



Serpentine Court Steering Group

Tuesday 5th February 2019

Minutes

Residents: Danielle Slaymaker (Chair), Cassy Elliott (Deputy Chair), Sharon Jordan (Deputy Chair), Nasteexo Cabdi, Joan Forsyth, Robyn Goodwin, Nadia Hardi, Ronke Oludapo, Pauline Wright, Mercy Zvenyika, John Pearce (observer), Mariee Wymer (observer)

Staff and advisors: Anne Bircham (MKC), Lizzie Brown (MKC), Phil Chandler (MKC), Kevin Farrell (Tpas)

Apologies: Shannon McCaul (Deputy Chair), Sandra Mavunga, Emma-Jane Flynn (Tpas)

1. Welcome, introductions and ground rules

The previous minutes were agreed as a true record.

Danielle began the meeting by explaining that, following discussions with Kevin the leadership team and Kevin, there was to be a re-focusing of the SCSG agenda away from day-to-day housing management issues, and back to Regeneration. There was a view among members that valuable time has been taken up at meetings dealing with the pigeon infestation, waste management and anti-social behaviour. Those issues needed to be discussed in other forums, and SCSG needs to deal with the many tasks relating to the Regeneration that lie ahead in 2019 (see item 2).

(A group comprising of council officers, a local councillor and residents is in regular contact over waste and recycling and pigeon infestation. The SCSG member who has been looking at the anti-social behaviour statistics is now attending the Community Safety Forum and is being supported by Anne Bircham and other concerned residents).

Matters arising:

Visits to other regeneration projects: Alicia to organise a separate visit for SCSG in the new year. Carried forward. AF

Home loss payments: Lizzie Brown will take over the organising of the workshop to look at the impact of home loss payments on social security benefits from Alicia Francis. AF



MKC to produce an action plan which combines all the strands that came out of the walkabout and allows SCSG to monitor delivery against target. Cllr Darlington agreed to take this action forward.

ED

2. SCSG Priorities for 2019

Workplan

Lizzie agreed to create a workplan listing the 6 priorities identified by SCSG, along with what MKC can provide and then leaving empty space for the group to be able to define what they would like to do / achieve. This can also include what SCSG needs from MKC i.e. training. Lizzie explained that she may not have timings in place for the next meeting, but she will do as much as she can before providing it.

LB

The six priorities SCSG would like to work on are:

1. Resident Charter – and the mechanism for negotiating with MKC, in particular
2. Policies and procedures – will MKC be consulting Serpentine Court residents over the Local Lettings Policy etc. and allowing the residents to have an input?
3. Building design – continuing to work with HTA and MKC development staff on the look and feel of the new neighbourhood, and ongoing input to the Design Code.
4. Component choices and procurement – SCSG would like Serpentine Court residents to have a say in the choice of certain components for the new homes, such as kitchens and bathrooms, and to be involved in the selection of the builders.
5. Meanwhile activities – SCSG would like an input to the plans for community activities during the period before building commences e.g Play & Leisure strategy.

and, with deference to the Leaseholder Group, which is a separate group from SCSG, the Lizzie was asked to include (and consult with):

6. Resident Leaseholders – see 1 above, Resident Charter

Workshop on rent setting

Lizzie agreed to organise a workshop on the rent setting process for the new homes.

LB



3. Neighbourhood Employment

Phil Chandler, Neighbourhood Employment Programme Operational Manager attended the meeting to promote:

Digital Inclusion course

Funding has been secured for the 2-week course for adult learners (19+), which will run at Spotlight from 4 - 15 March. Phil confirmed that there are some basic entry requirements. At the completion of the course the participants will get to keep their tablet/laptop/netbook. The sessions will run from 9.30am – 4.00pm and are designed to increase people's employability. Phil will be handling the sign-up process and applications should be made through him. He invited SCSG members to advertise the course on Facebook and in shop windows.

Career Workout Session with Worktree

Worktree is a charity based in Milton Keynes that helps children and teenagers to receive careers information directly from real workers, and meeting workers to help them learn about and succeed in work.

Phil has had discussions with Worktree about extending its services to adults. Through sessions with workers, adults could create a connection with someone who does the work they are interested in. Sessions would also help adults to see how qualifications link to careers. The idea would be to change people's perspective on their future.

SCSG agreed that it was a good idea and encouraged Phil to pursue the matter with Worktree.

Job Club

A third Job Club session has been introduced every Wednesday afternoon. The sessions are aimed specifically at people of later years who needs extra assistance to find employment.

4. Report on Project Board – 29 January 2019

Sharon attended the last Project Board meeting and reported the main points (minutes are available on the MKC website). The Play & Leisure Strategy event will be taking place on 20 February at Spotlight. She had advised the Project Board on how to encourage residents to attend the event and have an input. There will be 3 themes on which



residents will be asked to give a view: 1) Warren Park and the leisure facilities, 2) Ideas for used for the community hub building, and 3) Funding for improvements to the wider Lakes – ideas include upgrading the litter bins and improving the little park areas. A number of SCSG members volunteered to help organise the event.

5. Project update

Coffee morning: the event held on a Thursday morning at Spotlight is going well and provides a friendly and welcoming environment for residents to have informal chats about Regeneration. Anne is continuing to develop the coffee morning as a hub for the whole Lakes Estate.

Cross Links: works to bring the building back in to use have been estimated at £30,000. SCSG agreed that it was costly and there may be other alternatives. Anne reported on positive talks that had been held between MKC and Fenny Stratford Town Council over the ongoing use of Spotlight. Following feedback from residents, the buzzer system has been done away with, and visitors will be able to walk straight up to reception. MKC is trying to turn the Spotlight into a welcoming community hub and a base for the Housing and Regeneration staff. SCSG also suggested that The Warren could offer an alternative to the Cross Links' unit, but it was acknowledged that a number of well-established sessions are running and couldn't be moved.

Park Run: the first run of 2019 will take place at Sir Herbert Leon Academy on 27 February. It's a 2km course. Children 4-14 years can enter every week but must register online for their first run.

During 2019 Anne will be working on engagement across the whole Lakes estate. She will be sending an electronic email update called "Upd8" to all residents who have submitted their email details. The first Upd8 will have a summary of the ballot results, information about the coffee morning, information about partnership working and the new Lakes junior parkrun. She will be collecting ideas for uses for the new build community hub and will be promoting any initiatives which improve community safety. She will be working closely with the two neighbourhood officers who will be also based on a regular basis at Spotlight.



6. Tpas Independent Advisor report

Kevin and Emma met with Lizzie and Anne today to discuss the Tpas workplan and share views on the SCSG priorities for 2019.

Kevin will be attending the Play & Leisure strategy event on 20 February.

There will be another Leaseholder Group meeting in the next few weeks. Kevin is waiting for clarification on how the Resident Charter negotiations will work before calling the meeting. He also reported that one more resident leaseholder had been in touch with him, recently. All resident leaseholders have now engaged with Tpas, and 5 out of 6 have chosen to keep in contact with Kevin and 4 continue to take part in the Leaseholder Group, and the new contact has been invited to join.

7. Any Other Business

Question time

Anne responded to the questions that had been raised at the last meeting, as follows:

Anne referred SCSG to Annex B under the regeneration item of the Full Cabinet Paper of 2 October 2018 which covered the Housing offer for Council tenants living in Serpentine Court. Available on CMIS on MK Council website.

Q1: Some tenants are worried about being allocated a flat that is on a higher level than the flat they currently live in. Do they have the right to refuse the offer and where would they stand if they do refuse?

A: There is no information and Anne suggested this is an item which could be included in the development of the Resident's Charter.

Q2: If a tenant chooses to move off the Lakes Estate, is there a fixed timescale by which MKC has to move them?

A: There is no fixed timescale: tenants would join MKC's lettings scheme and follow the process.



There was one new question:

Q3: As there are not going to be any new maisonettes planned, will tenants living in a 2-floor property, now, have the right to a 2-floor newbuild if they wish?

A: No, because Like-for-Like is based on the number of bedrooms and not the type of home.

Date and times of next meeting

- Tuesday 5th March - 6.30-8.00pm (refreshments 6.00pm onwards) at Spotlight