

TO: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
5th October 2018

FROM: **HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB COMMITTEE**
14 September 2018

DISPENSATIONS

Members who were also residents of the Barbican Estate had not been granted dispensations to speak or vote in respect of today's item of urgent business in respect of the Housing Governance Review.

The Town Clerk explained the rationale behind the above decision as follows:

After consultation with the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Standards Committee, the Town Clerk rejected the request for a dispensation under urgency provisions to speak in connection with the housing governance review at the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee.

At its meeting on Monday 10/9, the Dispensations Sub (Standards) Committee considered a number of dispensation requests, the vast majority of which related to the Housing Governance review. In summary, having taken account of all relevant matters, Members considered that applications to speak at the Barbican Residential Committee on the Housing Governance Review should be granted in view of the strong resident representation included in that Committee's constitution, the requirement for 'local democracy to be seen to be being done' on such a fundamental issue, and also as the final decision on the review itself would not rest with that Committee.

Members were not persuaded that requests to speak at other committees on the Housing Governance Review made as strong a case and considered that these should be rejected. The Sub Committee also noted that Members with a disclosable pecuniary interest could communicate their views on a matter to a committee or chairman in writing, or request an alternate member of that committee to put forward their views.

The Policy & Resources Committee expressed a desire to consult with and receive the views of those Committees which would be affected by any change. Potential options included the disbandment of the Housing Sub Committee, as it currently exists. However, because only half the Members of the Sub-Committee were allowed to speak on this, a proper and complete view could not be formulated by the Sub-Committee, on its own future, for a report to Policy and Resources. The Chairman therefore intended to seek the permission of the Chairman (of the Policy and Resources Committee) to address the Committee when they take a decision on Housing Governance; reflecting the views of those Members who were not granted a dispensation to speak at today's meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee.

The Chairman expressed his concern at what he perceived to be an over-zealous interpretation of the Localism Act, unique to the City Corporation, resulting in only half of the Members of the Committee being able to speak and potentially disenfranchising residents. Members strongly endorsed this view and asked for their comments to go on

record and for it to be RESOLVED, that – these views be reported to the next meeting of the Standards Committee