

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

Monday, 24 September 2018

17. HOUSING GOVERNANCE

The Chairman had agreed to admit the following item of urgent business in respect of the Housing Governance Review.

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk in respect of Housing Governance and noted the comments raised at previous Committees, who would also be affected by the review. The Chairman advised that he would be seeking the views of those Members who had not been granted dispensations, and would ask the Chairman (of the Policy and Resources Committee) if he could address the Committee and share their views.

The following comments were made in respect of options (i) and (v) as set out in the report:

- I. The debate warranted further exploration by all Members, at the Informal Meeting of the Court of Common Council in November, before a final decision could be taken.
- II. The Barbican Estate needed separate representation from the HRA Committee/Sub Committee. Whilst it was accepted that the BRC might need some re-organisation, subject to further debate, it would not require a merger with another Committee. Members noted the City Corporation's undertaking to Barbican Residents that they would always have their own Committee.
- III. Under the BRC's current Constitution, resident Members can be granted dispensations to speak but not vote. However, their right to speak could affect decisions taken by non-resident Members with voting rights. The recent outcome of dispensation requests had resulted in Members not being able to speak and concerns that this could potentially disenfranchise residents.
- IV. It was suggested that the report could have been more detailed in respect of the work undertaken by each of the Committees, drawing out the differences and similarities. Members noted the main difference in that the HRA Committee/Sub Committees were mainly concerned with policies affecting the wellbeing of residents; whereby the BRC, being almost entirely Leaseholders, was more property focussed.
- V. The Chairman felt strongly, and Members agreed, that any change should not decrease the quality or level of social and welfare services to

the City Corporation's Social Housing Tenants; it should have either a neutral or improved outcome.

- VI. Whilst noting a potential advantage on the property side, which might arise from linking the Committees, Members agreed that there would be no discernible advantage in breaking the link between the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee and the synergy offered by the Community and Children's Services Committee.

RESOLVED, that – the above views be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee, noting particularly:

1. Any outcome to the Housing Governance Review should not compromise the social and welfare services available to the City Corporation's housing tenants.
2. The need to retain separate Committees for Barbican and HRA/Social tenancy matters; whilst accepting that the BRC might need some re-organisation.
3. The Sub Committees suggestion to continue this debate at the Informal Meeting of the Court of Common Council in November, before the Policy and Resources Committee take a final decision.
4. The Chairman 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.