

Ebury Bridge Community Futures Group – Meeting 1

25th October 2017, 630pm – 730pm

Community Engagement Centre, 1 Wainwright House, Ebury Bridge Estate

MEMBERS ATTENDANCE:

- Fiona Quick [FQ]
- Kari Haslam [KH]
- Mike Smith [MS]
- Mohammed Eisa [ME]
- Rachel Riley [RR]
- Rhoda Torres [RT]
- Shaista Miah [SM]
- Waleed Shaath [WS]

WCC OFFICERS:

- Gelina Menville [GM] - Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team
- James Green [JG] – Development Team
- Louis Blair [LB] – First Call Housing (Independent Resident Advisor)
- Martin Crank [MC] – Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team

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. The feedback from the group exercise has been added at the end.*

Introduction

MC opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their coming and explained the importance of the opportunity this group has to work with and. MC starting the introductions with himself, and followed round the room. Each person addressed the room stating their name, what part of the estate they lived, and how long they had been part of the Ebury Bridge Community – with the length of time on the estate ranging from 6 years to 42 years. Officers provided their roles within the project.

Setting the Scene

It was explained that whilst no final decision had been made, the Council does have an intention to improve the estate in some way and that doing nothing was simply not an option. MC explained that the role of the group was to work with and enter into constructive communications with the Council, and that the CFG would provide strategic feedback into the process.

Terms of Reference

MC explained that this first meeting, was to bring the group together to meet each other and the officers, and to look at the terms of reference for the group. 'Ebury Bridge Community Future Group: Draft Terms of Reference' document was circulated and MC confirmed that an electronic version would be sent to all members, and that any additional comments should be received by close of play on Friday (27/10/17).

FQ asked for it to be explained to the group, what 'Terms of Reference' were for clarity across the entire group. LB explained that it was a document which sets out membership, code of conduct, expectations of the group as well as setting out the group's aims and objectives. This is what you sign up to as a member of the group, like a constitution.

MC reiterated that this group has been set up to help the Council take forward renewal plans for the estate, as such members will be ambassadors for the project and information will be passed through to this group in a fair and transparent way, however there may be times where due to the potential sensitive nature of the information that might be shared with the group in the future, a confidentiality agreement may also need to be signed. It was explained in what situations this might be required.

LB read through each section of the TOR document in turn, allowing for comment and question at the end of each section. The following questions arose throughout the discussions of the document:

Section 1. Background

RR asked for confirmation that there would be no “poor door” in any new scheme, explaining that in some new developments all social housing is relocating in the least favourable position on the estate. MC explained that the intention of the Council would be to recreate a mixed community, and that a commitment had been made from the Council that they would try their utmost to work with leaseholders who exercise their ‘Right to Return’ to provide new accommodation in the same area of the estate, if that was something that was important to them.

SM asked if there will be private properties built on the estate as well as private. MC confirmed that the estate will remain a council owed estate but that some private properties will need to be sold in order to provide cash into the scheme. However MC also stated that this was a perfect opportunity to increase the amount of social housing within the estate, which could potentially double the amount of social housing, and this could be one of the options that can be explored.

Section 2. The Community Futures Group

RR asked for the aims to include reference to the fact that all renewal options (from refurbishment of the whole estate through to the rebuilding of the whole estate, and partial options in between) will be explored. RR to suggest text.

FQ requested that they be in place a Service Level Agreement between the CFG and the Council to manage timely information sharing processes and to ensure effective partnership working between the group and the Council. This will also ensure that neither side causes delay to any deadlines, milestones or processes, due to not have information or providing a response within a timely fashion.

FQ also requested having meeting documentation circulated ahead of the meeting to allow members time to read and digest it, as well as provide meeting notes promptly following the meeting.

MC suggested that this wouldn’t need to be a SLA but that a clear communications protocol should be set up, for the mutual working benefit of both the Group and the Council.

3. Membership

RR stating that not all blocks were represented here and if there was a reason was 12 members where selected. Also there are not investment landlords present.

MC explained that the number of members could be looked at if the group wished to do so, and that if it was felt that there were residents from blocks who have not yet registered an interest that they could do so.

MC further clarified that the investments landlords would be engaged in a different way – through personal one to ones – and that it was important for this group to remain community focused. JG added whilst we will engage with investment landlords, they are likely to have different issues to those actually living and working on the estate.

RR asked about private tenants, not being listened to as part of the process. MC explained that all voices within the estate will be heard and that the wider community will be invited to consultation activities as the process progresses.

4. *The Chair*

RR asked if the Council had someone in mind for this position

JG and MC both explained that the Council do not have anyone in mind, but would expect this to be a housing professional, ideally with regeneration experience, to provide support to the group.

FQ, is the independent chair a fixed position for the duration of the group, or would the idea be for a resident chair to take over in the future.

MC said this can be decided by the group but the chair has to be someone that the group are comfortable with. This can be kept flexible to enable further discussions in the future, allowing a member/resident to take this role at an appropriate time, if decided.

5. *Time Commitment*

FQ requested that members be given fair notice of future meetings. A two week notice period was agreed on with the following dates being set for ease of future planning:

- Wednesday 8th November
- Wednesday 15th November
- Wednesday 29th November
- Wednesday 13th December
- Wednesday 20th December (*provisional date for informal Christmas gathering*)

6. *Code of Conduct*

The breach of tenancy/lease item and reference to internet links, needs to needs to be rewritten to make it clearer.

Overall a productive discussion took place about the terms reference. There were some typo's which also needed correcting, but the content overall seemed well received by the group.

RR asked for the deadline to be extended for further comment as she did not want this document to be rushed and wanted time over the weekend to digest its content and provide any additional comments. MC agreed to circulate an electronic version of the document to the group and that any further comments should be received by 9am on Monday 30th October.

RR asked if she could share the document with people not present of the meeting.

MC stated that it was important that this group remain in control of this document, as such it shouldn't be circulated within the wider community at this stage, as it is still in draft and the group are working on it. MC confirmed once the document was finalised, it will be published on the website for everyone to see.

Format of meetings

It was agreed that meetings will take place at the Community Engagement Centre, unless there was a requirement for desk work/activities, in which case the Edgson Youth Club will be booked.

The general feeling across the group was that it was easier to meet on the estate.

The group agreed going forward to start at 6pm.

WCC renewal objectives

The group were asked to complete a short exercise, looking at the Council's objectives (taken from the July Cabinet Report) and to rank them in order of importance to them.

This was an individual exercise, with the group coming together at the end to share their top 3 or 4 priorities.

FQ asked why this exercise was completed at the end. MC stated that the team had some discussion about when best to do this exercise, and decided to do it last. GM stated that it was important for the Terms of Reference to be discussed without being influenced by the Council's objectives, and that is why the exercise was completed at the end rather than at the start.

Appendix 1: Ebury Estate Renewal – WCC Strategic Objectives

The group were asked to look at the Council’s list of strategic objectives and to rank them in order of importance. Individual responses has been collated in the document below.

Not all of the objectives were ranked and some people disagreed with specific objectives. This document aims to simply record the individual responses within the group, and lists the objectives in the same order as presented to the group. This task was completed by all 8 attendees.

Task:

To achieve the Councils overall housing estate regeneration programme on Ebury and deliver new homes at Ebury Bridge Estate, the Council’s strategic objectives for the renewal of the estate are to:

WCC Strategic Objective	Responses within the group
Optimise the development opportunity, within the confines of the site and the surrounding area.	9 th – 1 person 10 th - 1 person 11 th - 1 person No - 1 person
Engage with residents on all proposals, in a full and transparent way that ensures residents and stakeholders have meaningful and early opportunities to shape the future of the estate.	1 st - 4 people 2 nd - 2 people 3 rd - 1 person 4 th - 1 person
Ensure that displaced tenants have the right to return to a social tenancy, Leaseholders are offered a fair deal and have the option to return to the estate. A package of support for businesses is developed.	1 st - 2 people 2 nd - 3 people 3 rd - 3 people
Consider the most appropriate combination of physical interventions to achieve the agreed aims of regeneration, including repair and refurbishment, investment in public realm, infill and intensification, demolition and rebuild.	3 rd - 1 person 4 th - 1 person 5 th - 1 person 6 th - 1 person 7 th - 2 people
Where demolition and rebuilding is chosen as part of estate regeneration, this should only happen where it provides an increase in affordable homes within the City.	2 nd - 1 person 3 rd - 1 person 4 th - 1 person 5 th - 1 person 7 th - 2 people

Proposals should look to improve the appearance of the estate, its relationship with the surrounding neighbourhood, benefitting from the excellent transport links and emerging development in the area.	3 rd - 2 people 4 th - 1 person 5 th - 1 person 6 th - 1 person 8 th - 2 people
Provide active frontages to Ebury Bridge Road.	5 th - 1 person 9 th - 1 person 10 th - 1 person 11 th - 1 person No - 1 person
Deliver housing of the highest design quality, as quickly as possible, using modern methods of construction where appropriate.	1 st - 1 person 5 th - 1 person 6 th - 1 person 9 th - 2 people
Using regeneration as a driving force to achieve social, employment and health improvements through new amenity space, employment and health interventions.	2 nd - 2 people 4 th - 2 people 6 th - 2 people
Deliver a scheme that makes a positive financial contribution to the City Council	8 th - 2 people 10 th - 1 person 11 th - 2 people
Proactively monitor the impacts and outcomes of regeneration, seeking to involve residents where possible.	3 rd - 1 person 4 th - 1 person 7 th - 1 person 8 th - 1 person 10 th - 2 people