

Serpentine Court Steering Group

Tuesday 4th August 2020

Minutes

Residents: Danielle Slaymaker (Chair), Sharon Jordan (Deputy Chair), Cassy Elliott ((Deputy Chair), Ronke Oludapo, Joan Forsyth, Pauline Wright, Mercy Zvenyika, Stacey Coleburt, Sebastian Power, Mariee Wymer (observer – Locals of the Lakes), John Pearce (observer), Steve Hallett (observer – St. Frideswide)

Staff: Anne Bircham (Milton Keynes Council), (Kevin Farrell (Tpas)

Apologies: Margaret Prescott, Sue Evans, Liz Jenkins, Cllr Emily Darlington

1. **Welcome and introductions and ground rules**

Danielle opened the meeting (via Teams) with a welcome and introductions. She reported the contents of the telephone conversation she held with Will Rysdale, Head of Housing Delivery, on Friday 31 July. Will confirmed that he had met with the Legal department to discuss the Residents Charter. Danielle pressed Will to step up efforts to finalise the document. She pointed out that leaseholders are still unclear about the Council's offer, and it is unfair to leave them in suspense. The discussion also included whether there would be resident involvement in procurement of the builders and plans to develop a resident participation model for wider Lakes Estate. Will promised to continue work on the above matters on his return from holiday.

2. **Minutes of 14th July 2020**

Agreed as a true record.

Matter Arising – MKC procurement team to meet with Tpas and DS. Currently MKC is working on looking at best procurement methods for the project. Carried forward. **Action AB**

Matter Arising – MKC to organise a rents and welfare benefits workshop. Anne reported 4 possible dates for the session – 9,10, 17,18 September - 6.30 -7.30pm. Danielle agreed to conduct a poll to identify the best date for SCSG members. Carried forward. **Action DS**

Matters Arising – Phil Chandler provided Anne with a progress report on the draft Home Loss Payments and Disturbance Compensation policy. Anne explained that the policy is still awaiting sign-off by the Head of Housing Delivery and the Director of Housing & Regeneration before it goes to Delegated Decisions Committee for approval. Danielle proposed inviting Will Rysdale to the September SCSG meeting to provide an update on this and other issues (See Action List on page 3). **Action DS**

Matters Arising – Anne reported that there had been no further progress with the resident involvement model for the regeneration of

the Wider Lakes. Draft outlines for an estate-wide stakeholder group have been presented to an internal Strategic Housing Delivery Board. Awaiting further decision from Head of Housing Delivery. Danielle agreed to raise the issue with Will Rysdale and ask him to provide an update at the September SCSG meeting. **Action DS**

Matters Arising – Dawn Wilson (Housing Access Manager) provided clarification regarding the term ‘housing choices’ in the Local Lettings Policy. Anne explained as follows: MKC cannot be sure how many choices tenants will be offered until the development stage is reached and it has conferred with HTA. The process may change but the intention is to give tenants the choice of a few properties before a formal offer is made, wherever possible. However, there may be circumstances where it is impossible to do so, due to the tenant’s needs or the limited availability of certain types of property in a particular location – there may be limited supply in some cases. SCSG supported the policy and took the view that it was beneficial to tenants. It would like MKC to spell out how the choices will work in the policy. Danielle to write to Anne asking her to pass SCSG’s request to Dawn. **Action DS**

3. **Project update**

Following a request from Danielle Anne provided an update on the current staffing arrangements for Serpentine Court and the wider Lakes Estate. Anne Bircham will return to her substantive post as Community Partnership Officer next week. Peter Wilson has been appointed as a Regeneration consultant for the next 6 months to support the team. Anne reports to Rahul Mundry, Development Manager and is line-managed by Will Rysdale. The Community Partner Manager post will not be replaced. SCSG was concerned to learn that the post has been deleted. It also observed that Regeneration forms only one part of Will Rysdale’s role, and Peter will only be in post for 6 months. Anne reported that Rahul has been tasked with delivery of the project. Danielle agreed to invite Rahul to the September meeting (together with Will) to discuss resourcing of the project. **Action DS**

Following concerns raised by SCSG over the information that had been given during the Town Council meeting about the shops. Anne reported that Rahul and Samantha Goodwin of Tpas had visited the owners of Best One and Happy Shopper to reassure them over the Council’s plans for retail on the Lakes. The discussions were cordial and neither owner expressed any concerns over what had been said at the Town Council meeting. An Upd8 will be issued this week by MKC with information about the Council’s standpoint on retail during the regeneration.

MKC Cabinet will discuss the funding of the project on 1st September 2020. There will be a live stream on Youtube and Anne will circulate the link to SCSG members via email on the day. Here are general details about the format of the meetings and the papers <https://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/> **Action AB**

The planning application is now due to be submitted to a Development Control Committee on either Thursday 8th October 2020 or Thursday 5th November 2020 (Nb No dates have been set).

Following Matters Arising and the Project Update, SCSG was of the view that a backlog has been building regarding policies and decisions about the regeneration process that directly affect tenants and leaseholders. It was agreed that Danielle would invite Will and Rahul to the September meeting and provide them with a list of the issues SCSG would like them to address. The list is as follows:

1. Resident Charter – particularly the delays in finalising the leaseholder offer.
2. Procurement – clarification of the Council's position regarding resident involvement in procuring the builders, and the proposals submitted by Tpas.
3. Home Loss Payments and Disturbance Compensation policy – a progress report on when this policy will be presented for committee approval.
4. Proposals for a resident involvement model for the Wider Lakes Estate – a progress report on the proposal submitted by Anne Bircham and Samantha Goodwin.
5. Local Lettings Policy – SCSG to highlight the need for MKC to clarify how the re-housing choices process will work in practice.
6. Staffing resources – SCSG to seek assurances that MKC is resourcing the project, correctly.

4. **Questions**

Q. Will we, as Lakes Estate residents, have the opportunity to hear from the procured contactors on how they are going to manage the environmental effects of the immediate residents e.g noise, dust/dirt and general security, increased vehicles & machinery and working time schedules, the building works are going to be going on for a long period time.

A: The contractors will work within the rules and guidelines of the MK Council building restrictions regarding hours and associated building noise. The matter of how residents will be able to ask questions of short-listed contractors is still under discussion. Please see Matters Arising and point 2 in the action list which is going to be provided to Will Rysdale, Head of Housing Delivery, by Danielle.

Q: In the matters arising (of the July SCSG meeting), it states that there will be no compensation for the wider Lakes resident regarding the disturbance. I would like to know how the council came to that decision considering the amount of noise and dirt that residents in the immediate area will have to deal with. Compensation could come in the form of reduced rent or council taxes.

A. As per the previous answer; Residents on the wider Lakes estate would not be entitled to compensation for any disturbance caused by the regeneration.

Q. There was an article in the MK Citizen last week about YourMK being dissolved. Will this have any effect on our project?

A. No it won't. In 2018, MKC decided to end its partnership with YourMK, following feedback from the community. Since then the Council has been directly overseeing regeneration projects in both the Lakes Estate and Fullers Slade. A Council decision was taken last week to formally dissolve YourMK. This does not affect the current programme in Lakes Estate and Fullers Slade. The Council awaits the outcome of the Planning Application in the Lakes Estate and looks forward to working with the Community to develop detailed proposals in Fullers Slade.

5. **Any other business**

Steve Hallett asked about the status of the plans for a community hub. Anne reported that there have been no recent developments. The matter is sitting with Will Rysdale and he is considering the options. Anne agreed to keep Steve informed, as the church would like to be involved in future discussions about the matter and has some ideas to contribute. **Action AB**

Anne is also working with the team on the estate wide improvements programme which includes some courtyards on the estate. Residents in those areas will be consulted about all the positive ideas that could take place. She is also drafting input for a resident engagement programme which will be overseen by the Development Manager.

6. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 8th September - 6.30pm – 8.00pm via Teams