

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Supplementary Information



Date: Wednesday, 9 February 2022

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber - City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR

9. Public Forum

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item

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Statements

Ref	Name	Topic
S 1	Clive Stevens	Goram Homes



Public Forum Statements

Statement 1: Clive Stevens

I wish to lend my support to Goram Homes. It is a key component of the Project 1000 mission which I see as transformative for the life chances of so many Bristolians.

Regarding Project 1000: It is clear the housing market is not working for many. Even the Government admit it, their definition of an affordable home is now, "housing for sale or rent, for those [people] whose needs are not met by the market". In Bristol there are perhaps as many as 100,000 whose needs are not met by the market. Many live in council, social or association housing, but the housing list and the planning studies show many more aren't and it seems to be getting worse. Therefore it is totally appropriate and right for the state to increase the level of market intervention locally and nationally.

Regarding Goram Homes: I see from the publicly visible Appendix B that each site will become a separate limited liability business partnership, called an LLP. It also says land will be bought at market price (perhaps with help of Homes England grants? Although none appear to be shown). The loans to each LLP are to be borrowed from third parties (not Council borrowing from the Government's PWLB) and a proportion of the output will be houses sold at market prices.

It is a shame that the Council can't borrow from Government as it would be at a lower interest rate. I would be interested in the reasons why this can't be done. Perhaps it would fall foul of state-aid rules or perhaps it breaches Finance Department's self-imposed prudent borrowing "rules"? I think it worth finding out.

The Goram Home's directors appointed to each LLP will presumably need appropriate training and experience.

I am hoping your scrutiny gives Goram a clean bill of health. Many thousands of Bristolians need it to eventually change Bristol's affordable-housing market.