

Scrutiny Panel

30 July 2019

Community Call-Ins of

1. **Community Engagement Framework - Community and Engagement Committee - 12 July 2019**
2. **Housing Delivery Test Action Plan - Strategic Housing and Planning Committee - 19 July 2019**

Report by Assistant Director, Governance and Law (Monitoring Officer)

Purpose

To report the Community Call-Ins, under Part 4C of the Constitution of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, of:

1. The **Community Engagement Framework**, as agreed by the Community and Engagement Committee on 12 July 2019, which sets out a framework for the council undertaking community engagement and a standard by which such engagement can be measured; and
2. The **Housing Delivery Test Action Plan**, as agreed by the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee on 19 July 2019, which analyses current housing delivery in the borough and identifies measures to address the shortfall in delivery over the last three years.

Recommendation

The Scrutiny Panel is **RECOMMENDED** to determine how it wishes to individually respond to the Community Call-ins through selection of one of the two options below.

The Scrutiny Panel should note that it is to make separate and unrelated decisions for each of the two Community Call-In items.

The options for the Scrutiny Panel to decide each of the items raised through the Community Call-In procedure are to:

1. **REJECT** the request for the Community Call-In, in which instance the original decision of the relevant Committee is effective immediately and may proceed to implementation; or
2. **AGREE**, partially or wholly, with the reasons for the Community Call-In and ask the originating Committee to review and/or make revisions to its decision.

Key Points

The decision of the Community and Engagement Committee on 12 June 2019 was to **AGREE** that:

- the proposed draft framework for community engagement set out at Annex 1 [of the report to the Community and Engagement Committee] is endorsed;
- there is further online consultation and discussion at neighbourhood committees to shape the framework;
- the Director, Communities is authorised to amend the framework following consultations with the Co-Chairs and the relevant opposition spokesperson;
- the framework is published on the Council website by the end of September 2019*;
- a report is submitted to the Committee in February 2020 to update on progress and feedback on the framework; and
- that the further consultation mentioned in paragraph 15 is to continue through neighbourhood committees until the end of September 2019 rather than July 2019 as stated in the report**.

*amended from 'August' in report

**amendment added at committee

The decision of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan on 19 June 2019 was to **RESOLVE** that:

- the basis of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (Annex 1) for publication by August 2019 be approved;
- the use of the word 'speedy' in paragraph 3.11 of Annex 1 be amended to the word 'efficient'; and
- 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.

Community Engagement Framework

1. On 26 June 2019, a Community Call-In of the Community Engagement Framework as agreed by the Community and Engagement Committee of 12 June 2019 was received, with 100 signatures.
2. Following consideration by the Monitoring Officer, further information was requested of the originator of the Community Call-In.
3. This information was provided within five working days and the Monitoring Officer approved the Community Call-In as valid on 8 July 2019.
4. *“WE, the undersigned, being those who live, work or study in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, hereby call in all decisions of item 6 of the Community and Engagement Committee held on 12th June 2019, ‘Community Engagement Framework’ for the following reasons:*
 - *- Members of the public were not able to contribute to this item, as the co-chairs refused to allow those who ‘hadn’t submitted a green slip’ to speak, despite allowing them to on other items, bringing into question whether the decision-making was sound - particularly given this item was all about community engagement(!);*
 - *- The committee wanted to engage with people ‘who don’t normally engage with the council’, so the notion that this will be achieved through a consultation portal which doesn’t meet government guidelines on domains as well as neighbourhoods is laughable and inadequate - consultation must be wider;*
 - *- There is no basis for the consultation - no drafted questions, no concrete timescales, which did not allow for any evidence-based decision making as the councillors had no idea what form the engagement would take;*
 - *- Paragraph 22 of the report states the ‘framework will comply with equalities best practice’ - not law? This is wholly inadequate, as equalities legislation exists for a reason;*
 - *- No risk assessment has been completed, despite officers’ promise to send this to residents post-committee. It has now been admitted no risk assessment has been completed, which is a major flaw;*
 - *- No equalities analysis has been undertaken on the impact of an ‘online’ consultation and neighbourhood committee meeting. We have many disabled residents in this borough who may have restricted mobility and no access to the internet. Before this is consulted upon, a thorough analysis must be undertaken in order to ensure that the consultation is accessible to all; and*
 - *- The framework is in no way resident-friendly, and a first-class attempt at corporate jargon. Residents deserve better than this in understanding how the council will engage with them.”*

5. The response to the Community Call-In of the Community Engagement Framework as agreed by the Community and Engagement Committee of 12 June 2019 can be found at **Annex 1**.

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

6. On 2 July 2019, a Community Call-In of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan as agreed by the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee of 19 June 2019 was received with approximately 150 signatures. It was validated by the Monitoring Officer on 3 July 2019.
7. Due to the length of the Community Call-In, it is attached at **Annex 3**. Given the formatting of the Community Call-In, the text has been reformatted in the Officer Response at **Annex 2**, although the content of the Community Call-In has not been substantively altered.

Legal Implications

8. Should the matter be referred to Council for further consideration, any legal matters arising will be covered in the report for the Council meeting.

Background papers

Held by the author of the report:

Matthew Stickley, Democratic Services Officer and Clerk to the Scrutiny Panel

tel: 020 8547 5698

email: matthew.stickley@kingston.gov.uk