

Public Questions – Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee – 14 June 2018

	Item	Raised by	Question Raised	Answer
1	8	Jasmin Parsons	<p>5.2.1 As set out in the report to ARG on 27 November 2017, it is anticipated that additional evidence and analysis work will be commissioned to inform the development of the strategy. The estimated cost of this work is £50,000 and will be funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy administration income.</p> <p>The strategy will inform future housing delivery with the potential to bring both revenue and capital benefits to the council.</p> <p>5.2.2 The issues of funding and implementation of any potential interventions proposed by the Regeneration Strategy, will be fundamental considerations. It is intended that the Strategy will be practical and deliverable, and so the viability of programmes and delivery models will be carefully considered before recommending they be adopted. The Strategy will examine a range of external funding opportunities and will consider impact, longevity and value for money.</p> <p>Question</p> <p>How is the loss of revenue from Council residents being given an ultimatum choice of having to accept an association property or be removed from Barnet council's duty to house be economical to the borough rate payers?                      How can the immediate increase in Housing Benefits be economical to the borough rate payers?                      How is moving council residents from affordable homes to</p>	<p>The strategy provides an opportunity to articulate the council's approach to regeneration, creating a framework to inform future decision making in respect of directing future investment, securing funding, determining priorities for intervention and forming strategic partnerships. It will be a borough wide strategy which will focus on the places which need intervention, not just estate regeneration.</p> <p><b>1. How is the loss of revenue from Council residents being given an ultimatum choice of having to accept an association property or be removed from Barnet council's duty to house be economical to the borough rate payers?</b></p> <p>The Housing Revenue Account 30 year business plan takes full account of both the loss of rent and the reduced maintenance costs arising from the scheme. The business plan is reported regularly to the housing committee.</p> <p><b>2. How can the immediate increase in Housing Benefits be economical to the borough rate payers?</b></p> <p>Housing benefit is funded by central government. The council operates a number of schemes to help residents into work, or better paid work, so that they can increase their incomes and reduce dependency on benefits.</p>

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			<p>unaffordable properties beneficial to the actual residents?          How is moving council residents from affordable homes to unaffordable properties beneficial to the council rate payer?          Can we now assume that our council tax will be reduced due to your continued LBB Council strategy?</p>	<p><b>3. How is moving council residents from affordable homes to unaffordable properties beneficial to the actual residents?</b></p> <p>The council has put in a number of interventions in place to help ensure the new homes are affordable to residents, including guaranteeing rent levels and subsidising service charges. The homes are also more energy efficient and cheaper to heat than those on the old estate.</p> <p>Improving the quality of homes and the local environment is a key aim of the scheme, and resident satisfaction surveys for Phase 3A at West Hendon indicate that 95 % of tenants are happy with their new homes.</p> <p>4. How is moving council residents from affordable homes to unaffordable properties beneficial to the council rate payer?</p> <p>In addition to the points in 3 above, there are benefits to the borough more widely, including provision of additional homes to meet local demand, and investment in improved infrastructure.</p> <p>5. Can we now assume that our council tax will be reduced due to your continued LBB Council strategy?</p> <p>No. The council aims to keep council tax low for all residents, but cannot charge different rates for different estates.</p>
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2	8	Jasmin Parsons	<p>5.6.2 The Public Sector Equality duty is set out in s149 of the Equality Act 2010: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <p>(a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>(b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</p> <p>(c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>Question</p> <p>How can you hide behind this statement when residents are being forced to agree to housing agreements that they cannot afford keeping them in constant stress at the worry of falling behind on their rent and/ or other associated bills due to their low income just because the council LBB forced them out of their existing homes removed equal homes from the council stock permanently and not even explain who benefits from this strategy?</p> <p>Can you now explain the above in detail please?</p> <p>I also request that answer how you intend to tackle the growing problem of constant maintenance problems with the new builds on the West Hendon Estate?</p> <p>I also request how you intend to tackle the health issues arising from the constant dust issues on the West Hendon Estate?</p>	<p><b>How can you hide behind this statement when residents are being forced to agree to housing agreements that they cannot afford keeping them in constant stress at the worry of falling behind on their rent and/ or other associated bills due to their low income just because the council LBB forced them out of their existing homes removed equal homes from the council stock permanently and not even explain who benefits from this strategy?</b></p> <p>The benefits and impacts to tenants will be explored fully as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment. Equalities impact assessments will also be undertaken for any new scheme as it progresses. This will consider the benefits to existing residents. Regeneration provides an opportunity to provide new homes to residents to replace existing stock on unsatisfactory 1960's estates.</p> <p><b>I also request that answer how you intend to tackle the growing problem of constant maintenance problems with the new builds on the West Hendon Estate?</b></p> <p>There is no 'growing problem' of maintenance issues we are aware of. There have minor issues with the cleaning of ventilation filtration systems but Metropolitan Housing Trust (MHT) have agreed that help will be provided to any tenant that needs assistance in cleaning these. Other ad-hoc maintenance issues can be reported to MHT on their hotline number. This has been widely publicised and is included on notice boards in the entrance areas of the new estate. Feedback from</p>
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			<p>I also request how you intend to tackle the traffic issues arising on the West Hendon Estate?</p> <p>I also request how you intend to tackle the continued out of hours working issues arising from the contractors on the West Hendon Estate?</p> <p>I also request how you intend to tackle the continued out of hours working issues arising from the utilities on the West Hendon Estate?</p> <p>I also request how you intend to tackle the continued loss of parking for the existing residents due to all the above issues and the local garages on the West Hendon Estate?</p>	<p>resident surveys indicated that resident are happy with their new homes.</p> <p><b>I also request how you intend to tackle the health issues arising from the constant dust issues on the West Hendon Estate?</b></p> <p>The regeneration of estates is a challenging undertaking. Developers have to work in and around existing buildings with many properties still occupied. The level of construction involves large scale construction equipment and deliveries of materials, as well as the logistics of decanting residents from one block to another. Whilst there will inevitably be some noise, dust and disruption to residents, development partners are required to minimise these impacts.</p> <p>Robust Health and Safety practices are required by the Council of their West Hendon development partners, Barratt Metropolitan LLP (BMLLP). BMLLP are required to ensure that all construction practices are undertaken in a safe and controlled manner. As a result, BMLLP have put in place a number of measures to control dust and air pollution and mitigate potential risks. These include water based, dust suppression systems and analysis of materials prior to demolition to ensure that nothing dangerous is released to the atmosphere.</p> <p>BMLLP have established the Construction Working Group to enable the public to meet with the site team on a monthly basis and raise construction related issues – including dust. Additionally, a monthly construction</p>
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				<p>particular issue which could otherwise have caused a problem for residents.</p> <p>The development partners have responded to these incidents by carrying out a thorough internal review of their practices and those of the sub-contractors and identifying actions which can be taken to address potential risks to out of hours working – for example, enhanced inductions for new staff, improved signage alerting staff to the working hours, harsher penalties for sub-contractors breaching the restrictions. A presentation on this matter was made to the West Hendon Partnership Board on 31<sup>st</sup> May.</p> <p><b>I also request how you intend to tackle the continued out of hours working issues arising from the utilities on the West Hendon Estate?</b></p> <p>Utility companies do occasionally choose to work outside standard, weekday construction hours. This is common practice nationally and they are not bound by the same restrictions that apply to the development partners. Weekends are often quieter, with less traffic which means utilities are able to minimise their impact on the public.</p> <p>Applications for permits are carefully considered by the Council. The permit team have agreed to alert regeneration staff to applications relating to West Hendon so that residents can be kept up to date with planned works.</p>
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				<p>The biggest potential issue in the future is coordination of the utility works necessary for delivery of the highway improvements on the estate. To ensure disruption is minimised the Council is meeting regularly with all relevant utility companies and the development partners to ensure their works are appropriately programmed to reduce disruption to residents.</p> <p><b>I also request how you intend to tackle the continued loss of parking for the existing residents due to all the above issues and the local garages on the West Hendon Estate?</b></p> <p>Parking is an issue across London. On the estate this has been exacerbated by local garages using the estate to park vehicles. Council patrols in the area have been increased and targeting of 'hotspots' introduced as a way of trying to combat these abuses.</p> <p>The recent opening of a new, temporary resident car park will provide additional spaces solely for use by estate residents. Once completed the scheme will include a total of 1866 parking spaces which will dramatically improve the parking situation in the area.</p> <p>In order to discuss current issues further it has been agreed that a representative of the Council's parking team will be invited to attend a future West Hendon Partnership Board meeting.</p>
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