

Cabinet – Tuesday 7 September 2021

Agenda Item 8 (References from Other Bodies)

Notes:

1. Only the Chair of the referring body / motion owner may speak on a referral from Council, a Committee, or Scrutiny Committee (Cabinet Procedure Rule 2.3 (d) & (e)).

Referring Body	Page Nos
a) Regeneration & Renewal Scrutiny Committee (24 June 2021) (Councillor Crooks)	
<p>Regeneration and Renewal Strategy: Delivery Plan, Capital Project Approval, ‘Pipeline’ Progress and Estate Renewal Forum Updates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. That achievable targets are included in the delivery plan and brought to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.</i> <i>ii. That a pipeline for the establishment of Estate Renewal Forums be developed in order to create engagement with residents of the other areas (i.e. Beanhill, Coffee Hall, Netherfield, North Bradville and Tinkers Bridge) that have been identified as being in need of renewal from the very start of the process some years ago.</i> <i>iii. That delivery of regeneration and renewal programmes, as well as the delivery of new council housing to the general housing stock be speeded up.</i> <p>Regeneration Funding Explained</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. That steps are taken to ensure that regeneration and renewal is not the “poor relation” within the Housing Revenue Account funding structure.</i> <i>ii. That the funding available (from a variety of sources) must reflect the Council’s policy that regeneration and renewal is about a whole estate approach and not just its houses.</i> 	3-4

Referring Body	Page Nos
b) Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee (15 July 2021) (Councillor M Bradburn)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="212 275 1240 426">i. <i>That the Cabinet member for Tackling Inequalities and Child Poverty be requested to consider working with the CEO for Carers Bucks and Carers MK on providing more community larders and toy banks for young people.</i> <li data-bbox="212 432 1240 541">ii. <i>That the Cabinet member for Children and Families be recommended to consider establishing a Champions Model for young carers, similar to the existing Champions Model for those leaving care.</i> <li data-bbox="212 548 1240 680">iii. <i>That the Cabinet member for Children and Families be requested to look at means of alleviating transport and ICT issues for young carers accessing education.</i> 	4-5
c) Community & Housing Scrutiny Committee (20 July 2021) (Councillor Ferrans)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="212 774 1240 926">i. <i>That the Committee welcomes the successful collaboration between officer colleagues and the Mears Group, particularly in areas of concentrated council housing, to deliver an effective repairs service which was generating a high level of tenant satisfaction.</i> <li data-bbox="212 932 1240 1083">ii. <i>That the Committee welcomes the marked improvements to the number of properties meeting the Decent Homes Standard and noted that the delivery plan for this work should continue to deliver these improvements.</i> <li data-bbox="212 1089 1240 1199">iii. <i>That the Committee welcomes the Council's future plans to improve the energy efficiency of council homes, making them easier to heat in a cost-effective manner.</i> <li data-bbox="212 1205 1240 1314">iv. <i>That the Committee welcomes the Council's undertaking to address the issue of roof voids by installing partitions where necessary in order to reduce the risk of a fire spreading to other properties in the block.</i> <li data-bbox="212 1320 1240 1430">v. <i>That the Committee welcomes the commitment to complete the mapping of boundary ownership to assist tenants in getting repairs done.</i> <li data-bbox="212 1436 1240 1545">vi. <i>That the Committee endorses the work being done by the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and officer colleagues from Environmental Services to tackle the issue of fly-tipping across the Borough.</i> <li data-bbox="212 1551 1240 1661">vii. <i>That the Committee welcomes the commitment to complete and publish the mapping of landscaping responsibility and to ensure a common standard across all Council land.</i> 	5-7

(a) Regeneration & Renewal Scrutiny Committee (24 June 2021)

Regeneration and Renewal Strategy: Delivery Plan, Capital Project Approval, 'Pipeline' Progress and Estate Renewal Forum Updates

- i. That achievable targets are included in the delivery plan and brought to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.*
- ii. That a pipeline for the establishment of Estate Renewal Forums be developed in order to create engagement with residents of the other areas (i.e. Beanhill, Coffee Hall, Netherfield, North Bradville and Tinkers Bridge) that have been identified as being in need of renewal from the very start of the process some years ago.*
- iii. That delivery of regeneration and renewal programmes, as well as the delivery of new council housing to the general housing stock be speeded up.*

Regeneration Funding Explained

- i. That steps are taken to ensure that regeneration and renewal is not the "poor relation" within the Housing Revenue Account funding structure.*
- ii. That the funding available (from a variety of sources) must reflect the Council's policy that regeneration and renewal is about a **whole** estate approach and not just its houses.*

Response from Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities):

Thank you for the recommendations that you have presented to Cabinet which I think capture the points made at the last Regeneration and Renewal Scrutiny Committee.

We will soon be rolling out new ERFs and in order to achieve this we have recently made two appointments to help provide the resource to undertake this. We have a new and experienced Community Engagement Manager starting as well as a new Community Engagement Officer. These posts will ensure we are setup to roll out the new ERFs and support the officers that we already have in place.

In regards to the council house delivery programme we are constantly working to speed this up and since the scrutiny meeting we have secured external resource to help achieve this. This work is currently being undertaken in partnership with other internal teams, such as finance and planning. We have 5 sites currently on site and several more working their way through the planning process. I can also confirm that the delivery plan continues to develop and covers much more than just estate renewal.

The HRA Business Plan has undergone a comprehensive review over the last 18 months and will now be subject to a detailed rolling refresh, to ensure information is the most up to date to enable us to maximise investment decisions in the HRA. The HRA covers a number of priority areas of spend, including investment in our own stock. We use feedback from residents in order to inform the plan and the last consultation was undertaken in December

20 as part of the last review. Regeneration and renewal is a Council priority and will be considered, alongside other priorities in the annual setting of the budget.

We are actively looking for alternative sources of funding, including Homes England Grant and other specific grants, such as those related to sustainability / carbon reduction improvements as well as looking to make best use of and maximise our retained Right To Buy funding. We know that some regeneration and renewal schemes have elements that could be funded by the Council's General Fund and we are currently taking external specialist advice on the appropriateness of cost splits and assumptions. We expect to report the outcome to Cabinet in December as part of the draft budget.

(b) Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee (15 July 2021)

- i. That the Cabinet member for Tackling Inequalities and Child Poverty be requested to consider working with the CEO for Carers Bucks and Carers MK on providing more community larders and toy banks for young people.*

Response from Councillor Carr (Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequalities and Child Poverty):

Alongside the Council's priorities and from the work undertaken after the Child Poverty Commission we are continuing to support the work in growing the number of community larders and accessibility to Toy Banks in MK for young people. With this aim we would welcome further progressing this alongside the support that may be given by Carers Bucks and CarersMK.

Family & Children's Centres links with MK Foodbank are also very strong. All four Family Centres have food from the food bank where families can use vouchers to collect food parcels. The Centres also raise vouchers for families to collect food parcels. Further, the Children's Centres link in with the Family Centres to access food for the families living in their locality to ensure they are not missed.

In addition to links with MK Foodbank, all the Centres have food at the entrance for families to take, this is part of the Fair Share which several supermarkets are signed up to. This also gives opportunity to discuss with families whether they are experiencing further challenges they may be experiencing, e.g., availability of age-appropriate toys for their children.

- ii. That the Cabinet member for Children and Families be recommended to consider establishing a Champions Model for young carers, similar to the existing Champions Model for those leaving care.*

Response from Councillor Z Nolan (Cabinet Member for Children & Families):

Our 'Champions Model' was formulated to help support the needs of our Children in Care and Care leavers and to promote the voice of our young people amongst all councillors as we exercise our responsibilities as Corporate Parents.

Young Carers are not Looked After children, but it is acknowledged that there can be similarities in some of the challenges they face. I am therefore willing to promote the establishment of a 'Champion' for young carers alongside the existing Model and would encourage Members if they wish to be a 'Champion,' either for our Looked After children, Care leavers, or Young Carers, they contact our Children's Services to discuss.

- iii. That the Cabinet member for Children and Families be requested to look at means of alleviating transport and ICT issues for young carers accessing education.*

Response from Councillor Z Nolan (Cabinet Member for Children & Families):

The challenges experienced for many of our young people regarding access to transport and alleviating ICT issues was particularly recognised during Covid, and this was seen to disproportionately challenge some groups of young people, including Young Carers. As we therefore begin a new school year, we will consider how we are able to alleviate further any barriers for Young Carers particularly in relation to them accessing education.

(c) Community & Housing Scrutiny Committee (20 July 2021)

Milton Keynes Council Housing Maintenance Programme:

- i. That the Committee welcomes the successful collaboration between officer colleagues and the Mears Group, particularly in areas of concentrated council housing, to deliver an effective repairs service which was generating a high level of tenant satisfaction.*
- ii. That the Committee welcomes the marked improvements to the number of properties meeting the Decent Homes Standard and noted that the delivery plan for this work should continue to deliver these improvements.*
- iii. That the Committee welcomes the Council's future plans to improve the energy efficiency of council homes, making them easier to heat in a cost-effective manner.*
- iv. That the Committee welcomes the Council's undertaking to address the issue of roof voids by installing partitions where necessary in order to reduce the risk of a fire spreading to other properties in the block.*
- v. That the Committee welcomes the commitment to complete the mapping of boundary ownership to assist tenants in getting repairs done.*

Response from Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities):

We have now completed our work looking across our existing set of key performance indicators (KPI's) and identified where we want to see improvement. In these areas we have agreed a more challenging target with our provider. These areas are as follows: Average repair times, responsive repairs 'first time fix', customer satisfaction and appointments made and kept. Drop-in repair surgeries have been rolled out across housing estates as we work with our residents, Mears and Councillors to deliver an effective repairs service.

As of 01/04/2021 Milton Keynes Council's % of homes classed as decent stood at 87.473% (compared to less than 60% in 2019). To achieve a 95% decent rate within 3 years, we will target a 2.5% decent increase year on year. Currently there are 543 properties which have not received a stock condition survey which are showing as non-decent. We are planning to survey the un-surveyed sites during 21/22. There are also 415 properties which have been identified as failing a single element of decent homes. Following a review of the components and upgrades of components where required, we anticipate a large number of properties to move from non-decent to decent.

Given the importance of the energy performance of existing buildings to carbon emissions, a key objective of our planned investment programme is to maximise the energy performance of the Council owned housing in Milton Keynes, through investment in domestic energy efficiency. Our programme therefore has an energy focus, and it is our objective to move our assets to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Category C as a minimum. Where possible, we will therefore prioritise investment works where the EPC is likely to be D, E or F.

We are in discussions with our corporate Health & Safety team who are supporting in undertaking compliance works across the housing stock and we will be actively investigating the issue mentioned in regard to roof voids and works will be undertaken where required during 21/22.

We are actively recruiting into the team for a Building Surveyor and Data Analyst to support in the mapping of boundary ownership to assist in undertaking any necessary repairs.

Estate Management

- vi. That the Committee endorses the work being done by the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and officer colleagues from Environmental Services to tackle the issue of fly-tipping across the Borough.*
- vii. That the Committee welcomes the commitment to complete and publish the mapping of landscaping responsibility and to ensure a common standard across all Council land.*

Response from Councillor Townsend (Cabinet Member for Public Realm):

A dedicated Flytipping Action Plan will be presented to Cabinet. This will include unique actions for Housing maintained land. A dedicated Environmental Enforcement Officer for Housing land has been recruited into the Environmental Crime Team. A three year Service Level Agreement is in place with dedicated key performance indicators (KPIs) to demonstrate value for money for Housing tenants and expected deliverables.

A dedicated Housing Mapping Officer is now being recruited on a two year fixed term contract – this will be 50% funded by the HRA. This officer will work to undertake a dedicated update on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land ledger. It will be both an in-field and desktop exercise. This will not only include land that surrounds housing blocks, drying areas and ERLAS (estate related

landscape and structure) but also land in close proximity that is public but ownership not yet identified. It is estimated that a significant amount of housing land is not mapped and this will need to be added to the contract layer and associated costs base to be considered. A universal baseline of services for landscaping is being developed and stakeholders including housing and Parishes will be included in a forthcoming workshop to agree the outline specification for standards.
