

# LWE- Refurbishment Programme Board

Minutes of 16/01/20



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

## LANCASTER WEST REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME BOARD

16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

5:30-7pm

### Minutes and actions from meeting

#### Attendees

Doug Goldring	Director of Housing Management (RBKC)
Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith	Deputy Leader -Lead Member for Grenfell & Housing (Chair)
Susan Al Safadi	LWRA nominee
David Ward	LWRA nominee and Vice-Chair
Fiona Doherty	LWRA coordinator (in place of Chair)
Liam Tedds	MHCLG
James Caspell	Neighbourhood Director (LWNT)
Steve Mellor	Group Finance Manager (RBKC)
Elpida Andreou	Programme Manager (LWNT)
Shaun Haden	Head of Service Improvement (LWNT)
Phoebe Cole	Service Improvement Project Manager (LWNT)
Alejandra Castillo	Project Support Officer (LWNT)

#### Apologies:

Cllr Robert Atkinson	Notting Dale Ward
Cllr Marwan Elnaghi	Notting Dale Ward
Cllr Judith Blakeman	Notting Dale Ward
Desmond Zephyr	Head of Community Development & Partnerships (LWNT)
Monika Lee	Head of Property (LWNT)
Abbas Daoud	LWRA nominee and Chair
David O'Connell	LWRA nominee and Vice-Chair
Laura Williams	MHCLG

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith, Chair, led on the introductions and apologies.
- 1.2 Cllr Kim Taylor Smith stated that there appeared to be a clash of meetings, hence why the ward Councillors could not attend. And added that Council Meetings are posted on the Councils website to consider and check against for future board meetings. These will be checked in advance of future meetings

## **2.0 MINUTES & ACTIONS**

- 2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as accurate and a correct record of discussion and agreement (Appendix A).
- 2.2 James Caspell confirmed that all actions from the previous minutes were completed, or for discussion on the current agenda

## **3.0 PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- 3.1 Elpida Andreou gave an overview of the revised programme (Appendix A) that included an actuals column suggested by Doug Goldring at the previous meeting. For ease, the new Programme highlighted completed task in grey and tasks subject to change (early predictions) in orange. Elpida explained that those in orange would later form individual programmes for each of the projects.
- 3.2 Liam Tedds asked that a simplified version of the programme would be easier to follow that focuses on key milestone dates such as technical design, planning, tender periods, contract commencement etc. Doug asked that the internal voids refurbishment programme is also shown alongside the major works on the new programme. **(ACTION: Elpida Andreou)**
- 3.3 Kim Taylor-Smith raised concerns over the level of disruption residents will have to face during the major works and what plans to decant residents are proposed. James Caspell explained that residents would not be decanted during window renewals and block repair works but respite facilities will be available for use during the day whilst works are on site. The respite options are currently being considered.

The options to enable decants - temporary or permanent – will be considered where major internal refurbishment, including asbestos removal in a flat is planned. Followin the formal request at the previous meeting, a HomeSwitch proposal has been co-designed with residents and is to be discussed later on the agenda.

## **4.0 PROCUREMENT UPDATE**

- 4.1 Elpida Andreou presented the procurement update (Appendix B) highlighting a key programme change in delivering the LWE major works from 4 to 6 discrete projects.
- 4.2 Elpida Andreou advised the Type 4 Surveys tenders received on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were evaluated with residents. The Operation Report was presented to Doug Goldring and

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authorised at the meeting. An award and contract to be actioned with an anticipated start mid to late February 2020 allowing for mobilisation. **(ACTION: Elpida Andreou)**

- 4.3 Elpida Andreou advised that tenders for the Principal Designer and the Mechanical & Electrical Consultants were both due back by end of January 2020. Residents will be encouraged to partake in the evaluations that proved successful with the Type 4 tender. The multi-Disciplinary Design team tenders are anticipated to go out early February 2020.

### **5.0 FINANCE UPDATE**

- 5.1 Elpida Andreou presented spend to date summary on the LWE budget (Appendix C). Doug Goldring asked that a forecast spend profile including void refurbishment costs against the LWE capital budget is considered for the next meeting. **(ACTION: Elpida Andreou/James Caspell)**
- 5.2 Liam Tedds asked that spend targets are agreed against the MHCLG grant to forecast drawdown of the funds by RBKC. Elpida asked if these are required as quarterly targets. Liam confirmed that drawdown would only be required annually so quarterly targets could be estimated and be flexible within the end of year agreed target. **(ACTION: James Caspell/Elpida Andreou)**

### **6.0 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

- 6.1 James Caspell presented the various dashboards for information. (Appendices D1, D2 & D3). James stated that the information from the various workshops, open days and pilot viewings are being gathered and proving extremely useful. For example information from equipment trialled like, Switchee, Nest etc. will be used to decide the internal refurbishment standard to be offered for in situ residents.
- 6.2 James Caspell advised that a state-of-the-art misting system has been trialled in one property, and will be the first in council home in the borough. These systems are easily retrofitted into properties and unlike sprinkler systems do not cause damage to fixtures and fittings. Our Fire Safety Team and Monika Lee, Head of Property Services are currently consulting with the LFB in terms of where these systems should be fitted present. Doug Goldring stated that there is no requirement for any type of sprinkler systems in low rise blocks or indeed retrofitting to existing stock in the low and medium rise stock on LWE . James confirmed that at present consideration to install these systems would be in properties where the risk of a fire and/or the inability to respond to a fire was high. **(ACTION: Monika Lee)**
- 6.3 Kim Taylor-Smith asked the residents present on how they feel about gas cookers being removed and offered all electric? Susan Al Safadi stated that many older residents like cooking with gas and hoped the opportunity to retain their gas cookers would be available. James Caspell confirmed that no resident would be forced to give up gas. However where void refurbishment is being carried out, induction hobs that are energy efficient, and electric cookers, are being gifted alongside other appliances. Residents asked if the Board has a policy

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on further replacing cookers that were replaced following the tragedy. It was felt that those with a new cooking appliance since Grenfell, should not be gifted another one.

6.4 Residents asked if alterations / open planning could be considered. James Caspell explained that this is a live issue being explored with building control, planning and the fire safety team currently.

6.5 David Ward sought clarity on level of surveys completed across the stock. James Caspell advised that over 20% of properties have been surveyed for general stock condition, and information collated to inform the internal refurbishment programme, alongside imminent Type 4 FRAs, and structural surveys of our concrete blocks.

### **7.0 VOID REFURBISHMENT AND LOCAL LETTING PLAN**

7.1 James Caspell presented appendices E1 and E2 and advised that the Local Letting Plan has proved successful; the first 4 bed property has been released as a result. James added that an audit is also being carried out to identify any properties with adaptations that may be offered to residents with specific needs. Kim asked that once there is certainty on the demand and allocations from within the LWE, that vacant properties are placed on the broader Housing Register. Kim asked for an analysis of the demand based on unit size against the list of applicants for the next meeting. **(ACTION: Shaun Haden)**.

7.2 James reported that there is limited demand for studios with many now vacant. Proposals to convert a 2 bed and a studio to form a larger unit is now being drawn up for planning.

7.4 James Caspell advised that a number of voids will be held for potential decants.

### **8.0 HOME SWITCH PROPOSAL**

8.1 Following the request at the previous Board meeting, James Caspell presented the HomeSwitch Proposal (Appendix F) for discussion highlighting the potential savings from Temporary Accommodation of about £4.5m and other benefits. The proposal will afford residents one move into a fully refurbished property whilst providing voids for refurbishment. Doug Goldring stated that the proposal was fundamentally a rolling programme of works and understood the merit in the proposal in terms of assisting the team in delivering the works and reducing multiple disruption to residents. Doug confirmed that technical decants are already used in the rest of the borough.

However, Kim Taylor-Smith expressed some concerns over the method of reallocation and suggested that the proposal should include terms & conditions for applicants. For example, switching should only take place on a like for like basis, and need to be compatible with the borough-wide Allocations Policy. Specific concerns raised by the Chair included potentially confusing objectives of the proposal, the impact on the wider housing register, and potentially “pepper potting” the refurbishment.

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It was agreed that James Caspell would further explore these concerns with the ambition to agree a way forward outside of the meeting, that also reflected the representations made by the resident association (**ACTION: James Caspell**).

8.2 David Ward asked what proposals are being considered for residents adjacent to properties having work in terms of noise and disruption. James stated that respite options are currently being explored and will need to be in place before the in situ refurbishments are scaled up. These will include a mixture of void flats, community centres, organised activities etc. Options will be mapped and advertised prior to works commencing.

### **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE**

9.1 Shaun Haden presented an update that included achievements and goals in energy savings and carbon reduction across LWE. Residents are engaging and embracing the changes that have included switching to a renewable energy provider, trialling LED lighting, and Nest 'Smart' Thermostats.

Shaun went on to explain the various opportunities being explored including renewable energy, ground source heat pumps, solar power, rainwater collection, use of sustainable materials and planting meadows to encourage biodiversity.

9.2 Phoebe Cole explained the proposal to pilot retrofit measures at 50 Verity Close following a meeting with EDF Architects and a visit to a retrofit project in Portsmouth. The scheme would be seeking funding from the Mayors Energy Efficiency Fund (MEEF). Doug Goldring questioned the affordability to roll out such an initiative across the estate within the current budget.. Shaun stated that other Social Landlords introduced a levy within their service charges on the back of energy savings to residents that would help pay back the capital costs. Doug Goldring asked for further information on how other providers have actually implemented this. (**ACTION: Shaun Haden**)

### **10. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

10.1 James Caspell presented the Community Development Dashboard. James stated that in addition to helping residents into work, translation services etc., we are also supporting residents in accessing various funding opportunities for small projects at LWE. One of which is funding for green walls near the leisure centre.

### **11.0 AOB**

11.1 None

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### 12.0 ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM REF	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET DATE
3.2	New programme with a focus on key milestone dates	Elpida Andreou/ Laura Glasgow	February 2020
4.2	Letter of award & Contracts for Type 4 Surveys	Elpida Andreou	Issued 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
5.1	Forecast spend on LWE programme	James Caspell	Next Board Meeting (April 2020)
5.2	Agree targets spends with MHCLG	James Caspell	March 2020
6.2	Advice from LFB on Fire Mist Systems	Monika Lee	Next Board Meeting (April 2020)
7.1	Analysis of the demand based on unit size against the list of applicants	Shaun Haden	Next Board Meeting (April 2020)
8.1	Re-submission of refurb decant scheme, to include Terms & Conditions for applicants.	James Caspell	By next meeting
9.2	Explore options on service charge levy for payback on retrofit projects.	Shaun Haden	March 2020

**12.0 Next Meeting:** Next meeting will be in mid-April 2020, dates to be confirmed.