

CRE Residents Ballot Workshop

4 October 2018



Agenda

1. Welcome and housekeeping - Chair, Tom Bremner
2. Apologies and introductions
3. Presentation outlining Mayor of London Guidance on ballot
4. Workshops with residents
5. Questions
6. Summary and future business

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Welcome, housekeeping, apologies and introductions

- Introductions: Three Chairs/RSG members, Councillors and Council staff
- Some things to agree on before we start e.g.
 - CRE residents come first
 - Non-political
 - Show respect and listen
- We will collect the feedback and write this up to present back to the **next meeting on 17 October at 6.30pm** - but we will only be able to contact you if you complete the registration (and feedback) form
- We won't be able to answer any **personal issues** tonight - but you can fill in the Question Sheet and we'll come back to within a week
- You can also use this sheet for **any other questions** you have - if you want a personal answer you'll need to fill in the contact details

CRE Residents Ballot Workshop

What tonight is and isn't about

1. **Sharing information** We want to share with you the Mayor's Greater London Authority (GLA) Guidance (dated July 2018) on ballots
2. **We want to work together with local residents** to get the best for Cambridge Road Estate (CRE)
3. **Listen to your views and questions to make sure that the ballot is run fairly** and gives CRE residents a chance too understand the issues and get their voice heard.
4. **We won't be able to**
 - Make decisions tonight
 - Agree who can and cannot vote
 - Debate in detail the whole CRE regeneration
 - Provide a legal interpretation of the guidance
 - Not about the offer or the question at this stage - too early to do this

Background on the GLA Guidance on ballots

What is a Ballot?

- A Ballot is a **democratic process** of requesting constituent and eligible voting citizens to make a **Yes or No** decision in writing on a particular issue
- In February 2018, the Mayor of London announced that all housing estate regeneration projects should hold a resident ballot where the Greater London Authority (GLA) **provides funding** for councils to enable them to build social or council housing. The final GLA guidance was published on 18 July 2018
- The GLA now requires any landlord to **hold a ballot** of local residents before it will fund regeneration schemes that:
 - involve the **demolition of any social housing**
 - the building of **150 or more new homes**
- There are a **number of exemptions** including where there is already a funding agreement in place with the GLA, which is the case with Kingston.

Background to the Ballot at CRE

Why is Kingston holding a ballot on CRE?

- To give **CRE residents a choice about the regeneration by allowing them to vote** on their homes and their future
- In July 2018 the Council committed to local residents, under the new administration, by taking a decision at a Full Council meeting, to proceed with a **voluntary ballot of residents living on the estate**
- Kingston is likely to be one of the **first major landlords** in London to be holding a ballot as part of the Cambridge Road Estate (CRE) regeneration proposals.

The GLA Guidance on Ballots

The GLA guidance covers a lot areas and **is complex** so it's important to understand what it says

The GLA Guidance is **not the law**, and it is the **council's decision** about a ballot, who can vote and how it's run.

The GLA guidance sets out 3 principles:

1. Who will be **eligible to vote**
2. How the ballot should be **run**
3. What should be covered as the '**landlord offer**' on which people are asked to vote.

Who can vote - what the GLA guidance says?

3 groups of eligible voters

1. **Social tenants** named as a tenant on a tenancy agreement dated on or before the date the Landlord Offer is published. For CRE this is primarily Kingston council tenants
2. **Resident leaseholders or freeholders** who have been living in their properties as their only or principal home for at least one year prior to the date the Landlord Offer is published. This excludes buy to let landlords as they are not residents
3. Any resident whose main home is on the estate and who has been on the **local authority's housing register for at least one year** prior to the date the Landlord Offer is published. For CRE this will include most people in temporary accommodation who live on the estate

Who can vote - what the GLA guidance says?

- there is **no discretion** for landlords (the GLA calls them 'Investment Partners' or 'IPs') to set their own vote eligibility criteria
- voters must be **living on 'an existing social housing estate'** - e.g. CRE
- voters must be **over 16**
- the term 'social tenants' includes (as well as council tenants) residents of **'affordable housing'** e.g.
 - **low cost home ownership** such as shared ownership
 - **low cost rental** - sometimes called 'intermediate' market rent
- but it only includes 'social tenants' of the 'Investment Partner' (i.e. Kingston council for CRE) and **not of any other landlord**
- it **doesn't include anyone who isn't a social tenant** (unless they fall into one of the other categories)
- There is **no minimum turnout** requirement

Running the ballot - the role of the 'Independent Body'

The GLA guidance says landlords must appoint an '**Independent Body**' (IB) to undertake the ballot.

The IB must:

- review the **arrangements for voter registration** and identification
- undertake or oversee **the distribution of the Landlord Offer**
- advise IPs on the **ballot question**
- ensure votes cast are **recorded and counted accurately**
- confirm that the ballot is held in accordance with the **checklist**

Running the ballot - the checklist

The Independent Body's checklist for the GLA

1. Robust process to **identify voters** in place?
2. **Independent Body** appointed?
3. **“Yes or no”** vote offered?
4. Did a simple **majority vote “yes”** and has the GLA been told?
5. Was the question to voters in the ballot **unambiguous and direct**?
6. Was an appropriate **range of ways to vote** offered?
7. Were ballot papers delivered **under separate cover** from any consultation material and/or the Landlord Offer?
8. Did the Landlord Offer explain the **arrangements for casting votes**?
9. Was there **sufficient time** between the distribution of the Landlord Offer and the start of the ballot period?
10. Was the **ballot period sufficient** (minimum 21 days) and did it end less than 6 months after the Landlord Offer was published?

The Landlord Offer

The GLA guidance defines the landlord offer as:

- The **broad vision, priorities and objectives** for the estate regeneration, including information on:
 - **Design principles of the proposed estate regeneration**
 - **Estimated overall number of new homes.**
 - **Future tenure mix.**
 - **Proposed associated social infrastructure.**
- Details of the **full right to return or remain for social tenants** living in homes that are to be demolished.
- Details of the **offer for leaseholders and freeholders** of homes that are to be demolished.
- Commitments relating to ongoing open and transparent **consultation and engagement.**

What happens next - when will the ballot be?

Short-term

4th & 17th October 2018

- 2 CRE residents meetings to discuss the ballot

November 2018

- A report will go to the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee for an update on the ballot arrangements

Longer-term

Summer/autumn 2019

- CRE ballot held

What do we know about who could vote on CRE?

Mayors Guidance categories - indicative numbers (NB these will be adjusted after further analysis)

Category of voters (household numbers only)	Likely households eligible
Social tenants (Kingston council tenants living on CRE)	503
Resident leaseholders and freeholders	67
On housing register for 1 year (and living on CRE)	135
Estimated Total	705

Workshop

Introduction

- Working together in tables
- Introduce yourselves (and make friends if you don't know people!)
- Have fun
- Give everyone a chance to speak
- Try and capture all your questions and issues
- Remember CRE residents come first
- Four rounds - each about 15 minutes

Workshop Round 1

Not sure about something? You won't be the only one!

- Anything you want to ask to help clarify things?
- It is complicated and it's never been done before
- There are **no silly questions** - asking questions will help everyone on CRE
- We'll try and answer if we can tonight - if not we'll take away and come back on 17 October
- Use these for a 'Frequently Asked Questions' factsheet

Workshop Round 2

Who do you think should vote? Why?

- Do you agree with what the GLA guidance says about who can vote?
- If you think it's wrong - why do you think that?
- How can we make sure we don't miss anyone out who is entitled to vote?
- Anything else?

Workshop Round 3

How should the ballot be run?

- What information do you need to vote?
- Is the Landlord Offer enough and what else do you need?
- What can we do to make sure that all residents get this information?
- Is 21 days enough time to vote?
- How can we work with residents to get the right ballot question?
- How do think people should be able to vote?
- Anything else?

Workshop Round 4

Children are the future

- Any vote will impact on local children and young people more than anyone else.
- How can we ensure young people and children get involved and have their voice heard?
- Anything else?

Questions and Future Business



- Any questions?
- How have you found it tonight?
- Please complete and hand in the registration and feedback form
- Next meeting - Wednesday 17 October, 6.30pm, Piper Hall, Chaired by Ed Naylor, former Mayor of Kingston