

Time Commenced – 6:00 pm
Time Finished – 8.18 pm

Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Review Board

18 January 2021

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair)
Councillors McCristal, Pearce, Russell and West

In Attendance: Verna Bayliss – Director of Planning, Transport and Engineering
Maria Murphy – Director of Derby Homes
Paul Clarke – Head of Planning
Ian Fullagar – Head of Strategic Housing
Nigel Brien – Head of Traffic and Transport
Lincoln Smithers – Head of Engineering
Phill Massey – Group Engineer, Structures Design and Bridges
Shaun Bennett - Director of Investment and Maintenance – Derby Homes
Karen Brierley – Principal Housing Development Manager

17/20 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Carr.

18/20 Late Items

There were no late items.

19/20 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20/20 Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

21/20 Residential Permit Parking in Derby

The Board considered a report on residential permit parking in Derby. The report provided information on permit parking schemes and an update on the implementation of 'virtual' electronic residents permits. This followed the January 2019 meeting where the Board resolved to support the continued use of schemes and requested an update on the plans for improvement through the introduction of electronic systems.

Members of the Board asked if the MiPermit scheme was a Council / Government or private scheme and why 10p was charged to use it. It was reported that the scheme was operated by a third party and the 10p charge was the operator fee. The Council had worked with the contractor as a development partner to expand the scheme this had included the waste site on Raynesway which had been developed and implemented in 10 days to help manage the smooth re-opening of the site after the March lockdown. The booking system was now being used in other parts of the country.

Members of the Board also asked if residential parking encouraged people to park in near by streets causing a displacement problem. It was reported that to implement a residential parking area it was normally a number of streets rather than just one. 51% of households had to agree to the parking restrictions or the scheme could not be implemented.

Resolved to support the continued use of residents parking schemes and the greater flexibility delivered through personal management of electronic permits.

22/20 A52 Wyvern Transport Improvements Scheme – Update on Delivery and Lessons Learned

The Board received a presentation which gave an update on the delivery of the A52 Wyvern Transport Scheme and lessons learned.

The presentation gave an outline of the key dates of the project and reported that it was anticipated that the workforce would be off site by February 2021. Members of the Board viewed a time lapse video of the project.

Details were given of difficulties with the project that became apparent in April 2018 and resulted in an audit report in May 2018. Work was undertaken to complete the design work and establish the costs of the project. Council Cabinet agreed the revised design and budget in April 2019.

Work on site recommenced including the demolition of the Meadow Lane footbridge, new lanes and junction improvements. Works on the Wyvern opened up 23 hectares of land for development and potential 1335 jobs once the land was developed. The new footbridge was erected on site and lifted into place in 2020. Further works including the footbridge approach ramps were undertaken and traffic management was removed in October 2020.

A second presentation outlined lesson learned. An audit report was issued which included 53 recommendations. The key areas of learning were, internal governance, resources, finances, design maturity / change co-ordination and the need for a one team approach.

The presentation also outlined the implementation of system weakness recommendations.

Members of the Board thanked officers for the report and indicated that they felt reassured the project would be completed on the revised timescales and budget.

Members of the Board asked for more information on what went wrong with the original project and what can be done to make sure mistakes are not repeated in the future. It was reported that a detailed report was being prepared and this would be presented to elected Members.

Resolved

- 1. To note the presentations.**
- 2. To request the lessons learned detailed report be presented to elected Members as soon as it is available.**
- 3. To consider the report at the March 2021 meeting of the Board or to arrange a special meeting of the Board if this is not possible.**

23/20 Localities Working

The Board received a presentation on working in localities. The presentation gave background information on the response to the global pandemic and the work undertaken by Derby's community response hub. It was amazing teamwork across the local authority sector along with the community and voluntary sector and residents.

The pandemic had shown how a multifaceted response had worked with hundreds of volunteers coming forward from the community. It was a shared problem addressed by bringing communities and agencies together. Silos had been broken down, which may not have happened in normal circumstances. The role of elected Councillors was essential as they were the experts on the issues in their wards. Access points had been simplified for citizens.

The role of the local authority needed to change to meet the needs of the city and its residents. The Council had traditionally taken on a paternal role but could not do everything for everyone. The Council could provide the playing pitch but would need to let others play on the pitch. To do this the Council needed to work with citizens, have an agile workforce and be empowered to rip up the old rulebook.

Derby's recovery plan was based on three work streams, economic, organisational and community recovery. This was in the context of better together, building stronger communities, facilitating better problem solving and reducing demand for services and social care.

The locality model would create the platform and identify the players. This would involve a fundamental shift in approach, identifying services in neighbourhoods from across the council and creating an operating model within which players would function together.

The pandemic had created momentum, this had motivated change. An effective response would enable a stronger recovery. The Council had the opportunity to make real and long lasting changes to how we work together.

Bold and brave decisions needed to be made and we need to listen to and work with our communities.

Members of the Board asked why this was being considered at this Board. It was reported that a similar presentation was being given to the Communities Board as well. Our communities were front and centre to regeneration and housing, both needed communities to make them work.

Members of the Board asked who was driving the changes. It was reported that Rachel North, Strategic Director of Communities and Place was the driving force behind the proposals.

Resolved

- 1. To note the presentation.**
- 2. To request that all Councillors receive the presentation.**
- 3. To request that a communications plan be drawn up for all Councillors.**

24/20 Provision of Additional Affordable Housing in Derby

The Board received a presentation on the provision of additional affordable housing in Derby.

Paul Clarke, Chief Planning Officer explained that the threshold for affordable housing was set in the local plan so that all developments of 15 units or more were required to provide an element of affordable housing. Further details of how affordable housing is to be secured is set out in the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The threshold could only be lowered through the preparation of a new Local Plan and SPD. There was currently no programme to begin work on a new Local Plan.

The Government consulted on a paper titled 'Changes to the Current Planning System' alongside the Planning White Paper earlier last year. This made recommendations which would make it impossible to lower the threshold and would indeed increase the threshold. The Government was proposing to increase the threshold to 40 or 50, initially for an 18-month period, but potentially in the long run, depending on the impact that it has over that time period.

Often developers would provide properties just under the threshold for affordable housing, so any decrease in the threshold probably would not result in more affordable housing being available. Registered providers also do not want small numbers of units due to viability. There was the potential for unintended consequences of lowering the threshold.

In respect of contributions in lieu of providing affordable housing, the Local Plan and the SPD allow for financial contributions to be secured in lieu of on-site affordable housing, but only in exceptional circumstances. This was

usually only where on-site provision was not practical or desirable from a Registered Providers perspective. In the past we have found it difficult to spend those financial contributions we do have and actually the issue in the delivery of affordable housing was not necessarily cash, it was having suitable sites.

From a Planning point of view, it was also more desirable to have the affordable housing on-site as part of sustainable, mixed and balanced communities. We do not want to be creating affordable housing ghettos or having large swathes of purely market housing.

Ian Fullagar, Head of Strategic Housing, reported that the Homes England definition was:

'Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market'.

The target rent was Council rent. The Council, Derby Homes and Housing Associations were the main providers of affordable housing. Those funded through S106 contributions tended to be provided by Housing Associations with rest being provided by Derby Homes and the Council. The Council tended to deal with the more difficult sites that no one else wanted to tackle. The Council also bought houses on the open market at short notice.

Properties were provided by the Housing Revenue Account and relied on collaboration with Debry Homes and examples of such purchases included the War Memorial Village Trust homes. Any sites of surplus Council owned land were also assessed to see if they were suitable for affordable housing.

Shaun Bennett, Director of Investment and Maintenance – Derby Homes explained that the War Memorial Village Trust homes were very green properties.

Some 100 homes had been provided over 16 sites across the city. Local contractors had been used to support delivery, over 35 apprentices had been supported and fire safety sprinklers had been incorporated in all homes.

Going forward Council surplus sites would be developed to maximise the benefit from council assets, private land would be secured new build, the aim for all developments was to be zero carbon, exemplar schemes with enhanced design, quality and safety – affordable housing should be trailblazing with thermally efficiency and faster construction. It was also hoped to provide more Extra Care properties.

Members of the Board thanked the officers for the work undertaken to provide this information which was very positive and forward thinking. It should be noted that it was not just about the cost of the rent but also the costs of utility bills that was being addressed.

Members of the Board asked if there was an update on the Rolls Royce main works site on Nightingale Road and whilst appreciating the planning position comments was there anything that could be done to increase affordable housing in the city.

It was reported that developers were pushed as far as possible but it depended upon the viability of sites. An example was given where the District Valuer had not taken into account the amount of money paid for the purchase of the land. This had resulted in landowners then not selling sites, meaning that sites allocated for housing were stalled in the planning process.

What might help would be a regeneration fund to help bring sites forward and working in partnership to help deliver those sites.

In respect of the Nightingale Road site, there was a proposal that the Council take on the site rather than Debry Homes so that the Right to Buy receipts could be used. It was reported that a meeting was due to take place in February to discuss taking the site forward.

Members of the Board requested information by ward on the various projects be sent to ward Councillors.

A Member of the Board asked about the turning point in the graph on S106 affordable delivery. It was reported that it related to the amount of S106 sites coming through at that particular time. The HRA debt cap had also been lifted but this would take time to feed through.

Resolved

- 1. to note the presentations.**
- 2. To request information be provided by ward on the various projects be sent to ward Councillors.**

25/20 Remit, Work Programme and Topic Reviews

The Board considered a report which allowed the Board to study its Terms of Reference and Remit for the forthcoming Municipal Year. The report also allowed officers to inform the Board of any key work areas, issues or potential topic review subjects within the service areas for discussion or inclusion in the work programme.

Resolved to note the work programme.

26/20 Items Referred from the Executive Scrutiny Board

There were no items referred from the Executive Scrutiny Board.

MINUTES END