

Item No. 22.	Classification: Open	Date: 16 July 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Regeneration Risk Registers and Archive Records of Housing Estates	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Fiona Colley, Regeneration and Corporate Strategy and Councillor Ian Wingfield, Deputy Leader and Housing Management	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY AND COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD, DEPUTY LEADER AND HOUSING MANAGEMENT

The management of risk and clear communication with stakeholders are both key to the successful delivery of our regeneration projects. Risk management ensures that we have strategies in place to deal with challenges that arise on projects to make sure that we can deliver the best possible outcomes and communication with stakeholders ensures that all involved are kept informed and have the opportunity to effectively engage and influence decision making.

Being open about the risks within projects is important and how we do this needs to form part of our communication and engagement strategies on individual projects and programmes. I support the recommendations within this report that we share risk information as openly as possible but that the publication of day to day management tools would not be the right approach.

Understanding risks and our strategies to manage them within our strategic projects is a fundamental part of my brief and I am satisfied that the implications of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are being appropriately considered within our regeneration projects.

Complete and accessible archive building information is essential to support the delivery of an effective housing service. Housing and community services have a range of projects underway to improve the completeness and accessibility of information which will support ongoing service improvements.

We recommend this report to cabinet.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That regeneration risk registers are not published online but that risk and risk management are considered as part of project communication plans to ensure that risk information is available online, and via other mediums, in order that stakeholders are aware of risks and the strategies to manage them.
2. That cabinet note that Regeneration risk registers have been reviewed and amended as necessary in consideration of the concerns raised by overview and scrutiny committee in relation to National Planning Policy Framework and that

the cabinet member for regeneration has been briefed directly on the implications of paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. That cabinet note the actions taken by housing and community services to date, and those planned, to improve the accessibility and completeness of building archive information and the potential need for investment to support this.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. In October 2012 overview and scrutiny committee considered the management of risk within major regeneration projects in the chief executive's department and received a briefing from the strategic director of housing and community services in respect of the major works on the Four Squares Estate.
5. In November, three recommendations were made to cabinet:
 - that cabinet explore ways in which regeneration risk registers can be placed online in a form digestible to the public; and,
 - that cabinet be invited to review relevant risk logs in the light of paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - that cabinet be asked to assess the quality of archives in respect of construction of housing estates and consider whether additional investment is merited
6. This subsequent report to cabinet is later than would usually be expected as a result of the issues raised being explored in detail by officers.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Publication of risk registers

7. Project and programme risk registers are live documents that act as the key tool for risk management within regeneration and capital projects. They capture the risk, responsible parties and mitigation strategies as well as assessing the likelihood and impact of risks should they arise. The nature of the projects managed within the regeneration department mean that these documents contain significant commercially sensitive information the publication of which could detrimentally affect the effective management of relationships with commercial partners and other stakeholders.
8. Although the publication of redacted registers may be possible, on balance this is not considered to be appropriate. Redaction would be onerous and would also remove important context resulting in registers being an inaccurate representation of the risk profile of projects and the risk management strategies proposed.
9. Publication could also lead to too much consideration being given to the public interpretation of documents rather than their effective use as a risk management tool with scoring and risk prioritisation inappropriately affected.
10. Currently, publication of risk information associated with regeneration projects takes place through open reports at key project milestones (Gateways associated with procurement and cabinet reports at other decision making points) and through public consultation and publicity.

11. Gateway risk information is limited and focussed on procurement risks and is potentially therefore of limited interest to the public. Risk information within cabinet reports can be similarly limited and focussed on the particular issue under consideration.
12. It is considered that the most appropriate way to ensure that risk information is publicly available in digestible form is to ensure that risk is duly considered as part of the communication plan for all projects. In this way risk information should then be collated, formatted and made available (including online) to the appropriate stakeholder groups as part of the overall communication strategy for a project.

National Planning Policy Framework

13. Risk registers are updated by project managers and directors both routinely and in response to specific events or advice. In this instance those responsible for the Aylesbury and Elephant and Castle regeneration programmes were aware of the specific guidance from the NPPF and the potential implications on projects and the overall programmes. In light of OSC comments risk registers have been reviewed and where appropriate amended to make clear the consideration of this issue.
14. The cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy has been briefed specifically in regard to paragraph 173 of the NPPF and its implications on the projects and risk management.

Housing Archives

15. The Major Works division has recently initiated several interdependent projects to help assess the quality and accessibility of building-related information held, and to implement improvements in the divisions practices and procedures relating to digitally archived information. A brief outline of specific projects currently ongoing is given below:
 - Building Plans (Fire escape routes) – As recommended by the recent Lakanal inquest, the London Fire Brigade will be supplied with building plans detailing primary and secondary escape routes for all blocks over five storeys tall. As existing architectural drawings of Southwark's housing stock are currently held in a variety of formats in numerous locations, a project to create a consolidated digital archive on Northgate's Electronic Document Management System (EDMS), *Info@Work*, is currently under way. This project involves cataloguing, organizing and digitally storing a large array of historical and newly commissioned building drawings, photographs, and other major works related documentation, much of which has recently been digitalized from outdated micro-fiche technologies. Having this material organized on an EDMS system will make it easily navigable and accessible to a wide range of users within the housing department and will facilitate consistent provision of such information to external stakeholders such as the emergency services and contractors. This exercise follows in the footsteps of other ongoing projects making use of *Info@Work* to store important documentation in connection with the construction and maintenance of Southwark's housing stock, including a centralized store of health & safety files and operating and maintenance manuals.

- Asset Management System (AMS) Review: A project group has been reviewing the use of our current Asset Management System, Apex, to ensure that Southwark has the best possible tools for managing its stock in the long-term. As well as looking at how other organisations make use of their AMS, the project group has been investigating the demands of all the divisions within the housing and community services department in order to progress towards a more streamlined and integrated asset database to complement the functionality and information stored on the main housing management system, Northgate. It is expected that this project will lead to an expansion of the information held and a requirement to update the procedures which help capture all relevant asset-related data, ensuring information is continuously updated and a high level of accuracy is maintained. In addition to holding extra information, the aim of this project is to make asset-related information more easily accessible to other divisions or departments such as regeneration, repairs and specialist housing. Achieving this will inevitably require some additional investment in order to extend the capabilities of our systems, required help process the additional information to be consolidated on the AMS. In preparation, it will also be necessary to engage in wide-ranging data-cleansing exercises to ensure that only reliable information is being used to help make important decisions about investment planning, such as option appraisals or area-based regeneration initiatives. The potential costs of adding the desired functionality is currently being investigated in conjunction with our existing software suppliers.
- Major Works Website: Work has already begun to write a new section of Southwark's website, specifically relating to current major works schemes and future investment programmes. The aim is to make information about planned work as readily available as possible – and ensure that the information available is well-maintained and continuously updated. Initially, work is being undertaken to amalgamate relevant information into easily digestible formats. A quarterly update schedule will be implemented to ensure that the responsible teams keep published information up to date.

16. The three exercises outlined above will, together, have a major impact on the quality of archival information about Southwark's estates and housing stock that is available to officers, contractors and residents. Easy access and rational organisation of information are the guiding principles of all of these, and with the appropriate tools in place to handle the burgeoning amount of data, will enable the council to make significant progress towards having more pro-active planned maintenance and investment strategies to meet medium- and long-term objectives.

Community impact statement

17. This decision has been judged to have no significant impact on local people and communities or disadvantage any protected group.

Director of Legal Services

18. The report author has identified that the risk registers contain significant information about the risk profile of projects and the risk management strategies in place to address the same. However the report author has at paragraphs 10 to 12 of the report also outlined how in the interests of transparency risk information associated with regeneration projects will be made publically available at various stages of all projects.

19. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') establishes a statutory right for anyone to submit a request for recorded information held by the council. Therefore any person (which includes an individual, company, partnership etc) could request a full copy of the risk registers under the Act and this decision will not override their statutory right to make such a request.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Documents	Held At	Contact
Regeneration Risk Registers and Archive Records of Housing Estates (Report of Overview and Scrutiny)	http://moderngov.southwarksites.com/documents/	Shelley Burke, Southwark Council

APPENDICES

No	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Fiona Colley, Regeneration and Corporate Strategy and Councillor Ian Wingfield, Deputy Leader and Housing Management	
Lead Officer	Eleanor Kelly, Chief Executive	
Report Author	Sam Fowler, Project Director	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 July 2013	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	No
Cabinet Members	Yes	Yes
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