

Minutes of a meeting of the Resident Steering Group for Alice Shepherd House & Oak House held on 28th June 2021

Hybrid Meeting held In Person/Zoom

Residents Present:

Nadia Mahmoud – Alice Shepherd House
Jane McGregor – Alice Shepherd House
Ashley Lowther – Alice Shepherd House
Sharon Holmes – Oak House
Habib Ahmod – Alice Shepherd House
Cynthia Owusu – Alice Shepherd House

Others Present:

Lee Page – Independent Resident Adviser – TPAS
Mike Tyrrell – Residents Advocate
Mynul Islam – One Housing
Emma Leigh Price – One Housing
Leila Arefani – One Housing
Paul Handley – One Housing

Apologies:

Jill Skeels – St John's TRA

1 Welcome & Introduction

1.1 The apologies that were given are noted above.

2 Notes of the Meeting held on 24th May 2021

2.1 Accepted as a true record of the meeting

3 Matters Arising

3.1 6.7 AL had received a hard copy of the Offer Document issued to residents of Kedge, Starboard & Winch. NM & JM also requested hard copies. The document has been circulated electronically.

3.2 8.2 LA to chase up on the issue around public liability insurance in the playground areas. **LA**

4 Attendance

4.1 No current issues.

5 Feedback on 3rd Exhibition (8th & 12th June 2021)

5.1 LA gave feedback on the exhibition. There had been a good

turnout on the Tuesday event but 28 households attended overall. There were 4 other attendees over the two events including Ward Councillors. A total of 18 questionnaires had been completed and over 300 post it notes had been attached, with comments, to the display boards.

- 5.2 Following the event a booklet of all the display boards had been delivered to those households not listed as having attended and the Steering Group members. Unfortunately, the A3 size had meant that they weren't able to fit through individual letterboxes, but officers will check if they had been received when the follow-up telephone calls were made. A learning experience! **OH (future reference)**
- 5.3 To date MI & EP had undertaken 16 follow-up calls to residents and these will continue. Details to be shared with LP who will make some of the calls. To date only one resident had said that they hadn't received the booklet. The intention is keep going until feedback has been received from a minimum of 70% of households. **LP to undertake some of the feedback calls**
- 5.4 LA shared a draft presentation on the feedback at the event. A full presentation to be presented when all of the comments had been fully analysed, at the July meeting.
- 5.5 Preliminary results indicated some key themes with residents in favour of
- More greenery & planting
 - Encouraging biodiversity
 - Small water features
 - Secure courtyards
 - New community centre
 - Play spaces
 - Podium parking
- But having concerns around
- ASB in new spaces
 - Large public spaces that would encourage non-residents to congregate
 - Parking loss
 - Separate dog area (required)
 - Maintenance and costs
 - Need to retain mature trees
- 5.6 There were also elements of building design that residents liked but also expressed concern over. There were also likes and concerns expressed over internal designs (e.g. most liked separate kitchen and living areas)

- 5.7 A full feedback report will be produced by PRP following the telephone surveys. JM mentioned that she hadn't completed a feedback form. LA stated that they would also be followed up.
- 5.8 NM asked about having access to the raw data on the feedback forms? All comments will be in the final report (anonymised).
- 5.9 Following the analysis OH will issue a newsletter to residents to summarise the findings. In response to a question from SH, LA confirmed there would be a breakdown of attendees from Alice Shepherd and Oak Houses.

6 **Next Steps**

- 6.1 There are currently six options (with additional sub-divisions). LA shared the detailed timeline which showed that we are still working towards a ballot in February 2022 with the next event in September 2021. Aiming to have reduced to 2 options by the time of the next event.
- 6.2 RSG expressed concerns that this was a big reduction at once. LA confirmed that the 'do nothing' would effectively remain a third option. Potentially the remaining options would also have variations within them. LA proposed that the options are reduced to three being the 'do nothing' plus the two most popular from the last exhibition.
- 6.3 JM raised the 'elephant in the room' being the recently announced merger between OH and Riverside. Would this have any effect on the decisions made. PH said the short answer was no but a fuller response was due to be given under AOB.
- 6.4 NM asked for the timeline to be circulated to the RSG (less some of the annotations). **OH**
- 6.5 PH stressed that the options would not be reduced arbitrarily but would be based on viability and which have strong resident support. This could be 2,3 or 4 options. At present looked likely 2 options left plus the business as usual. But could be more as the feedback wasn't yet complete. Will only remove options that are either unpopular or not viable or both.
- 6.6 In response to JM, PH explained that, as part of the planning requirements, all considerations have to be explored in full view of the community even though some may be relatively unachievable either through financial viability or planning requirements. The intention has always been to reduce the

options down to a single choice for ballot. JM still felt that OH were leading the process in a certain direction.

- 6.7 MT said that if there was overwhelming support for a non-viable option then there would be exploration of how the option could be shaped to make it viable? PH agreed. AL asked if viability was dependent upon sales? PH said it was as any development needed to pay for itself – that includes the commitments required by the council.
- 6.8 LA stated that the breakdown of the split between private sales and social housing was over and above the need to re-provide existing homes. LP asked about current assumptions. PH stated that the breakdown was based on 35% net new affordable homes (beyond the re-provided homes). A brief discussion on grant funding from government. Current grant funding is unknown.
- 6.9 Final event in early 2022. MT asked for a copy of the presentation. LA agreed but it only covers the initial views.
- 6.10 AL raised the issue of the current scaffolding and the lack of information provided to residents. Given this the residents would not have faith in any OH process around the regeneration. One Housing have already raised this internally and an open day is to be held to enable residents to raise questions. In the process of being arranged.

OH

7.0 Date of Next Meeting

7.1 26th July 2021

7.2 Further Meeting Dates were agreed as follows

- 23rd August 2021
- 27th September 2021
- 25th October 2021
- 22nd November 2021
- 24th January 2022

8.0 Any Other Business with OHG Officers present

8.1 PH had circulated a letter earlier in the day about the merger announcement. Limited information to share at present. In response to questions from NM, it is a horizontal merger (between equal partners). It's not a 'done deal' yet as there is a mandatory consultation period to go through with staff, residents and other stakeholders. So not definitely happening but it is something both One Housing and Riverside want to happen. Proposal is that One Housing would join Riverside as

a subsidiary (One Housing junior to Riverside in the arrangement) for a period of 2 years following which they would merge fully and become part of the Riverside Group.

- 8.2 It's a mutual merge rather than a take-over. Explanation as to relative sizes both in terms of stock and financial base. Most Riverside stock in north of England. One Housing had looked for the merger intending to make the organisation more secure. Neither company in any difficulties at present.
- 8.3 LP asked about whether both organisations would honour the commitments being made e.g. 5 years on from now? PH said that conversations had been held between One Housing and Riverside re a joint public statement to agree to honour existing and future commitments made.
- 8.4 SH asked about a 'friendship' arrangement to access each other's homes (i.e. Essex) as part of commitments, even prior to merger. PH said there would certainly be discussions and this was a real possibility.
- 8.5 MT asked questions around service delivery for which the level of detail isn't currently available. There are aims to improve customer service. Very early days. LP asked questions on behalf of Jill Skeels and PH said that existing resident groups would continue to be recognised.
- 8.6 As part of the process there would be a lot of due diligence work to ensure that neither partner was exposed to increased risks.
- 8.7 In relation to regeneration the merger won't affect directly the work being undertaken. In terms of any offer made as part of this process it's not sure as yet where the offer would come from. PH felt it most likely to still be OH even if it was a subsidiary. He didn't think Riverside could come in and make changes post-merger. Hence the intention to publicly state there would be no changes to offers made in regeneration projects. Accepted the need to understand the subsidiary arrangements.
- 8.8 LA raised the potential to visit other projects and visiting New Union Wharf. Early discussions but looking at dates during August so groups can visit. Asked about interest and demand? SG very interested in this.

9.0 Any Other Business without OHG Officers present

- 9.1 LP shared information circulated by MT.

LP to

**email to
SH**

9.2 MT pointed out that of the 17,000 OH stock, a third is in Tower Hamlets. Post-merger any influence through the Council would be reduced as it would be 5000 homes out of a total stock of 75,000 rather than 17,000.

9.3 SH felt that it would be better to reduce options to 4 rather than 2 initially. LP said that this hadn't been ruled out but SH felt the response was a little 'wishy-washy'. Group worried that whatever was agreed now would be very much changed at the end and that this wouldn't meet residents aspirations.

9.4 HA asked about progress on website? EP to check on progress.

EP

10.00 Meeting closed at 9.00 pm