

Chairman's Statement ref Milton Keynes City Council Development Proposal

I have represented GHRA for the past few years in negotiations with MKCC to provide a suitable space for residents to hold Community events. What MKCC proposed during the meeting on Thursday 15th June came as a complete surprise, I had only been informed a few days before in confidence that MKCC were terminating negotiations on the lease and knew nothing of the other proposed developments encroaching on our green spaces. See <https://tinyurl.com/MKCC-GH-Proposal-JUN2023>

I am disappointed that their proposal was not discussed in advance so that it might incorporate elements useful to residents but it was not discussed and does not suit us at all in my opinion.

As most of you will have observed, MKCC are poor estate managers and have consistently failed to maintain our environment and infrastructure, roads, trees, street lighting, grass-crete and redways, all of which have been neglected. Local amenities such as the swimming pool and Barford site (shop etc) have suffered similar lack of care and attention to repairs. When they do undertake repairs they are often overcharged, we have examples of this with their roof repairs on the estate costing several times more than what private tenants got the job done for.

MKCC were hoping that they could persuade Stony Town Council to take on the former Arts Centre and to raise their taxes so locals could pay for it but Stony Town council did not want to burden residents with the additional costs. MKCC then undertook to refurbish the Arts Centre for community use. GHRA made representation as to how the redevelopment could be designed to suit our needs but every aspect was rejected. It is uncertain how much MKCC spent on the refurbishment but it is in the region of £500,000 which includes £67,000 for consultants fees. GHRA did offer to undertake the works and return the underspend to MKCC but this was declined.

MKCC believes the way to resolve their maintenance issues is to offer developers green spaces and to use money given to the Council by developers to undertake necessary repairs. This is an unsustainable method as in years to come what will MKCC do when they have run out of green spaces to sell? MKCC needs to focus on real issues that concern us and stop wasting money on elements that they cannot influence. They need to be more diligent in paying for repairs in a timely fashion before they become expensive. Some residents will recognise they and their families in the past exercising a "stitch in time saves nine".

As Chairman of the GHRA I should be impartial but I personally reject these new proposals in its entirety as being totally unsuitable for our residential estate. We will be seeking and recording residents feedback here <https://tinyurl.com/MKCC-GH-Proposal-Feedback>

It is vitally important that you consider what MKCC is proposing and let GHRA have your opinion so we can convey to MKCC **what you the residents want**. MKCC should recognise that they work for us and should respect residents' and tenants' opinions and objectives.

David Tavener 25th June 2023