

**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA****HOUSING AND PROPERTY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
7 NOVEMBER 2013****DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, PROPERTY  
AND REGENERATION****REPORT ON CURRENT ISSUES**

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of recent policy and practice developments, which are likely to impact on the future work of the Business Group and to update Members on progress of important current projects

**FOR INFORMATION**

**HOUSING****1. Edenham Way Update**

- 1.1** Following consultation, the architectural study of the area on Edenham Way was finalised and events held over the summer with local residents and businesses to make them aware of the findings.
- 1.2** Consultation also started with council officers which will be used to help develop a supplementary planning document for the area.
- 1.3** Since then, officers have been planning the procurement process for architects and developing the necessary documentation to carry out a tender to appoint architects for the area. Given the value of the contract, the procurement will be led by EU regulations, and therefore a formal procurement process. The advert for the procurement will be placed later this year, with architects likely to be appointed in spring next year.

**2. Trellick Tower Update**

- 2.1** Over the summer, there was an art installation in the unused garage site at the back of the tower, the artists worked with local residents to put on shows about the local area.
- 2.2** The TMO was successful in its bid for Housing Regeneration Programme funds to improve the CCTV monitoring for the area and also to restore the reception area to a design more in keeping with the original design which opens up the entrance and sets back the

concierge desk. Existing Listed Building Consent covers the changes planned, and the TMO is currently working up detailed plans, which will be shared with residents at a consultation event next week.

### **3. Whistler Walk Update**

- 3.1** Whistler Walk Children's Home is based on the World's End Estate in SW10 OEP. The existing Children's Home is to be relocated to premises known as East Row. These new premises have been designed to a modern specification and will provide more suitable provision than that at Whistler Walk.
- 3.2** It is anticipated that East Row will be completed before the end of 2013, with the Children's home moving out of Whistler Walk in January 2014. At this time the facility at Whistler Walk will be surplus to the Council's requirements.
- 3.3** Some initial work has been carried out to look at the possibility of converting the premises to self contained affordable accommodation. There is a possibility of four or five new units. The Council will be working with KCTMO to obtain a more detailed feasibility study and will then apply for planning permission to convert the premises into housing for letting at social rents. The work can be funded through commuted sums received in lieu of affordable housing.

### **4. Grenfell Tower Update**

- 4.1** RBKC Planners are considering the planning application for the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower and a decision is expected soon.
- 4.2** KCTMO officers are meeting residents on a regular basis and current consultation is focussed on the proposed operation of the new communal heating system. Residents will also be involved in the evaluation and selection of contractors.
- 4.3** The proposed works have been advertised through OJEU and Pre Qualification Questionnaires have been evaluated. Tenders will be invited in November once the specification is finalised and planning permission is confirmed. The works are anticipated to start on site in spring 2014."

### **5. Enforcement of HRA Car Parks**

- 5.1** KCTMO has requested that the Council create a Traffic Management Order covering all parking areas on HRA land, to enable an effective



enforcement regime following the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, which banned clamping and towing of vehicles parked on private land. Transport officers raised a number of concerns about this proposal, including the possibility of entrapment of vehicles parked behind gated sites, requests from residents in private roads across the Borough for similar treatment and a fall in the Council's performance at PATAS (the independent tribunal for appeals against Penalty Charge Notices issued by the London Local Authorities)

- 5.2** Transport officers met with the Deputy Leader and Cllr Coleridge (Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Transport & Arts), KCTMO and Housing Officers to discuss these concerns on 26 September 2013.
- 5.3** Councillors agreed that a Traffic Management Order should be created on the terms requested by KCTMO, as they felt that the Council had a strong case to protect private land on Council estates from illegal parking. It also agreed that major gates could be removed to prevent illegally parked vehicles from being entrapped.
- 5.4** The traffic order will cost c.£100,000 to implement, there is a small risk to the General Fund if the costs are not recovered from penalty charges however, to compensate for any loss, it was accepted that the contract could be varied and enforcement activity reduced thus reducing the cost of enforcement.
- 5.5** Provisional timescales are below:
- KCTMO 'informal' consultation with residents over the general principles – November 2013 to January 2014
  - Statutory public consultation on the Traffic Management Order – February to March 2014
  - Key Decision on Traffic Order – April 2014
  - Traffic Order into effect – May 2014
  - Go-live of enforcement service – June 2014

## **6. Housing Standards Review Consultation**

- 6.1** The Department for Communities and Local Government has recently consulted on the Housing Standards Review which examined existing building regulations and local housing standards. The consultation period ran from 20<sup>th</sup> August until 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013.
- 6.2** The aim of the consultation was to seek views on the results of the review which is to reform the framework of building regulations, guidance, local codes and housing standards developers currently

have to adhere to with the stated aim of reducing bureaucracy and costs on house builders.

- 6.3** The consultation proposed a number of options and sought comments on their merits for national standards across a range of themes namely: energy, accessibility, security, water, space, and process/compliance.
- 6.4** RBKC has produced a response, which was led on by the Planning department with input from Housing and the Climate Change Manager. Within Housing Needs specialist knowledge from the Housing Opportunities Team occupational therapists, and officers within the Strategy and Regeneration Team were incorporated into the response drafted by Claire Shearing, Senior Planning Officer.
- 6.5** There was general consensus that the currently adopted standards detailed in the London Plan 2011 were successfully delivering housing appropriate to the needs of RBKC's residents and that any changes being proposed for minimum standards should mirror or exceed the specifications contained within this and apply to all tenures.
- 6.6** The Government's intention is to issue a national Described Standards document as soon as possible after the consultation, with a planning Policy Statement setting out how housing standards should be treated in the planning system in the future.

## **PROPERTY**

### **7. Urgent Key Decision: Flat 8 284 Old Brompton Road, SW5 – statutory lease extension**

- 7.1** There were issues in getting the premium settled in view of the complication with the head lease in the building.
- 7.2** In addition, this matter had also been referred to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) by the tenant for determination of the price to be paid for the lease extension, and a hearing was scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013. The Tribunal's regulations in relation to the conduct of cases require both parties (i.e. the Council and the tenant) to submit two weeks before (by 17 September 2013) the tribunal date of 1 October 2013 proofs of expert evidence along with bundles of legal documentation to the Tribunal.
- 7.3** It would have wasted resources in instructing the Council's retained consultant surveyors to produce a proof of evidence in order to meet this deadline when the price for the lease extension had



already been agreed between the parties' valuers, subject to Council approval.

- 7.4** Similarly, there would have been considerable unnecessary legal costs involved in preparing the legal bundle.
- 7.5** Councillor Marshall, in accordance with the Constitution as the Scrutiny Chairman, agreed that this decision was indeed urgent. In taking this Urgent Decision on 11 September 2013, it has avoided the abortive costs which would have been incurred in complying with the Tribunal's directions, or the penalties which the Tribunal might levy for non-compliance.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

### **Councillor Rock Feilding-Mellen**

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Property Services and  
Regeneration

**Background Papers used in the Preparation of this Report:** None

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