

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Thursday, 22 May 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub
(Community and Children's Services) Committee held at Committee Rooms, West
Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 22 May 2014 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Billy Dove
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines
Gareth Moore
Dhruv Patel
Adam Richardson
Elizabeth Rogula
Virginia Rounding
Alderman David Graves

Officers:

Ade Adetosoye	-	Director of Community and Children's Services
Eddie Stevens	-	Community and Children's Services
Jacquie Campbell	-	Community and Children's Services
Karen Tarbox	-	Community and Children's Services
Paul Jackson	-	Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	-	Community and Children's Services
Elizabeth Donnelly	-	Community and Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlain's Department
Jacqui Daniels	-	Town Clerk's Department
Philippa Sewell	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ann Holmes and Deputy Henry Jones.

**2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN
RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Mr Gareth Moore declared an interest in housing matters as a tenant of Golden Lane Estate.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. A list of Members eligible to serve was read out and Virginia Rounding, being the only Member indicating her willingness to serve, was declared to have been elected for the ensuing year.

4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30. A list of Members eligible to serve was read out and the Revd Dr

Martin Dudley, being the only Member indicating his willingness to serve, was declared to have been elected for the ensuing year.

The Chairman welcomed new Members, Ann Holmes (in her absence) and Dhruv Patel, and thanked the outgoing Member Angela Starling.

5. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members discussed the terms of reference which currently prevented the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Community & Children's Services Committee from standing as either Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Sub Committee, which did not follow the wishes of Members.

RESOLVED – That the Town Clerk be asked to consider the mechanism through which the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee's Terms of Reference could be reviewed and, where possible, amended to allow the Deputy Chairman of the Community & Children's Services Committee (Ex-Officio) to stand as Chairman of the Sub Committee.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 30 January 2014 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Emergency Access to Tower Blocks

Officers reported that detailed work was underway concerning fire safety. External consultants had been employed to produce risk assessments and officers were now working through their various recommendations. Members noted that a report on this issue would be brought to the next Sub Committee meeting.

7. **HORACE JONES HOUSE PRESENTATION**

The Sub Committee received a presentation of the Director of Community & Children's Services concerning the mixed use scheme at the One Tower Bridge development and asking Members for their thoughts regarding rent setting, allocations and tenure, and to make a recommendation to the Grand Committee.

Members discussed the options at length, querying details including the following:

- Expected level of service charges: this is not yet determined but expected to be higher than other City stock due to the level of amenity and quality of the building;
- Demand from existing tenants: can we identify those who might be interested or whose income would meet higher rents should they be charged? A marketing campaign will be undertaken when the level of rent is agreed. The City does hold details of tenants' income, other than for those who are claiming housing benefit;
- Lack of signage promoting the Corporation's involvement in the development: the developer-only signage was part of the agreement negotiated by the City Surveyor;

- Right to buy: tenants of Horace Jones House would acquire the right to buy, but it is anticipated that such purchases are unlikely given the market value of the properties;
- Rent increases: it is proposed that these are in line with the government-set regime for the City's other social housing (CPI + 1%);
- Provision of disabled facilities: one property in the block has been specifically adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities; and
- Fixed term tenancy length: if such tenancies are used, they would be fixed for 5 years, in line with the recommendation of the Localism Act and best practice.

Members agreed that there was a need for mixed developments providing affordable housing to ensure a mix of people could live in the centre of the City. They also agreed this development offered an opportunity to fund improvements to the City's existing housing assets or to support further new development.

RESOLVED – That a recommendation be made to the Community and Children's Services Committee based on the following:

- (a) Rent: set at 40% of market rents;
- (b) Allocations: existing social housing tenants should be prioritised (with greatest priority given to those overcrowded or under-occupying); and
- (c) Tenancy: like-for-like for existing social housing tenants (predominantly lifetime tenancies) and five-year fixed term tenancies for new applicants.

8. AMENDMENT TO THE ALLOCATION POLICY

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services which sought approval for an amendment to the Allocations Policy making provision for the use of local lettings policies. Each individual policy would be brought before the Sub Committee for approval, and Members noted that any such policies would be time-limited for 3- to 5-year periods to address specific needs or circumstances.

RESOLVED – That the proposed amendment to the City's allocations scheme be approved.

9. CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES - UPDATE

Members received an update report of the Director of Community & Children's Services on the City of London Almshouses. The Head of Housing Management reported that the planning application to the London Borough of Lambeth to convert the Deputy Matron's flat to an office and community meeting place had been approved, and builders were in place to begin the work within the next few weeks. With regard to the damp problems at the Roger's Cottages, a pilot property had been identified and the resident had vacated her home for the duration of the repairs (approximately 2 weeks). Members discussed the need to review the contents of the hamper, noting its value of approximately £50.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. HOUSING ESTATES - ALLOCATED MEMBERS' REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the events and activities on the City of London social housing estates. Officers reported that the 2013/14 Estate Satisfaction Survey had been completed by a total of 932 households representing a 33.46% return rate. This was a significant improvement on previous years and offered a robust basis for analysis.

Members noted that Estate meetings were held four times a year on larger estates and twice a year on smaller estates. Members also considered the Allocated Members for each estate.

RESOLVED – that:

(a) The Allocated Members be assigned as follows:

Avondale Square (Southwark)	-	Virginia Rounding
Small Estates	-	Elizabeth Rogula
Golden Lane (City)	-	Gareth Moore and Deputy John Barker (Ward Members)
Holloway & York Way (Islington)	-	Deputy Catherine McGuinness, Barbara Newman and Deputy Michael Welbank
Middlesex Street (City)	-	Deputy Henry Jones (Ward Member)
South Bank Estates	-	Adam Richardson
Sheltered Schemes & Almshouses	-	Deputy Billy Dove and Mark Wheatley
Sydenham Hill	-	Deputy Billy Dove and Mark Wheatley
Lammas Green/Otto Close (Lewisham)	-	Deputy Billy Dove and Mark Wheatley

(b) Allocated Members be added to the distribution list for the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee; and

(c) An open invitation to Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee meetings be extended to the Allocated Members.

11. HOUSING UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which gave Members a general update on Housing Service performance from 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014. The Head of Housing Management highlighted the breakdown of the 2013/14 Estate Satisfaction Survey responses which had highlighted some areas for work; e.g. 69.39% of residents responded that they feel safe on estates; officers were therefore unpicking the perception of why 30.61% did not feel safe.

Members noted that the number of people on the housing waiting list had reduced as people with no connection with the City, and therefore ineligible, had been removed. Officers reported that 98.5% of rent had been collected, giving a year-end figure of 98.6%; Members agreed this was a very impressive achievement and formally expressed their thanks to the officers involved.

In response to Members' questions, the Head of Housing Management reported that more resources were put into rent collection, but that some evictions took place in the case of long-standing non-payment.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12. **REMEMBERING YESTERDAY, CELEBRATING TODAY**

Members received an information report on the programme of community development work being done to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War. Members noted that the name of the project had been changed from 'The Poppy Project'.

The project will run for four years; extending the work beyond the first year allowed more activities to be run and would develop the capacity of residents and local staff to manage community programmes so they are sustainable in the longer term.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

In response to a question from the Chairman, it was:

RESOLVED – That a report and presentation come to a future meeting regarding health and wellbeing events on estates.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

15. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item	Paragraph
16-18	3
19-20	-

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 30 January 2014 be approved as a correct record.

17. **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the draft Asset Management Strategy.

18. **HOUSING PROJECTS PORTFOLIO UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which gave an update on the Housing Projects.

19. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 12.47 pm

Chairman

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