

Serpentine Court Steering Group

Tuesday 10th September 2019

Minutes

Residents: Danielle Slaymaker (Chair), Sharon Jordan (Deputy Chair), Cassandra Elliott (Deputy Chair), Robyn Goodwin, Nadia Hardi, Joan Forsyth, Ronke Oludapo, Pauline Wright, Mercy Zvenyika, Stacey Coleburt, Jan Power, Mariee Wymer (observer – Locals of the Lakes), Jean Wallace (observer), Clive Wallace (observer), Zamira Abdi (observer)
Staff: Anne Bircham (Milton Keynes Council), Kevin Farrell (Tpas), Jonathan Rees (HTA)
Apologies: Cllr Emily Darlington, Nasteexo Cabdi

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

Danielle had another commitment which meant she was unable to be present at the start of the meeting. Kevin opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions.

He welcomed Jan and Stacey as full members of SCSG.

2. **Minutes of 2nd July 2019**

Agreed as a true record.

Matter Arising – Anne had invited Jonathan to the meeting.

Matter Arising – Kevin had contacted Lizzie Brown regarding the Resident Charter – see item 5.

Matter Arising – Kevin reported that the visit to the New Avenue wasn't worth making as the project was still at an early stage and no residents had been through the whole process. Attention has been switched to Dollis Valley – see item 5.

Matter Arising - The Clerk to the Town Council had responded positively to Sharon about the about the dog bins but she is still waiting for a response about the ash trays.

3. **Project Update – Anne Bircham (MKC)**

Consultation Events

The next consultation event will take place is on Saturday 28th September at Spotlight between 12 noon and 4.00pm (see item 4), which will exhibit the planning application before submission to MKC Planning department. It is important that the details of the application are as full as possible to ensure a successful submission.

Day-to-day Repairs

Mears will be holding a weekly repairs drop-in at Spotlight from 10.30 am to 12.30pm, starting Thursday 26 September. The session will coincide with the coffee morning and the Neighbourhood Officers will also be present.

Aqua Aerobics

Aqua hold an aqua aerobics class every Wednesday for a discounted rate of £2.50 per session. It is open to Lakes residents and they will receive the discount on production of a document showing their address.

Local People Involvement Group

This group has funding to tackle social isolation and encourage healthy lifestyles. It is also trying to build links between the residents of Newton Leys and The Lakes. The funding is available to local groups.

4. **Lakes Consultation Event – 28 September**

Jonathan Rees of HTA took the meeting through the presentation panels that will be used for the event and explained the content.

The exhibition will cover house types, new homes, an update on the site plans, environmental works such as lighting, footpaths and landscaping, and will address the key themes that came out of the Commonplace survey including security and litter.

HTA have been holding meetings with MKC planners and various departments to discuss the new homes, the energy strategy, play facilities, drainage and trees etc.

Jonathan confirmed that the phasing plan is the same as before. However, HTA is now including additional areas for wider estate improvements.

MKC Planning has asked for an archaeological dig to be carried out. This will only apply to the Skene Close and Melfort Drive site.

In meetings with the police, HTA has been asked to consider designing gated alleyways, which would have self-closing gates, well-lit at the entrance and design features to deter people from loitering.

The latest timeline for the submission is December; however, the programme is being regularly monitored to ensure that HTA has sufficient time to address all items required for planning validation and approval. Whilst target dates are set for planning submissions during the regeneration process, the dates can be adjusted to account for updates to the proposed works, unforeseen technical issues arising through surveys or due to issues that are raised through the pre-planning process/discussions with planning officers. The latest update to the programme accounts for the new energy centre being included, estate improvements and time needed to address the drainage issues. SCSG raised the following questions:

Q: Will the roofs of the new building be pitched or flat?

A: Mainly pitched, but there will be some flat roofs containing mechanical services equipment. HTA and the engineers are also investigating the use of 'Blue' flat roofs which are designed to let rainwater evaporate rather than be drained away.

Q: Will the new roads names continue the famous lakes theme?

A: That sounds like a good idea and MKC will consult with residents.

Q: Regarding the energy centre that will service the homes in the central zone, what happens if it stops working?

A: There will be a back-up gas system in place that would kick-in to make sure no one is without heating and hot water.

Q: Who will pay the heating bills?

A: Milton Keynes will implement a system that means that properties will be charged individually through a form of metering. The introduction of the energy centre has only recently been proposed so the management structure is still being reviewed; however, one option includes Milton Keynes council managing this within the Council.

Q: If drainage isn't a problem now, why are the additional drainage systems needed in the future?

A: MKC planning policy requires rainwater to be stored on site temporarily, rather than being displaced into the sewer system as soon as it rains, which could lead to overloading and flooding. As such, water is usually stored in purpose-built ponds or below ground tanks and then slowly fed back into the sewer system.

Q: MKC planning wants to introduce a pond area to help with rainwater drainage, but many of us have serious reservations about the idea due to child safety and fly-tipping. Can we have a poll at the exhibition to ask residents what they think?

A: Yes, we can create a drawing that shows how the drainage works in the area and why the lake is being proposed. We can also run a poll to gauge opinion and to understand the key concerns. It is likely that a pond will still be required in some form; however, we can gather residents' feedback on the key concerns in order that we can address these items.

Action: HTA

Q: Could a splash zone be introduced for kids to play in?

A: The proposed water collection and drainage area has been located near Stoke Road in an area identified for 'ecological enhancements'. This is due to the existing ground levels and to provide a safe distance from activity and play spaces. As such, a splash park in this location may not be suitable.

Q: What size are the balconies?

A: These will be approximately 5m² x 7m² and they will have enough depth for small tables and chairs.

Q: Will there be any 3-bed flats?

A: Currently, all the flats are 1 and 2-bed. However, some 3-bedroom wheelchair apartments may be needed as these homes work better across a single level.

5. **Tpas – Independent Advisor report**

Residents Charter

Kevin had just received MKC's responses. He will be calling workshops with SCSG and the Leaseholder Group to review the Council's feedback.

Action: Kevin

Local Lettings Policy

Kevin and Sharon will raise the matter at the next Project Board and ask for a progress report on the production of the first full draft of the policy. Kevin will then organise a workshop for SCSG.

Action: Kevin & Sharon

Study visits

After consulting Jonathan Rees, Kevin found that the New Avenue regeneration scheme in Southgate, Enfield, was still in the early stages, and no residents had been through the whole regeneration process. Therefore, a visit to Dollis Valley, Barnet, has been arranged for 1st October, where SCSG members will have an opportunity to meet local residents and learn about their experiences, as well as looking at the built environment and landscaping. Kevin and Leanne are in the process of organising the transport and the SCSG members who have volunteered will be receive confirmation and a briefing sheet produced by HTA.

Action: Kevin

Tpas Independent Advice and Support

Kevin and Samantha are unable to attend the exhibition on 28th September due to a training commitment elsewhere. Leanne Farrell will cover for them.

6. **Any other business**

None.

7. **Date and times of future meetings**

Tuesday 8th October - 6.30pm – 8.00pm at Spotlight