.

Action: Ms A

Johnson

Subject to the above, the report was received and noted.

A5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT/TMO MID-YEAR REVIEW

Ms Johnson noted that increased levels of participation and voting at the AGM were probably a result of better promotion of these events, improved attendance at road shows and wider use of the Internet by residents. She drew attention to the TMO's performance which was on target overall and those indicators not on target in September

had improved in October. She assured the Chairman that on the death of a tenant, officers handled succession issues sensitively. The Chairman highlighted the importance of the work on developing investment options. The Committee should scrutinise the premises behind any options for investment being considered, such as the level of investment required, before accepting the need for an options appraisal.

Action: Ms

Tobin

Ms Johnson said the Committee would be updated on the Modular Management Agreement in the New Year.

Action: Ms A

Johnson

The Committee expressed continued concerned over flat entrance doors in TMO stock that were non compliant with fire safety standards. Mr Black responded by emphasising the vast majority of flats were designed to contain fire. He also confirmed the TMO was working with the Fire Brigade at the highest level and the 68 leaseholders with non-compliant doors had been informed by letter that it was their responsibility to meet the standard and they were responding. Councillor Pascall said he appreciated the work already carried out on this issue but urged all parties to make as much progress as quickly as possible.

Councillor Dent Coad praised the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower which she felt showed the Council had listened to those residents.

In response to concern over TMO tenants adversely affected by restrictions on Housing Benefit, Ms Johnson advised that discretionary housing payments were time limited. Once the individual household circumstances were understood, suitable options would be presented to these tenants.

Ms Johnson confirmed that sheltered housing stock could be used to accommodate younger vulnerable residents with special needs where appropriate. Ms Johnson stated that a considerable amount of work had been done in recent years to assess the suitability of both TMO and housing association sheltered housing stock to meet older people's needs. Two stock condition surveys revealed that the current design and access standards of sheltered housing in the borough were not up to standard. Improvements in the stock would take a considerable time and were dependent on site availability. A paper on progress in this area would go to the Committee in the New Year.

Action: Ms A Johnson

Subject to the above, the report was received and noted.

A6. PLANNING POLICY HOUSING ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Mr Medlin summarised the report. He advised that Section 106 agreements were likely for the time being to remain the route for

raising money for affordable housing but nevertheless the document had been drafted to allow for the Community Infrastructure Levy as a possible mechanism. Mr Medlin would circulate to the Committee details of all the consultation events.

Action: Mr Medlin

The Committee noted that the proposed increase in the formula for residential floorspace that triggered financial contributions to affordable housing (from the current 800 to 1200 square metres) referred to the charge of £2,500 per square metre. This was based on development costs and equated to around ten per cent of the value of residential floorspace. The consultation explained the current approach and sought views on future policy changes.

Councillor Rossi was surprised that the options for provision of affordable housing on-site or off-site did not include out-of-borough provision and the Chairman suggested this should be a fourth option.

In response to a query on restricting super-prime developments Mr Medlin advised that it was difficult to influence the scale of these developments through planning law. The Committee noted that central government's wish to remove some planning restrictions could make it even more difficult for planning authorities to restrict such developments.

The Chairman was to draft a response from the Committee but the Labour Group and Councillor Wade reserved their positions and would draft their own responses.

Action: the Chairman / Councillors Dent Coad and Wade

The report was received and noted.

A7. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

The Chairman noted that the Vice-Chairman had already completed a visit and had submitted a visit report and he encouraged Members to contact officers to arrange visits.

Councillor Hargreaves agreed to join the Sub-Group on the Self Financing Regime for Council Housing Finance. Councillor Mackover reported that census information was coming through slowly and would inform the work of the Housing Occupancy Sub-Group. Councillor Palmer was waiting for a suitable consultancy contract to be examined.

Subject to the above, the report was received and noted.

A8. KENSINGTON ACADEMY AND LEISURE CENTRE – SECTION 106 AGREEMENT, CABINET KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported that section 106 Agreement funding was likely to amount to £500k to be spent on a range of activities such as air

quality improvements, library services and open play spaces but the largest proportion would meet transportation needs which were still to be established by TfL. The actual cost to the Council was likely to be £80k.

A9. KENSINGTON ACADEMY AND LEISURE CENTRE – CONTRACT LETTING FOR ENABLING WORKS, KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported the full procurement process had been completed with a total cost of £57.4 million of which £50.4 million would be in payment to the contractor, Leadbitters. In December 2011 the Cabinet had agreed that the combined heat and power plant was to be excluded from these works as it would not represent good value for money. Mr Clark confirmed that the site for residential housing would most likely be released through long leases with the Council retaining the freehold.

A10. DENYER STREET DEPOT REDEVELOPMENT – CABINET KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported on negotiations of financial heads of terms with John Lewis and the report to Cabinet would recommend that John Lewis should meet the cost of a new school, an annex and a new depot for street sweepers. The Council would retain the receipt for the land sale of the depot. This would pay for the development of a commercial building to replace the empty annex. An access route to Sloane Avenue was part of the agreement.

Councillor Hargreaves congratulated Messrs Clark and Ainley for the long and tricky negotiation.

A11. CENTRAL LIBRARY – RENOVATION: APPROVAL OF FEASIBILITY STUDY AND OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET, CABINET KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported on the proposal to carry out the necessary infrastructure improvements for provision of air conditioning, electronic facilities, the roof and new office space for letting. The changes would be to the non library parts and generate a revenue stream of £350k a year. The capital project would be completed before space would be rented out on the lower ground and ground floors. There would be no change to the library apart from the infrastructure improvements. The refurbishment would be challenging as it was a grade 2 listed building and the library services were to be unaffected during refurbishment.

A12. MIDDLE ROW PRIMARY SCHOOL, W10 – APPOINTMENT OF DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACTOR, CABINET KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported on recommendations for the Cabinet for a £10 million project appointed to BAM Construct UK which would cost the Council only £400k once the Department for Education funding was

accounted for. The development on site should start in the New Year.

A13. LAND SWAP FROM THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE GENERAL FUND TO FACILITATE THE KALC PROJECT, CABINET KEY DECISION

Mr Clark reported that 264 square metres of land underneath Grenville Tower would be leased to the General Fund for community use.

A14. PRESENTATION ON 'THE HOUSING MARKET IN LONDON AND OVERSEAS INVESTMENT – BY ANDREW HEYWOOD

Mr Heywood delivered a presentation a copy of which was kept with the minute book. From the discussion that followed Mr Heywood highlighted the need for further detailed analysis and the paucity of key data to inform further exploration of the issues.

Mr Heywood was thanked for his thought provoking presentation.

A15. ANY OTHER ORAL OR WRITTEN ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were none.

The meeting finished at 8.34pm.

Chairman