

Minutes of Ledbury Estate Residents Project Group Meeting 5 December 2017

Attended	Resident members		
	Mike Tyrrell	MT	LBS
	Sharon Shadbolt	SSH	LBS
	Abigail Buckingham	AB	LBS
	Neal Purvis	NP	Open Communities - ITLA
Observers	Jeanette Mason	JM	Ledbury TRA
	Toby Bull	TB	Resident

1.0 Notes of the Meeting 7 November

1.1 The notes of the meeting of 7 November were agreed as accurate.

2.0 Volunteers for vacancy on RPG and Update of Terms of Reference.

2.1 The RPG agreed to amend item 9 of the Terms of Reference to become:

9. *The Ledbury Towers RPG shall consist of up to 9 tenants and leaseholders. The members will be resident in, or may be temporarily decanted from, the Ledbury Towers.*

2.2 The RPG welcomed Shelene Byers and Serife Dervish as members of the RPG.

3.0 Option Appraisal

3.1 MT reported the Council welcomed the conclusion of the Arup Report that it was possible to strengthen and refurbish the blocks. The report to the Council's Cabinet on 12.12.17. explained this and set out an outline to make decisions about the future of the blocks.

3.2 SD asked what was the main reason that the strengthening works needed to be done. MT replied that the works had to be done to meet the standard in the 2012 Regulations for Large Panel Construction Blocks. MT reported that LBS were meeting Communities and Local Government, the government department responsible for housing (CLG) on Wednesday 6.12.17.

3.3 NP explained that residents had submitted questions after the meeting with Arup on 23.11.17. He was awaiting responses. Residents had since raised more questions for Arup. MT responded that answers from Arup had been received by LBS and would be forwarded by LBS.

3.4 VT asked why residents would have to move out for refurbishment works. AB replied that to fit the strengthening the floor screed would have to be dug up. There would be a substantial amount of work inside flats and dust and noise. It would not be possible to do strengthening works with residents in occupation.

3.5 VT explained that some elderly residents were not aware of this. MT offered to visit any residents who were not aware of the implications of the Arup Report.

3.6 RPG members suggested issues that should be taken into account in the option appraisal process in setting out different options that were appraised. The issues that were identified were: plumbing (including soil stacks), leaks, sprinklers, sealing/tanking of kitchens and bathrooms, renew the cold water tanks, insulation to the block.

3.7 LBS to review when other items had been upgraded or replaced, including; lifts (renewed in Peterchurch 2012), water pumps and rubbish chutes. Roofs had been renewed in 2006.

3.8 There were some problems that needed solutions. Such as condensation in the communal stairways in some, but not all blocks, that make the floor slippery. Window safety catches were not fitted (or working) in all flats. SD suggested that vents in the communal stairwells that are not regularly cleaned, and get gummed up should be replaced.

3.9 TE asked whether the timber banister rails in the communal stairways met fire safety standards. **AB to circulate FRA for each of the four tower blocks.** There were questions about the illumination of the stairwells in the tower blocks in the case of fire.

3.10 SB asked why light fittings in the kitchens and bathrooms were impractical and difficult for residents, particularly elderly residents to replace the bulbs. AB explained that there is a requirement to fit energy saving lightbulbs, and the fittings were part of a LBS standard specification.

3.11 JD suggested there was an opportunity to look at the design of rubbish disposal, as the system in place did not work well.

3.12 SD asked whether the garages would be included as part of the option appraisal?

3.13 MT explained the Option Appraisal process and outline timescale from a circulated document *Ledbury Key Stages*. The ideas as to what should be included in the Specification for the Option Appraisal would be circulated to RPG members, to be agreed by the RPG meeting on 16 January. There would then be a two week consultation with residents across the estate, before the specification was priced by cost consultants. The results of this consultation, leading to a final specification for the cost consultants will be decided by the RPG Meeting 6.2.17.

3.14 There was a discussion on the options to either use one of the two cost consultants companies that LBS has a contract framework contract with, or to go out to tender to contract with another cost consultant organisation. AB outlined the process of engaging through the framework contract or through a tender. The tender process would add at least three to four months to the timetable, and would lead to some delay in pricing the options, and therefore when a decision could be reached on the future of the blocks. AB was confident that either of the two companies on the framework contract could provide the work and standard needed. Both were in the final year of a four year contract and were expected to bid to for the next four year framework contract.

3.15 There was a discussion on the pros and cons of the options, and whether a tender process would lead to any different outcome. The RPG's view was that using one of the two companies on the existing framework contract was the best option. **AB to manage process to select cost consultants, and to keep RPG informed through the process.**

3.16 Following the estatewide consultation on the specification for the Option Appraisal, the cost consultants will price each of the options. To carry out the Option Appraisal that follows this, there is a need to contract with Option Appraisal Consultants.

3.18 AB outlined the tender process for this, with an advert for organisations, invitation to tender, and evaluation of the tenders received. RPG members will be involved in the process of selecting the Option Appraisal Consultants. If the value of the tender is above threshold of £164,176, the process will be through an OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) which includes an advert across Europe, and has EU defined timescales. AB gave examples of recent similar work that had been close to the EU threshold. **AB to review previous work for the Council and advise RPG on whether OJEU procurement is needed and the timetable for procurement of the Option Appraisal consultants.**

3.19 NP can provide support to RPG members who are interested in taking part in the choosing of the Option Appraisal Consultants.

3.20 MT asked the RPG for the most effective methods to engage with residents who could not attend meetings on the specification that is priced by the cost consultants.

3.21 TE suggested residents who had moved out with the Right to Return should be consulted. MT confirmed that they are being sent the Ledbury Newsletter weekly.

3.22 Sessions or exhibitions at the entrance to each block between 3pm and 6pm are a good way to meet most residents.

3.22 SB suggested RPG members acting as block champions and advertising that they would be available in their home at a particular time each week/

3.23 The RPG supported the idea of a public meeting in late January to update residents on progress, and explain the Options for the Specification to be priced. **MT to suggest date for estatewide public meeting.** MT to co-ordinate dates with JM for TRA AGM.

3.24 NP suggested that the Council's Community Engagement Section carry out online consultations boroughwide and may be able to help set up web based consultation.

3.25 TE suggested that most leaseholders were contactable through an email list.

3.26 MT to suggest dates for later stages in the option appraisal process in an updated version of the paper to the next RPG Meeting. This is to include the *purdah* period, when it is not possible for the Council to make decisions that could have any effect on the outcome of the local elections on 3 May 2018.

4.0 Updates from LBS

4.1 MT reported that the fire alarm system had been checked in Peterchurch and was working. Checks on the other three blocks would take place on 6.12.17. If these were successful, the changeover to a two fire warden per block system, with fully operational fire alarms would happen at the end of week beginning 11 December. Non resident leaseholders had been contacted to make sure they inform the Council of any change of tenants so new tenants can be briefed on evacuation procedures.

4.2 SD asked whether the wardens knew who vulnerable residents are. There is information for each block held securely it would be handed to the Fire Brigade when they arrived at any callout.

4.3 AB reported that there had been some pilot work to identify what was effective for the deep clean. The deep clean will take place after the fire alarms and the entryphone doors are fully operational. Acid cleaning will not work on the stairs, but will work on the landings and the walls. There will be a walkaround in each block to identify works needed by block.

3.27 There was a discussion on the checking of the entryphone system SSh confirmed that LBS had records of the residents who had received new entryphone fobs. LBS would meet the engineering team to check the door entry systems on 8.12.17.

3.28 SSh is leading on the project to decorate the hoardings. VT, TE, SS and JM to meet SSh on 13.12.17. to plan the work.

4.0 Resident Issues

4.1 Compensation – NP is awaiting response from Leasehold Section on any further compensation that may be offered to leaseholder. Tenants to consider this and compare with compensation that has been offered to tenants. MT reported this information should be received imminently. AB explained that the gaps and cracks could not be made good until the Option Appraisal process had set out the future of the blocks and works that would be included in this.

4.2 Residents raised questions about enforcement of parking on the estate. Parking was difficult, not just on the estate, but also in the surrounding streets. MT explained that staff and contractors were allowed to deliver, but were not allowed to park on the estate. VT had reported parking without permits online but there had been no action from LBS Parking Enforcement. This is an estatewide issue that should be taken up through the TRA.

5.0 Draft Council Offer to Tenants and Leaseholders

5.1 NP explained that the document was an attempt to pull together in one place what the Council were offering in rehousing, and compensation to both tenants and leaseholders. The intention was that when agreed the Council would publish it. **RPG Members to review the document and contact NP if there are issues that are unclear, or have been missed.**

6.0 Council Decision Making

6.1 NP drew RPG members attention to information previously circulated to Councillors and decisions that Councillors were expected to make on Ledbury:

- The Right to Return will be in the newsletter, and sent to all Ledbury Towers tenants.
- Ledbury Update Report – to be considered by Council Cabinet on 12 December
- Ledbury Leaseholder Buyout - to be considered by Council Cabinet on 12 December

7.0 Matters Arising from Minutes 7.11.17.

7.1 SSh confirmed that satisfaction surveys following the hot water and heating works would be issued to residents by 15.12.17. to identify any post works issues.

8.0 Future Meeting Dates

- 16 January
- 6 February
- 6 March

- 10 April (to avoid Easter week)
- 1 May
- 5 June
- 3 July
- 7 August