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| <b>Committee</b>  | <b>Dated:</b>          |
| Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee   | <b>27/11/2018</b>      |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Housing Estates – Allocated Members’ Report  | <b>Public</b>          |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Director of Community & Children’s Services  | <b>For Information</b> |
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### **Summary**

This report, which is for information, provides an update for the Committee on events and activities on the City of London Corporation’s social housing estates.

The report is compiled in collaboration with Allocated Members, whose role is to take an active interest in their estate, to champion residents and local staff and to engage with housing issues in order to play an informed part in housing-related debates within the Committee.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. The Allocated Members Scheme was introduced in 2000, when Members of the Community & Children’s Services Committee were allocated to different City of London Corporation housing estates. This report is presented to the Housing Management Sub-Committee twice a year.

#### **General Estate Matters**

2. Residents are eagerly awaiting the installation of superfast broadband on their estates. They are particularly enthusiastic about the provision of free wi-fi Hotspots on several of their estates. The installation is nearly complete on a few of the estates and will be complete by the end of next year on all Housing estates.

3. Estate staff have been feeding into the Policies and Procedures reviews, reading them through the lens of the people 'on the ground' and feeding that back to the Head of Estates.
4. We have had bespoke General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training for estate staff who carry out porter/cleaner roles. It is geared towards addressing issues that they may come across in their day to day work on the estates.

#### **Avondale Square Estate – Allocated Member, William Pimlott**

5. As the new Allocated Member for the Avondale Square Estate, I look forward to meeting with the team and having a tour of the estate.
6. Since the last report, Randall Anderson and John Fletcher visited Avondale Square Estate to meet Estate Manager, Shaun Thurston and Estate Officer, Ade Folami on their July Estate Walkabout. 10 residents attended, and it was great to get a feel for the estate and to understand what was happening in the local area. A report was generated from the walkabout which was forwarded to them, and Mr Fletcher made several suggestions during the walkabout on what could be prioritised.
7. Suman Hussain, Customer Service Officer, left at the beginning of October and has been replaced by Edwin Middleton-Weaver. I look forward to meeting Edwin on my visit to the estate.
8. On 7 July Avondale Community Events (ACE) organised an event to commemorate the centenary of the ending of the First World War, specifically in memory of the 345 Southwark soldiers who did not return from the war. The event was attended by around 100 residents and was a thoroughly enjoyable day.
9. Also as part of the commemoration of the ending of WWI, a mural display of graffiti artwork has been created in front of George Elliston House, and looks fantastic. I look forward to seeing the display on my visit.
10. ACE also held their annual Picnic on the Green on 1 September. The weather remained sunny and dry all day and the event was attended by well over 100 people from the estate and local area.
11. Since the last report, there have been various improvement works on the estate. The electronic barriers to control the parking have been fitted on at the front and back of the estate, which will really help with the problems of illegal parking and fly-tipping. 17 new parking bays have also been marked out on the estate, which will address the high parking demand and bring in more revenue.
12. During Estate Open meetings, residents have regularly complained about the lack of light around the estate due to the faulty streetlights. I am pleased to say that a project has been put in place to replace or repair all the external lighting across the estate, which will be completed in the next month.

13. The Decent Homes Programme has gone very well on the estate, with minimal issues raised. There are now only three properties left to complete.
14. Superfast Broadband has now been installed in each block on the estate, as well as in the Estate Office and Community Centre. This has made benefit surgeries much easier for tenants who need to come in to fill in online applications.

**Small Estates (Isleden House and Windsor House) – Allocated Member, Peter Bennett**

15. At Windsor House, Decent Homes work to replace kitchens and bathrooms was undertaken earlier this year, and residents are very pleased with the renovations.
16. The office at Windsor House has undergone major refurbishment, making this a more inviting space for residents to see staff. The community hall is undergoing major repair work to the entrance hall and internal decorations to bring new life into an under-used space. Estate staff will have an open evening once the work is complete to encourage residents to use the hall more regularly.
17. At Isleden House, residents agreed to open the communal hall on Thursday afternoons to host a joint bingo session with another local housing estate. There are regularly 15+ people attending, all enjoying the use of the communal hall and facilities and their bingo winnings! The Scheme Manager applied for funding for the Little Angel Theatre to provide a show called “Me and My Bird” for sheltered residents in the communal hall as part of a series of community events which also included “Crafternoon” sessions for children on the estate. The sessions were enthusiastically received, with further sessions planned later in the year.

**Golden Lane Estate – Allocated Member Barbara Newman, CBE**

18. Michelle Warman has been managing Golden Lane since April, and I joined her for the Estate Walkabout in July to see how the current projects are getting on.
19. Michelle has continued to meet monthly with Cripplegate Ward Members to discuss matters affecting Golden Lane Estate and other common issues across the City of London Housing Estates.
20. I am pleased to report that the internal and external decorating programme is well underway and the contractors, K&M Decorators, have utilised their apprenticeship programme successfully on Golden Lane. Steve Murray is the project lead and has kept the residents informed as the programme progresses on each block.

21. The Great Arthur House curtain wall project has been completed. Residents have received letters asking them to report any defects with any of the works that have been carried out, as the contractor will be responsible for putting it right during the one-year defects period.
22. Refurbishment work on the Community Centre is complete, however there have been some adjustments to the office that need to be addressed for health and safety reasons, such as making the existing interview room slightly larger, and adjusting the reception desk to meet the needs of the Customer Services Officer. Centre Manager, Stephanie MacDonald, is now in post and has responsibility for the overall management of the Community Centre and the Sir Ralph Perring Centre.
23. The Under 5's Playground is complete, and the Community Development team organised a very well-attended grand opening, which included the opening of the Community Centre on Saturday, 14 July. The event was supported by the Estate Team and opened by Alderman Timothy Hailes JP.
24. Fellow Members will be pleased to note that concrete repairs to the blocks are nearly completed now, with some finishes left to sign off. The project team have been applying several finishes to the site to match as best they can the surrounding area and are hoping to meet with Planning Officers shortly to sign off the repairs. There have been a number of issues raised with contractors around cleaning and concrete splashes, and a bigger clean-up will be carried out once the work has been completed.
25. The pond behind the Community Centre has been fully refurbished with fresh water plants, a new filter and a fountain. This will make it much more visually pleasing, particularly when viewed from inside the Community Centre.
26. The hoarding has now been erected for the COLPAI site, and there are regular meetings for representatives from each block including Members and interested parties to voice their concerns and be involved throughout process. It had been noted that there was no representation from tenants, but that has been addressed, and now there is a tenant attending. Overall, the COLPAI project appears to have received more positive feedback recently.

### **Holloway & York Way Estates – Allocated Member, Mary Durcan**

27. I had the opportunity to visit Estate Manager, Greg Nott and his team at the York Way estate at the end of June when the estate was celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an event organised by the Residents' Association. Greg and his team supported residents to put on a well-attended, thoroughly enjoyable celebration.
28. Several projects have advanced since the last report. The community hall toilets have been refurbished, which residents really appreciate. This improvement had been planned for some time, so it was great to see this completed for residents; the hall now has much more suitable facilities and has been adapted for disabled use.

29. Phase 2 of the Decent Homes project has been a success on York Way and has received positive feedback from the residents regarding the standard of the finished works and the contractors carrying out the project. There are only eight properties remaining on York Way that have been added to the end of the contract and should be finished before the end of the year. The estate team did a great job facilitating access so that as many properties as possible could be completed.
30. Internal and external redecorations have started on York Way estate. The project has been very positive so far, with the estate already looking cleaner and brighter as a result.
31. Holloway estate project works continue, with the communal electrical re-wire project starting. The work is being done by Guardian, who were brilliant in delivering the tenanted property rewire contract earlier in the year. This project is expected to be finished by the end of this year.
32. Over the summer, Greg and his team had to deal with a serious incident involving a fire in one of the properties on the Holloway estate. Fortunately, no one was hurt, but the damage to the inside of the property was quite severe. Greg and his team have been supporting the tenant and her family since the fire, and the flat is now habitable again. On a positive note, the fire was contained to only that property and a follow-up investigation by the London Fire Brigade concluded that the standard of safety managed by the estate team was very high.

#### **Middlesex Street Estate and Dron House – Allocated Member, Deputy Henry Jones**

33. Estate Manager, Laurence Jones has settled in well at Middlesex Street. Regular meetings are being held with Members. Laurence now has a full complement of staff after a member of his team returned from long term sick leave. The new Customer Service Officer has settled well into her role and has become an invaluable member of the team.
34. Laurence attends regular meetings and works well with the City of London support services including Adult Social Care and the police support teams. His team members are able to respond to any safeguarding concerns speedily and work with the agencies to ensure support is put in place.
35. Another of our residents celebrated her centenary in September. We now have two centenarians living on the Middlesex Street Estate. The estate team presented her with a newspaper published the day she was born and flowers to mark the occasion.
36. The annual summer party was held on the podium. This was well supported by residents and one of the local businesses. Residents were able to enjoy an afternoon of food, music and entertainment. Most importantly, the event brought residents together and gave a community feel to the estate.

37. The external/internal painting programme is complete, with many more projects soon commencing. These projects include Petticoat Tower balcony windows and doors, Petticoat Tower front door replacement, estate-wide concrete repairs, and the lift replacement programme. The estate team will work closely with residents to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum. They will also ensure that communication with residents is maintained and regular bulletins are sent out.
38. The landscaping project to improve Artizan Street outside Petticoat Tower is now complete, and has really enhanced the area. I am looking forward to the spring/summer, when the plants are in full bloom. An opening celebration is being planned and will be advertised soon.
39. The conversion of the top floor (podium level) of the shops on the estate and the old porters' mess room is ongoing. Work is due to be completed in December 2018. Once finished, the estate will have a further 10 properties for social renting.
40. The work to repair the flood damage in the library and community centre is almost complete. Estate and library teams have been temporally located in the Portsoken Community Centre but will shortly move back to the newly refurbished office and library.
41. As part of giving something back to the community and as a thank you for putting up with all the noise and building work during the shop conversion, Vinci construction are planning a Christmas party for residents.
42. The previous Estate Manager, Angela Smith, has now left the City - we wish her the very best in the future.
43. The renewal of the kitchens and bathrooms at Dron House is now complete.

#### **Southbank Estates – Allocated Members, Randall Anderson and Mark Wheatley (Sumner Buildings)**

44. The installation of superfast broadband commenced at Southwark Estates earlier this year, and residents are very much looking forward to getting affordable access to high speed internet connections.
45. Decent Homes works commenced at Southwark in May, and residents have largely welcomed the new kitchens and bathrooms. Where there was dissatisfaction, officers from Housing and Property Services met with residents to agree ways forward. Estate staff helped with the site set-up and daily co-ordination, and helped contractors gain access to harder to reach residents.
46. A well-attended resident drop-in session was held in June at the Blackfriars Settlement. Most residents in attendance wanted additional information about

Decent Homes. Residents continue to welcome these sessions, as it gives them an opportunity to meet officers within Housing, Property Services, and external agencies.

47. A separate drop-in session was held for Horace Jones House residents on-site in the roof gardens. There have been some issues with the meter readings at Horace Jones, so we wanted to get a clear picture of the issues residents were having and discuss the way forward with them. Dave Walker from Southwark Mediation Service attended the meeting and was very useful in helping to manage the dialogue with tenants.
48. Sumner Buildings residents organised a successful Chill Out Fun Day event in July. The residents were given Community Event funding to hold the event, and officers provided support by promoting it and arranging the site set-up on the day. Sumner Buildings has a very strong community spirit, and resident feedback on the event was very positive.
49. William Blake Estate benefitted from a project in July to carry out improvement works to existing car spaces and parking line markings. Following several requests by residents, we were also able to create eight new motorcycle bays.
50. Workshops were held in September and October to gather Sumner Buildings residents' feedback on future development plans for the site. It was a great way to get residents' ideas for what they would like to see so that architects propose designs that address their ideas. Once some concepts have been drawn up, residents will be invited back to a further drop-in session to see the concepts and provide further feedback. Residents have provided a lot of really good ideas for potential development, and I look forward to seeing how co-production of this project continues to take shape.

#### **Sydenham Hill Estate – Allocated Member, Susan Pearson**

51. In July, an open drop-in meeting was held at Sydenham Hill Community Centre for residents. The development team discussed plans and took questions regarding plans for Mais House. Residents were very interested in the future plans, and raised issues they wanted considered, mainly around parking and community amenities on the estate. The Communications team will be holding workshops with residents and former residents of Mais House to hear what they would like to see on the estate.
52. Decent Homes works have commenced on Sydenham Hill. Tenants have largely welcomed the works and look forward to having brand new kitchens and/or bathrooms.

#### **Harman Close – Allocated Member – William Pimlott**

53. Residents have enjoyed using the garden more this year now that work has been undertaken to create a picnic area and improved raised beds. Funding for these projects was obtained via Tesco "Bags of Help" grants. 17 residents

attended a day trip to Eastbourne, which they all enjoyed thoroughly. Harman Close is hosting the second of the three joint events this year, Halloween being the theme.

## **Background Papers**

This report was compiled in consultation with the Allocated Members, managers and staff of the City of London's housing estates.

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