

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 July 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson	Dhruv Patel
Revd Dr Martin Dudley	Elizabeth Rogula
Ann Holmes	Virginia Rounding
Deputy Catherine McGuinness	Mark Wheatley
Gareth Moore	

Officers:

Philippa Sewell	Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	Chamberlain's Department
Ade Adetosoye	Director of Community & Children's Services
Katherine Bowen	Community and Children's Services Department
Jacque Campbell	Community and Children's Services Department
Elizabeth Donnelly	Community and Children's Services Department
Karen Tarbox	Community and Children's Services Department
Jacqueline Whitmore	Community and Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman David Graves, John Fletcher, Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines, 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 Ann Holmes, being the only Member indicating her willingness to serve, was declared to have been elected for the ensuing year.

The Chairman welcomed new Members, Randall Anderson, John Fletcher, Deputy McGuinness and Mark Wheatley, and thanked the outgoing Members Chief Commoner Deputy Billy Dove (who was in attendance) and Adam Richardson.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ALLOCATED MEMBERS

Members received the Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Community & Children’s Services Committee at their meeting on 8 May 2015, and the Allocated Member guidelines and list for 2014/15, which was updated as follows:

ESTATE	ALLOCATED MEMBER
Avondale Square (Southwark)	Virginia Rounding
Small Estates: Dron House/Spitalfields (Tower Hamlets); Isleden House (Islington); Windsor House (Hackney)	Elizabeth Rogula
Golden Lane (City)	Gareth Moore (Ward Member) Deputy John Barker (Ward Member)
Holloway & York Way (Islington)	Deputy Catherine McGuinness Barbara Newman Michael Welbank
Middlesex Street (City)	Deputy Henry Jones (Ward Member)
South Bank Estates: Southwark Blocks (Southwark) William Blake (Lambeth)	Randall Anderson
Sheltered Schemes & Almshouses: Harman Close (Southwark); Mais House (Lewisham); City of London & Gresham Almshouses (Lambeth)	Mark Wheatley Ann Holmes
Sydenham Hill: Lamma Green/Otto Close (Lewisham)	Mark Wheatley

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 27 April 2015 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Horace Jones House

In response to a Member’s query regarding Right to Buy, officers undertook to re-examine the legal framework.

Stanley Cohen House

Members noted that meter checks had been added to the five-year cyclical tests, and the Fire Brigade report was still outstanding.

Tenancy and Rents Policy

Officers informed Members that the Chancellor's recent Budget announcement would significantly affect a number of areas of social housing, notably a cap on welfare benefits.

Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund

Officers advised that information had been publicised but, so far, there had been little take-up.

Questions

In response to Members' queries, officers confirmed that an interim Building Surveyor had been appointed, and the permanent Building Surveyor was due to start in August 2015. Officers also advised that a Professional Services Framework was now being put in place to simplify and expedite procurement procedures.

Resident Communications & Engagement Strategy – Technology

With regard to communications and IS systems, Members resolved to seek assurance from the Information Technology Sub Committee that ensuring officers had the ability to send information to residents quickly and effectively was a priority.

Golden Lane Estate – Petition

Regarding the Golden Lane Estate petition received at the last meeting, the Director of Community & Children's Services advised that he had responded to the petitioners and their reply was awaited.

7. TENANCY SUPPORT PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from Emma Martin and Martin Hammond from the Tenancy Support Team, after which Members of the Committee had the opportunity to ask questions.

The Tenancy Support Team worked with vulnerable tenants who, for a variety of reasons, were unable to manage their tenancy without support. The team worked with numerous types of organisations to offer short to long term support (depending on what was needed). Members were taken through two anonymised case studies, from the initial referral through assessment, intervention and the outcomes. In response to Members' queries, Mr Hammond confirmed that the team worked with all City tenants, including those in other boroughs. Members noted the complexity of liaison arrangements, and advised officers that Allocated Members could help wherever possible. With regards to problems with numeracy, Mr Hammond reported that the Money Matters training being offered on the Middlesex Estate was invaluable to help residents manage their own finances.

The Chairman thanked Ms Martin and Mr Hammond for their presentation.

8. **PROVISION OF WORKS RELATING TO ADAPTATIONS, REDECORATION WORKS AND CONDENSATION REDUCTION**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding the provision of adaptation works, as part of the Asset Management Plan.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the comments of Projects Sub Committee, approval be given to go out to tender to seek new contracts and £911,250 be approved to fund the procurement, management and works within the 3 year contracts.

9. **HOUSING UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services providing an update on the Housing Service performance and progress against key areas of work.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **HOUSING ESTATES – ALLOCATED MEMBERS' REPORT**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services which provided an update on the City of London Corporation's Social Housing Estates. The report had been compiled in collaboration with Allocated Members, who took an active interest in their estates, championing residents and local staff and engaging with residents.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. **CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation from the Assistant Director, Housing & Neighbourhoods regarding the forty-two City of London and eight Gresham Almshouses in Lambeth, after which Members of the Committee had the opportunity to ask questions.

Members noted the presentation and the report, and queried the governance arrangements for the Gresham Almshouses. The Assistant Director confirmed decisions affecting them were taken to the Gresham Committee and any maintenance or development schemes were proportionately funded from the Gresham Trust. She also reported that, at a request from the Chairman, a review of the Charitable Objects was being initiated. With regards to the suggested change of job title from 'Matron', Members agreed that 'Almshouses Manager' would be a suitable alternative.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Director for her presentation, and it was **RESOLVED** – That:

- (a) A review of the Charitable Objects of the Almshouses be carried out; and
- (b) The job title of 'Matron' be changed to 'Almshouses Manager'.

12. **RESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY – UPDATE**
The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children’s Services which provided an update on the action plan for the Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13. **PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME**
The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children’s Services which provided a summary of the 2015/16 Professional Training Programme offered to Housing Service staff. Members were advised that they would also be welcome to attend any of the sessions on offer (provided they book in advance).

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

14. **PETS POLICY**
The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children’s Services outlining the development of a new Pets Policy. Members noted that this policy would not apply to sheltered housing.

RESOLVED – That the new Pets Policy be adopted on all City estates.

15. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – OUTTURN 2014/15**
The Sub Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services, which compared the outturn for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in 2014/15 with the final agreed budget for the year. This had been approved at the Grand Committee meeting on 10th July 2015.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16. **THE CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES – RISK REGISTER 2015**
The Sub Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services, which outlined key risks for the City of London Almshouses Charity, and suggested a RAG rating for each. Members discussed the report, and agreed to defer the report to allow the risks and their ratings to be re-examined.

RESOLVED – That the report be deferred to the next meeting.

17. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
The Chairman thanked the Assistant Director – Barbican & Property Services and the Projects & Improvement Manager on behalf of the Sub Committee, as this would be their last meeting.

19. **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
20-23	3
24-25	-

20. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2015 be approved as a correct record.

21. **CAPITAL RECEIPT FROM REDROW - BLAKE TOWER, 2 FANN STREET**

Members considered a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community & Children's Services.

22. **HOUSING PROJECTS PORTFOLIO UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

23. **ISSUE REPORT: HOSTEL DEVELOPMENT & LODGE II (MIDDLE STREET) ENABLING PROJECT**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

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

There were no questions.

25. **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 closed at 3.36 pm

Chairman

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