

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITIES BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 1ST DECEMBER, 2021

MEMBERS: Councillors Guner Aydin, Ergin Erbil (Chair & Associate Cabinet Member (Non-geographical based)) and Achilleas Georgiou and Ayfer Orhan

Community Representatives:

Tim Fellows - Enfield LGBT Network

Bevin Betton – Enfield Racial Equality Council

Officers: Joanne Drew, Director of Housing & Regeneration, Peter George, Programme Director, Meridian Water, May Hope, Plan Making Manager, Helen Murch, Head of Strategic Planning & Design, Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety, Lucy Nasby, Strategy & Policy Manager, Annie Radcliffe, National Management Graduate Trainee, Stacey Gilmour, Governance Officer

Also Attending:

Simon Allin, Local Democracy Reporter

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Greer and Councillor De Silva. Councillor Lindsay Rawlings was substituting for Councillor De Silva.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered in respect of any items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED the minutes of the last meeting held on the 7th September 2021 subject to the following amendment:

- (i) Page 8 (1) should read The Proud North London Trust

4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

RECEIVED the report of Joanne Drew, Director of Housing & Regeneration, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

NOTED:

- (i) The report provides an update on provision of affordable family sized homes to buy and rent within the Council's direct delivery programme.

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- (ii) The Council aims to build 3,500 affordable homes by 2035 with a target to deliver 40% family sized homes (i.e. homes with 3 bedrooms or more) across the Housing Development Programme.
- (iii) This comes after the borough's 2019 Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) highlighted a 42% shortfall in three-bedroom rented homes. In addition, the highest demand among households on the waiting list for council housing is for three bedroomed homes.
- (iv) The provision of good quality 3 bedroom or larger homes will create the home environment families need to aspire and thrive throughout their lifetime.
- (v) Previous reports considered by Cabinet and Council in February 2019 and January 2020 recognised the role the Council can play in increasing housing supply in the borough – both in its role of directly delivering new build homes (or acquiring them for affordable rent) and in enabling the delivery of homes by housing associations , developers and private landlords.
- (vi) Delivery of affordable family sized homes is an area where intervention is required if the Council is to meet its commitment to create a lifetime of opportunity.
- (vii) A summary of the family homes currently being progressed through the Council's 2016-23 programme is attached at Appendix 1 of the agenda.
- (viii) The Council, through its Housing Development Programme, is on track to deliver more family homes to meet the needs of Enfield residents. However, funding remains a real barrier to accelerating supply to meet ever growing need.

Following Joanne's update the following comments/questions were raised.

- Joanne explained that the rents from social and affordable homes were not enough to pay for the costs of building them, so the authority needed grants from the Government or Greater London Authority (GLA) to fund them. She added that family homes cost more to build per unit than one and two-beds, so there isn't enough grant to enable a whole scheme to be built out viably.
- Joanne went on to say that schemes are always a compromise between what the Council would like to do, which is as much affordable housing as possible, and what can be afforded. So, schemes are balanced up with smaller units to make them viable recognising that there is also a demand for these homes including from downsizers.
- In response to a question from Cllr Georgiou about the report's connection to Equalities, Joanne explained that the majority of residents in temporary accommodation were from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. She added that the housing waiting list had a higher percentage of residents with disabilities and critical housing needs of different complexities and this is the same across London. Joanne added that at least 10% of the homes built by the Council will be fully wheelchair adaptable and suitable for those with disabilities.
- An in-depth explanation was provided on what is meant by affordable homes. It was also advised that the least affordable housing for

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residents is in the private rental sector as opposed to Council /Housing Association properties. These residents therefore have the most challenges as their income often doesn't cover private rental levels.

- Enfield Let, an Ethical Lettings Agency has been set up to assist those who would otherwise struggle to access private housing and ensure residents are not discriminated against because of their financial status. The move towards ethical letting is part of Enfield Council's wider strategy to tackle homelessness and reform the private rental sector in the borough.
- Bevin Betton, Chair of Enfield Racial Equality Council said that the Housing Associations that Enfield Council use should also be looking at family-sized houses. He acknowledged that family-sized housing is costly, but this is what is required therefore Enfield Council should be providing this.
- Joanne replied that the Council was looking to make best use of existing homes, tackling 'under-occupation' by encouraging people who do not need large homes to downsize. She added that a scheme called 'chain links' is being investigated to maximise the rehousing opportunities when a new home becomes vacant.
- Pointing out that 'affordable' housing as defined by the Government is out of reach of many in the most deprived parts of Enfield, Cllr Georgiou said that the Council needed to 'lead the way' and define what is affordable for residents.
- Joanne explained that if the Council were to adopt such a policy, it would affect the 'quantum' of housing that could be supplied and the number of family homes that could be delivered.
- Cllr Orhan asked for clarification on the figures shown on page 12 of the report and Joanne provided a detailed explanation.
- Cllr Erbil commented that equalities did not appear to be at the top of the agenda for Housing Associations/Registered Providers (RPs) and therefore questioned as to what extent the Local Authority work with these partners to enforce this. Joanne replied that Enfield Council sees itself as leaders in the borough as housing planners, working closely with Housing Associations/RPs to ensure good practice and positive outcomes. She added that the Registered Provider Framework Charter will enable the Council to hold RPs to account for wider service delivery.

The Chair thanked Joanne for her interesting and informative update.

5. MERIDIAN WATER RESIDENTIAL & EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

RECEIVED the report of Peter George, Director-Meridian water, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

NOTED

- (i) The report updates the Board on the progress to date towards delivering the Council's target of 10,000 homes and 6,000 jobs at Meridian Water.

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- (ii) Meridian Water is a key component in contributing to the vision, aims and priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan. This includes:
 - Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods;
 - Safe, healthy and confident communities;
 - An economy that works for everyone.
- (iii) Meridian Water Aims & aspirations include:
 - Highest quality of design and place-making throughout;
 - New facilities to include restaurants, schools, community facilities, parks, health, leisure and culture.
- (iv) A residential update was provided detailing progress made to date on delivering the four sites at Meridian Water that has received Cabinet authority to proceed: Meridian 1-4. (please refer to Appendix 1: page 23 of the agenda for a plan of Meridian 1-4).
- (v) Discussions took place on the strength in diversity aspect of the programme including:
 - Promoting public sector values via procurement;
 - Insisting sub-contractors achieve 50% BAME and 50% females at a partner level plus Edmonton company;
 - Investment in scholarship/future generation;
 - Design future procurements to promote SME/diverse frameworks;
 - Encourage public sector partners to adopt a similar approach
- (vi) An employment update was also provided which covered details on the required outcomes. These included:
 - Create 6,000 permanent, high quality jobs of which no less than 25% will be from local labour;
 - Deliver 1,000 new high-quality jobs through Meanwhile Employment Uses on land intended for redevelopment, where possible rehoming these businesses within the new development;
 - Enabling local Enfield employers to supply meridian Water starting with its construction, with no less than 10% of all investment benefiting local employers;
 - Deliver 1,000 construction jobs, sustained over 25 years, of which no less than 25% will be from local labour.
- (vii) Meridian Water Enfield Construction Skills Academy will train up to 500 people a year giving them skills to gain a meaningful career in construction. Designs for the Skills Academy have progressed, and planning permission has been granted. Procurement of the Skills Academy Operator commenced in August with selection likely to be completed early 2022. The Skills Academy is due to be delivered late 2022.
- (viii) The Council has also entered a partnership with Troubadour Theatres which has delivered three film studios at Meridian Water with three more to be delivered by 2023. Troubadour also plan to deliver a skills academy for the film industry in 2023. This will provide sector-based training in technical roles associated with film production with a target of training up to 450 roles per annum. This Academy will work with an Higher Educational partner to deliver recognised industry qualifications.

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Following Peter's update, the following comments and questions were raised:

- Vistry have appointed a local firm to deliver Groundworks on Meridian 1a. This is a significant piece of work and great news for the local economy. Vistry is also performing well on levels of local, female and Black, Asian and ethnic minority construction staff.
- Through the procurement of the professional services for Meridian Four project, the team has sought to ensure that the Council's approach to promoting Equality, Diversity and capturing Social value benefits have been captured.
- In response to a question regarding employment numbers and statistics Peter explained that KPI's, data gathering, and baselining of these numbers is now in place with a tracker being updated quarterly and relationships with employers and contractors allows for the anonymized data to be collected. The monitoring also includes data on equalities, diversity and inclusion.
- Clarification was sought on paragraph 9, page 18 of the report. Peter advised that strategic and industrial land at Meridian Water will be discussed with the Greater London Authority (GLA) but in the context of the overall Local Plan, the target of 10,000 homes to be built remains constant.
- Concern was raised that climate change had not been addressed as part of the presentation received as this was most important in relation to equalities. Peter apologised that this slide had been missed from the power point presentation provided but agreed that it was absolutely right to raise climate change in relation to equalities.
- Peter asked for direction from the Chair as to the frequency of updates to the Board on progress with Equalities in relation to Meridian Water.

Action: Lucy Nasby/Chair

The Chair thanked Peter for his interesting and informative presentation.

6. DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

RECEIVED a copy of the report of May Hope, Plan Making Manager, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

The following information was highlighted:

- (i) The council is in the process of preparing a new local plan for Enfield. This report provides an update to the Board on the equalities impact of the draft Local Plan (ELP).
- (ii) It is a statutory requirement for all Councils to prepare a Local Plan and ensure that it is up to date. Enfield's current Local Plan includes a Core Strategy published in 2010 and a Development Management Document published in 2014: as both are older than five years they are required to be reviewed.

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- (iii) Preparing a new Local Plan provides the council with an opportunity to set out a positive vision for growth, ensuring that appropriate facilities and infrastructure are provided for future residents. It is a vitally important tool for helping the council deliver its corporate priorities and delivering the spatial elements of the council's corporate plan.
- (iv) When preparing Local Plans, the Equalities Act 2010 requires the council to:
 - Consider all individuals when shaping policy;
 - Eliminate discrimination;
 - Advance equality of opportunity;
 - Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
- (v) This public sector duty is an important task to be carried out during all stages of the Enfield Local Plan preparation.
- (vi) The Local Plan has also been subject to Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) ensures equalities are addressed by considering the protected characteristics.
- (vii) The Enfield Local Plan (ELP) includes long term planning framework for the borough up to 2039. The Plan will have a significant impact on the lives of those who live and work or visit the borough. Important choices will be made between competing demands and seeks to address inequalities, but policies need to be assessed for unintended consequences for equality issues.
- (viii) Plan preparation started in 2015 and includes engagement with voluntary bodies at each stage, which represents the interests of different racial or national groups, religious bodies, bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons, Enfield Youth Parliament, young people and students. EqIA assessments have also been completed at all stages.
- (ix) Information was provided on addressing inequalities through the vision and strategic objectives of the ELP. Four key themes of the ELP vision are:
 - A nurturing place;
 - A deeply green place;
 - Workshop of London;
 - Distinct and leading part of London.
- (x) Detailed strategic objectives address many equalities matters. These translated into objectives informing IIA and the EqIA.
- (xi) Further information was provided on the ELP policies on disability, age, race, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnerships.
- (xii) There are no specific policies for addressing religion or belief. However, Policy BG10 deals with space for burials and cremation and addresses the needs of different faith groups and the needs of diverse communities.
- (xiii) Equalities issues have helped underpin the development of the ELP policies. Many policies are designed to improve the relevant equality strands where possible or have a neutral impact.
- (xiv) Fulfilling the duty in relation to equalities matters in the development of ELP policy is an evolving and ongoing process. Equalities matters will

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be taken into account when reviewing representations and making recommendations on the next iteration of ELP policy.

Following May's update, the following comments/questions were raised.

- In response to a comment regarding the allocation of cemetery and burial space, May advised that there are policies within the ELP addressing burial needs and site allocations for all different faith groups. The Chair, Cllr Ergin Erbil added that a multi-faith cemetery is to be developed in the borough and this is a work in progress.
- Cllr Orhan said that she believed housing is an equalities issue as is social inclusion. She added that residents have voiced very strong concerns regarding the type of and allocation of housing within the ELP as the plan appears to be designed to bring people into the borough rather than structured for the needs of local residents; therefore outpricing local residents and not addressing local needs. Helen Murch, Head of Strategic Planning & Design responded that an important foundation of the plan in terms of housing is to ensure that people who are born and live in the borough can stay in the borough. Policies developed have been designed to ensure that the plan delivers the mix and levels of affordable housing that the borough needs, and this includes larger family homes.
- Tim Fellows, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board felt that the burden of house builds needs to be shared as the East of the borough is becoming more and more dense. Helen said that this is something that Enfield Council are very aware and conscious of. The spatial policy for distribution of this growth is one that is thought to be the best solution in order to level things up.

The Chair thanked Officers for their interesting update.

7. KEEP PEOPLE SAFE FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

RECEIVED the report of Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety and Julie Tailor, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, a copy of which is attached to the agenda,

NOTED:

- (i) The report provides an update on the sections within the Fairer Enfield Policy which relates to Tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls and provides assurance that the requirements of the policy are being progressed.
- (ii) Updates were provided against each element and full details of these are included in the report.
- (iii) Progress has been made in ensuring that local services designed to tackle domestic abuse support all communities and are easily accessible
- (iv) The Enfield Domestic Abuse Hub was launched on the 1st May last year in response to concerns over increasing domestic abuse incidents

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during the Covid-19 pandemic. Its helpline continues to operate during weekdays between 9am and 5pm.

- (v) The hub had improved the service provided to those contacting it. It has received 242 contacts since its launch and the council aims to keep it running beyond the end of the pandemic.
- (vi) During the last two years the Council has also set up a scheme to encourage perpetrators to change their behaviour and used communication campaigns aimed at preventing abuse by challenging the attitudes that foster it.
- (vii) Demand for services had been higher during the Covid-19 pandemic and delivery had at times been more difficult.
- (viii) The Council had secured around £300,000 from the Mayor's Office for Policing and crime (MOPAC) to continue its perpetrators programme after a successful pilot, following a joint funding bid alongside Barnet and Brent Councils.
- (ix) The project, set to run until July next year, allows perpetrators of abuse to voluntarily access a programme to help them change their behaviour, rather than doing so in response to a court ruling. The idea is to work with perpetrators from communities which may be marginalised for a variety of reasons and will also work in an intersectional way with the families to make sure that domestic abuse is being addressed in an appropriate way as well as recognising some of the pressures that may exist in terms of gender, culture or other factors.
- (x) Recent communications campaigns also included a project run with Enfield Youth Parliament. This focused on challenging inappropriate behaviour and has been shared on social media platforms.

Following Andrea's update, the following comments/questions were raised:

- Responding to a question from Cllr Rawlings, Andrea said that the council also had access to a helpline for male victims of domestic abuse.
- Cllr Orhan asked how the council could identify and help 'invisible' groups of people who were not speaking out about the abuse they faced because they were fearful of coming forward, perhaps because people would not listen or believe them. Andrea said that it was important to repeat the message that people could be confident that help is available for them. Adding that many women may be frightened to leave abusive relationships, she stressed the importance of providing good homes and opportunities with well-paid jobs.
- Andrea advised the meeting that the council was also looking at working with faith groups to help tackle domestic abuse. The Chair, Cllr Erbil suggested holding a community meeting with faith leaders, as well as working with organisations such as Age UK and Healthwatch Enfield.
- It was agreed that Andrea would come back to a future meeting of the Equalities Board with further updates to include:
 - Cross Department Practical Solutions (e.g. what's available across departments, for example housing/finance)

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- Data on ethnicity/gender of reported Domestic Violence
- Update on any development regarding a community meeting to include faith leaders.

Action: Lucy Nasby/Andrea Clemons

The Chair thanked Andrea for her interesting and informative update.

8. EQUALITIES BOARD DRAFT FORWARD PLAN 2021/22

NOTED the Equalities Board Draft Forward Plan for 2021/22.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

NOTED and agreed the date of the next Equality Board meeting as follows:

Tuesday 8th February 2022