

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**
Tuesday, 12 January 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub
(Community and Children's Services) Committee held at VIRTUAL MEETING –
ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY on Tuesday, 12 January 2021 at 1.00 pm

Present

Members:

John Fletcher (Chairman)
Mary Durcan (Deputy Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman David Graves
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Peter Bennett
The Revd Stephen Haines
Ruby Sayed

Officers:

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1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Fletcher (Chairman) and Jason Pritchard.

**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, and Deputy Henry Jones declared an interest in matters relating to the Middlesex Street Estate, as he was a residential and business lease holder.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the public minutes of the meeting held virtually on meeting on 30 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

The Chair noted that there are a number of references to reports being referred to as to be presented to the Committee at a later date and the Chair asked that for the future such mention should have a set date is provided.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Assistant Director, Barbican Estate & Property Services, went through the

listing and updated the Committee on the action tracker. The Committee agreed to remove the following items from the action tracker, as they have now been completed;

- Tenancy Visits
- Fire Safety
- Housing Policies – Renewal Timetable
- Pets Policy – HRA
- Presentation from Wates Constructions
- Estate Inspections Performance

5. **PETS POLICY REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Pets Policy Review.

A Member noted that the result of the consultation was very diverse with varied opinions. The Member asked if the policy will be applied across all the Estates or if this will be driven by the demands of each Estates. The Head of Housing Management responded that the policy will be applied across the board, the policy has expanded from the terms of reference from the Housing Tenancy Agreement. It was noted that for the future consultations, different viewpoints will be taken from Estates within the frameworks of the consultations.

Another Member asked that the policy refers to housing applicants having to seek permission, where can the applicants obtain the forms from. The Head of Housing Management responded that the small pets such as cats do not require an approval, but the policies refer to dogs only. The information on this is provided on the City of London's website and is advertised on the resident's magazine too, which is published twice a year. The Committee was also informed that Members are still welcome to send in their views on the policy, as this remains a draft document.

Another Member asked if the policy would have room for exemptions such as the use of therapy dogs, which some people may use in a therapeutic way, such as assisting with mental health. The Members were assured by the Head of Housing Management that there is provision in place for therapy dogs whereby exemptions can be made on the condition that the resident can provide supporting documents from their Doctors or a specialist in the medical field. The approval for such exemptions can be granted by an Estate Manager and is not a lengthy process.

Members agreed that the future consultations should be carried out as the turnover on the current consultation was low. It was suggested that for future consultations the Committee should look at consequences for unruly dogs and dog mess which are left uncleared by its owner.

RESOLVED – That the Committee;

- Approved the reviewed Pets Policy for use by the Housing Division; and

- Members indicated that further consultation is considered necessary on any aspect of the Policy.

6. **HOUSING ESTATE PARKING MANAGEMENT REVIEW - PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Housing Estate Parking Management Review - Progress Update.

The Committee was informed that the review of this policy came from the need to review the City of London's Parking charges and as part of the decision made by Members to increase concession for disabled drivers by 100%. A consultant was commissioned to explore this further and the report lays out the findings.

A Member asked if the report could have provided a variation of the charges rather than just a summary. The Member further commented that on the Golden Lane Estate there is an ongoing piece of work with grants from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) to invest in bike storages and as such if Officers can ensure that this policy does not hinder the ongoing application, which is being sponsored by the Member.

This was followed by another Member who agreed that the report did not consider all options and as such other alternatives' avenues are explored beyond its current remit. Another Member commented that if parking spaces can be rearranged in such ways which allows room for open spaces for residents, with consultation with the residents.

The Head of Housing Management commented that Members will have access to the full report once the final version is ready. In terms of alternative use of space, this was beyond the scope of this report. The Department may consider this option for the future and look at recreational spaces for the residents.

The Chair asked if the full report can be circulated with the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the report.

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

Communication Strategy

A Member commented that out of the 550 flats on Golden Lane Estate a recent communication was sent to just 150 homes as this is the number of email addresses Officers have access to. The email was the only method used to communicate in this instance. Can officers develop an action plan to improve on this coverage and ensure that all residents are kept up to date.

In light of the COVID-19 it is vital to ensure that the City of London can engage with all its residents, considering these viable options should be explored.

Assistant Director Barbican & Property Services replied that the Department is reviewing its own policy in terms of its Communication Strategy. The Committee was informed that each of the e-mail addresses which the Departments hold are various purpose rather than for a generic issue. The Communication Strategy review will allow the Department to explore this further and allow a diverse use of communications with residents across the Estates.

ASB in Elsbe Estate City of London

A Member asked that there seems to be an increase of anti-social behaviour within the Estate, with the patrol being decommissioned. The patrol had added value to estate and increased the quality of life for the residents.

The Head of Housing Management responded that the department is aware of the increase of the anti-social behaviour and it is disappointing to see that the patrol has come to an end but there is a procedure put in place to have a new contract in place for the anti-social behaviour.

Officers apologised for the way the end of contract was communicated with the residents and have taken forward learning from the experience

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

9. 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

xx

Paragraph

x

10. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the public minutes of the meeting held virtually on meeting on 30 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

11.1 Wates Living Space

The Committee received a verbal update from the Managing Director of Wates Constructions.

11.2 Post Presentation Discussions

11.3 Crescent House/ Cullum Welch House Heating Replacement

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

There were no non-public questions.

13. **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 3.04 pm

Chairman

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