43. Public Questions

A member of the public addressed the Committee to raise a question on repairs at the Cambridge Road Estate and what measure have been put in place to improve the estate as lifts were obsolete. By way of response it was explained that tenants had a right of repairs and a written response would be provided on this question.

Another resident raised a number of questions in relation to housing target figures within the draft London Plan. It was explained that the current housing target figure was 643 dwellings per year, but the emerging figure, as a result of the Draft London Plan, was 1364 dwellings per year. It was queried whether these figures were calculated based on population growth in Kingston. It was clarified that the figures set out in the Draft London Plan were not based on projected population growth of Kingston specifically, but the wider population growth of London as a whole.

44. Apologies for Absence and Attendance of Substitute Members

Apologies were received from Advisory Members Tom Wood, Tim Willcocks, Margaret Lloyd and Maria Wise.

45. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.
46. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 March 2019 were approved as a correct record.

47. Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Members considered a report which set out the Council’s Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (Annex 1) which analysed current housing delivery in the borough and identifies measures to address the shortfall in delivery over the last three years. It was noted that the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced into the planning system in 2018 as part of the new National Planning Policy Framework.

Members noted that the Government had introduced the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) to determine whether local areas were building enough homes to meet housing needs. There was a requirement for failing local authorities to publish their HDT Action Plans by 19 August 2019.

Kingston’s HDT compared the number of new homes delivered over the previous three years (2015/16 - 2017/18) with the authority’s housing requirement and was being used to determine the buffer to apply in housing supply assessments and whether the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply.

It was clear that Kingston was not delivering its annual housing target which had resulted in an overall shortfall of homes over this period. When measured against the Housing Delivery Test (and as identified in government statistics), Kingston’s delivery rate was 75% of what should be delivered.

The Committee considered that the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan specified a range of measures that the Council was progressing to address low rates of housing delivery, including a process to monitor implementation.

Two members of the public addressed the Committee to raise a series of questions and comments on the action plan, including whether the Council had any further plans to demolish estates for regeneration based on the information provided within the ‘early engagement on the Local Plan’ documents. By way of response it was explain that the resident had misunderstood the information provided in the aforementioned document as the sites listed were not active developments and were merely a result of a ‘Call for Sites consultation’ which ran in 2017. It was explained that landowners, developers, agents and the public were invited to put forward sites for consideration, which could have potential to contribute towards future development in the Local Plan and help address Kingston’s future need for housing, economy and employment, education, healthcare and other uses. It was emphasised that the consultation was an opportunity for the Council to build local evidence on the suitability of each site and whether to take forward in the Local Plan. Residents were encouraged to take part in the consultation to raise their concerns on particular sites offered.

Members queried what the Council had done to resist the housing demand outlined within the Mayor’s draft London Plan. It was emphasised that the Council had made the best possible planning argument to challenge the emerging figures at the
‘Examination in Public’ (EiP) meeting on 15 January 2019. It was explained that the panel of planning inspectors’ written report would set out its findings in relation to the EIP matters and it was hoped would include recommendations relating to the content of the draft London Plan published in December 2017 or associated matters.

Some Members considered that a consultation would have been useful for the action plan. Members queried what the consequences were of not having an action plan by August 2019. It was explained that in that case the Council would not be fulfilling its legal obligations and the powers that the Council has to create its own Housing Delivery Test Action Plan could be removed.

Resolved that –

1) the basis of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (Annex 1) for publication by August 2019 be approved;

2) the use of the word ‘speedy’ in paragraph 3.11 of Annex 1 be amended to the word ‘efficient’;

3) that any minor amendments be delegated to the Assistant Director of Strategic Planning & Infrastructure in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee and Opposition Spokesperson.

Voting:
Unanimous

48. Urgent Items Authorised by the Chair

There were no urgent items.

49. Exclusion of Press and Public

Signed…………………………………………………….Date…………………
Co Chair