

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**
Thursday, 16 May 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the meeting held at Guildhall at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson - *in the Chair until agenda item 4 (Election of Chairman)*
Mary Durcan
John Fletcher
Marianne Fredericks
Deputy Rev. Stephen Haines
Barbara Newman
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Peter Bennett
Jason Pritchard

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	- Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, Community and Children's Services
Liam Gillespie	- Community and Children's Services
Dean Robinson	- Community and Children's Services
Wendy Giaccaglia	- Community and Children's Services
Sonia Marquis	- Community and Children's Services
Jacqueline Whitmore	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Gwyther-Jones	- Community and Children's Service
Jason Crawford	- Community and Children's Services
Martin Goodwin	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy Rev Stephen Haines and Alderman David Graves.

The Chairman welcomed Ruby Sayed, Jason Pritchard and Deputy Rev. Stephen Haines to the Sub Committee.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no items.

3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chairman advised that this would be taken under 'Items of Urgent Business' at agenda item 18.

4. **TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 29**

RESOLVED, that – being the only Member willing to serve, John Fletcher be appointed as Chairman of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee for 2019/20.

Following the election, the Chairman was duly appointed to the Housing Delivery Programme Working Group (of the Policy and Resources Committee)

5. **TO ELECT A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 30**

RESOLVED, that – being the only Member willing to serve, Mary Durcan be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee for 2019/20.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that - the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 26 March 2019 be approved as a correct record.

7. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

Members received the Sub Committee's Outstanding Actions list and noted the following:

- Collection of water charges from tenants – Thames Water are able to attend residents' meetings and events.
- Petticoat Tower Balcony Doors and Windows – the Resolution had been submitted to the Procurement Sub Committee (next meeting - 30 May 2019).

All other items were scheduled for an update at the next or subsequent meetings.

8. **FIRE DOORS**

The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, was heard in respect of progress with fire doors. Members noted that works to replace the door sets would now proceed under the 'fast track' Project (Gateway) Procedure. Members noted that the works to Great Arthur House had been isolated as they required repairs to part of the walls, as well as the door sets.

9. **TENANCY VISITS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the tenancy visits project, which have been underway since August 2018. The inspectors had visited 95.4% of the tenanted housing stock and Members noted that this would be the final update, ahead of a full report to the Sub Committee in July 2019. The Chairman and Members commended an excellent result.

In respect of leaseholders, Members agreed that this required a different approach and should focus on vulnerability, noting that the City Corporation did not have the same rights to personal information as was the case with social housing tenants. Suggestions from Members were welcomed outside of the meeting.

Members noted that the final report, to the July meeting of the Sub Committee, would be publicly available on the City Corporation's Web Page and suggested that something more illustrative, in summary format, be made available for residents. Officers suggested that, once the final report had been presented in July, Members be invited to suggest how best to publicise the results.

RESOLVED, that:

1. The report in respect of the tenancy visits be noted.
2. The requirement for a different approach in respect of leaseholders be noted.

10. **ALLOCATED MEMBERS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of events and activities on the City of London Corporation's Social Housing Estates. Members noted that the report had been compiled in collaboration with the Allocated Members.

One Allocated Member felt that the content of their report had been somewhat edited but officers assured the Sub Committee that all the issues raised by the Member either had or were being actioned. The other Allocated Members present confirmed that they had been consulted on the content of their reports, before they were included in the Sub Committee's agenda.

Members agreed that the activities and reports of Allocated Members were extremely valuable and therefore suggested that a review of the purpose and contents of the reports would be timely. Members agreed that, in order to give the matter due attention, they should meet informally to debate it further, either before or after the next meeting of the Sub Committee on 22 July 2019.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted

11. **ALMSHOUSES UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the City of London Almshouses in Lambeth and the eight Gresham Almshouses on the Estate.

In respect of the refurbishment works, Members noted that the Decent Homes Contractor had been secured for the next phase. However, there was a delay in securing the funding for the 8 Gresham units and the City Solicitor had advised that, until this was resolved, the works could not proceed. Members expressed their frustration at the situation and the Chairman (of the Community

and Children's Services Committee) offered to take this up with the City Solicitor, if the matter could not be resolved shortly.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. CITY OF LONDON HOUSING ESTATES PLAY AND BALL GAMES AREAS REFURBISHMENT

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding City of London Housing Estates Play and Ball Games Areas Refurbishment. Members noted that the report had been approved by the Projects Sub Committee on 24 April 2019.

Members noted that residents would be consulted before any work was carried out, to ensure that the replacement play equipment met their needs and expectations as well conforming to modern standards. There was a further suggestion that it would be helpful for residents to see illustrations or models of what equipment was available and for officers to seek the expertise of the City Corporation's Department of Open Spaces.

RESOLVED, that Members

- Approve a budget of £30,200 to reach the next Gateway; namely £6,050 staff costs and £24,150 fees.
- Note the total estimated cost of the project at £271,700 (excluding risk).
- Approve Option 1 (Replacement Facilities)
- Note the project risk register at appendix 3 in the report

13. SOCIAL HOUSING RENTS FROM 2020

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Government's response to a Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) consultation on the regulation of social housing rents from 1 April 2020. From April 2020, registered providers would be permitted to increase rents up to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% each year, for a period of at least 5 years.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME - HOUSING DESIGN GUIDE

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Housing Design Guide, which would be used to procure both design services and contractors. Members noted that the Local Authority Building Control Warranty (LABC) was more rigorous than the National House Builders' Certification (NHBC) and that many private sector new build schemes had been found to have health and safety issues. Officers advised that, post the Hackett Review, all sprinklers and fire alarms would need to be to a very high standard. Members welcomed this report and noted that the

final document would be presented to the Community and Children's Services Committee.

RESOLVED, that:

1. The approach taken regarding the Housing Design Guide be noted.
2. Specific requirements in connection with Fire Safety, LABC Warranty, Secured by Design and Accessibility be authorised, subject to confirmation that the City Corporation would not face a legal challenge to their role as Inspectors.

NB. Subsequent to the meeting, legal opinion was been obtained and the advice given was this was unlikely to be challenged. It is therefore reasonable for the City of London Corporation to require compliance with explicit construction warranties to ensure appropriate standards are achieved and risk of defects minimised.

15. MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of progress made with the Housing Major Works Programme. Members commended excellent progress. In respect of the Great Arthur House front door replacement programme, Members noted that officers were awaiting feedback from the planning officers in respect of design and they would be advised once this was available.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. HOUSING WINDOW REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which updated Members on the timeline for the window replacement Programme across the City of London Corporation's social housing estates. Members noted the programme had been broken down into Golden Lane and non-Golden Lane works, and into further categories in respect of materials. Officers had worked extensively with the Procurement Team to ensure economies of scale could be achieved. Members asked if residents could be advised of the replacement window programme as soon as possible, along with information on key milestones, so they could see for themselves the progress that is being made. Members were also reassured that the lessons learned from the Great Arthur House project would benefit the window replacement programme particularly, if residents are to remain in their homes whilst the work is being done.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

Members had discussed the scope of the Community and Children’s Services Committee’s Terms of Reference at their last meeting on 8th May 2019. The Town Clerk advised that a recommendation would be made, to the Community and Children’s Services and the Policy and Resources Committees, to include a reference to development within existing estates.

Members considered the Allocated Members list (referred to in agenda item 10) and this year’s allocation was agreed as follows:

ESTATE	ALLOCATED MEMBER
Avondale Square (Southwark), including Harman Close	William Pimlott
Small Estates: Isleden House (Islington); Windsor House (Hackney)	Peter Bennett
Golden Lane (City)	Barbara Newman
Holloway & York Way (Islington)	Mary Durcan
Middlesex Street (City) & Dron House/ Spitalfields (Tower Hamlets)	Jason Pritchard
South Bank Estates: Southwark Blocks (Southwark) William Blake (Lambeth)	Deputy Rev. Stephen Haines
City of London & Gresham Almshouses (Lambeth)	Sue Pearson
Sydenham Hill: Lammas Green/Otto Close (Lewisham)	John Fletcher

Given there were 3 new Members on the Sub Committee, the Chairman suggested that a further programme of visits to the Estates be organised.

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
20 - 22

Paragraph
3

20. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2019 be approved as a correct record.

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

There were no non-public questions.

22. 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 3.40 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Julie Mayer: 020 7 332 1426
julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk**