

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 15 January 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 15 January 2016 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Dhruv Patel (Chairman)	Ann Holmes
Gareth Moore (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy Henry Jones
Randall Anderson	Professor John Lumley
Deputy John Barker	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Deputy Billy Dove	Barbara Newman
Revd Dr Martin Dudley	Deputy Joyce Nash
Emma Edhem	Delis Regis
John Fletcher	Elizabeth Rogula
Deputy Bill Fraser	Virginia Rounding
Marianne Fredericks	James Tumbridge
Alderman David Graves	Mark Wheatley

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Ade Adetosoye	- Department of Community and Children's Services
Neal Hounsell	- Department of Community and Children's Services
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community & Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Jacquie Campbell	- Community and Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dr William Campbell-Taylor, Deputy Stephen Haines, Alderman Paul Judge, Deputy Joyce Nash, Emma Price, Chris Punter, James de Sausmarez, Philip Woodhouse and Laura Jorgensen.

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

Mr Gareth Moore declared an interest in all housing matters as he was a tenant on the Golden Lane Estate.

3. MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

London Small Business Centre Tenancy Approval

The Assistant Director informed Members that the London Small Business Centre had been asked to consider whether they would be prepared to

increase their rental offer from 50% subsidy to 30% subsidy and reminded them that the rent free period in the lease should also be of assistance to them. This had been agreed by the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Grand Committee and Housing Sub Committee on the basis that the Director of Community and Children's Services would explore other potential funding within his delegated budget to meet the revised subsidy.

Officers are meeting with the London Small Business Centre later this month to confirm that they have found sufficient funding to fit out the premises and make a final decision on granting them a tenancy.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk notifying Members of two changes to the Committee's terms of reference. The Committee agreed to take responsibility for allocating grants from the Combined Relief of Policy Charity. The Committee also agreed to review with the Education Board the most appropriate governance arrangements for the Combined Education Charity and City Educational Trust. It was recommended that the Committees take joint responsibility for allocating grants from these funds. A similar addition will be considered by the Education Board when that Board reviews its Terms of Reference on 14 January 2016.

A query was raised regarding the list of Committee Members included in the Terms of Reference. The Town Clerk was requested to ensure that the current list accurately reflected the membership of the Community and Children's Services Committee.

RESOLVED – that the additional terms be agreed with the deletion of reference to priorities being agreed by Resources Allocation Sub Committee at item F in the terms of reference.

5. THE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014/15 CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

The Committee welcomed Dr Adi Cooper, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board, who presented the Board's annual report for 2014/15.

Dr Cooper reported that this year was the first time safeguarding adults had been put on a statutory footing, and key responsibilities had been set out for Boards. Dr Cooper advised that training and development opportunities were offered to all staff, as well as to the voluntary sector and partner agencies. The Board was currently mapping the training being offered, the intention was for a mechanism to be put in place to assess whether training needs were being met, before outcomes could be evaluated.

Officers advised that the City met the criteria of the Winterbourne review, and the outcomes of that review had been applied to the service in general. Officers also advised that this would be included in future annual reports, and that they would also be clearer in drawing out City-specific information.

Members noted that the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board was involved with the development of national policy and guidance and, although there was no strategic 'quick fix', the gap could be mitigated on an operational basis. Officers agreed, advising that, at the City, the same officers oversaw both areas and, as such, the structural arrangements in place significantly limited the risk of gaps occurring in the transition process between children and adults services.

Officers confirmed that issues concerning capacity and old age had recently come to the forefront, with a lot of nervousness about the continuation of care in light of cuts to budgets nationally, but advised that there were four fully qualified social workers who could assess all adults in the City with mental health needs, in addition to a locum social worker.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The Committee welcomed Jim Gamble, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, who presented the Board's annual report for 2014/15.

It was reported that this was a statutory report offering a transparent assessment of performance. The Director of Community & Children's Services at the City of London Corporation had initiated a review of the services offered, which had resulted in worthwhile areas of work for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board in terms of sharpening its focus. The intention was to make the document as accessible as possible, and included case studies and examples to evidence impact. Members noted that previous reports had been remiss in drawing out City-specific issues, which had been addressed in this year's report.

Members noted that, although numbers had increased over the past year, the Board was not satisfied with City take-up of LSCB multi agency training; this was a multi-agency issue not limited to Corporation staff. Members were advised that the Board was intending to push on this in the coming year, and, in response to a Member's request, undertook to forward a list of those responsible for advertising training events. It was noted that staff may be attending single agency training but it was important to emphasise the benefits available from the LSCB multi agency training.

Members noted the three priorities for the Board for the coming year:

The Local Safeguarding Context – this included Child Sexual Exploitation; Children Missing from Care, Home and Education; Preventing Radicalisation; Female Genital Mutilation; Neglect; and Domestic Violence. Members noted that the latter two were key to linking all these areas and implementing intervention strategies and support to address them all.

Early Help & Early Intervention – by front-loading resources, people could receive help earlier, reducing need later in life and theoretically reducing demand and therefore cost.

Strong Leadership and Strong Partnership – ensuring safeguarding is a topic at the forefront of leaders' agendas, encouraging a discussion of issues at all levels of management, including frontline staff.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW PHASE 2

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services informing Members that in November 2014, the Committee approved a number of recommendations arising from the Sheltered Housing Review Phase 1. These included the adoption of a strategy to build 'lifetime homes' on all estates so that tenants can remain in their homes as they grow older. They also included a detailed study of Mais House, the City's sheltered housing scheme in Lewisham. This report presents the work done so far to consider options for the future of Mais House.

The Sheltered Housing Review identified a drop in demand for traditional sheltered housing and a strong preference for people to be enabled to stay in their own homes and communities in the future. Mais House had been in particularly low demand and requires a significant amount of work to be done to bring it up to a reasonable standard.

Some ideas for the Mais House site had been identified in a report commissioned from a firm of consultants. However, before these could be worked up in more detail, there was a fundamental decision to be made about whether, in the future, Mais House remained a sheltered scheme for older people only, or whether it becomes a general needs development, open to residents of mixed ages.

Members noted that the City's Housing Strategy, as approved by Members, identified a demand for more general needs homes. Initial discussions with the London Borough of Lewisham suggest that this was also the case there, particularly as the borough already has an over-supply of homes for older people with low support needs. There was, then, a strong case for refurbishing or redeveloping Mais House as a lifetime homes scheme, providing accommodation suitable for people of all ages.

Discussions ensued regarding the options proposed by Officers. Members noted that the intentions of national housing policy -in respect of fixed term tenancies, are not completely in harmony with policies on social care. Members agreed that going forward the availability of Lifetime Homes would help to deal with the current lack of demand for housing at Mais House. The homes would be built to adapt to the resident's needs at that time.

Members noted that considerable amount of consultation that had taken place with residents. Although the report itself was consulted on over the Christmas

period, Members noted that the overall consultation had begun prior to this stage. Members were made aware of the comments from residents and although decanting residents was not ideal it would be necessary to undertake the upgrade work to the property.

Officers informed the Committee that many of the current residents at Mais House had expressed a strong desire for it to remain a sheltered scheme. Many have told us they are happy there and do not wish to move, other than on a purely temporary basis. Members needed to consider how to achieve the City's aim to provide homes to meet housing need, whilst taking into account the individual needs and wishes of the existing Mais House residents.

It was noted that a majority of the flats were currently bedsits; however, these had become increasingly unpopular and it was not recognised that older people should not be expected to downsize their lives to the extent that they can fit into one room.

In response to a query, Members noted that the project would need to be fully planned and Project Manager appointed to deal with all residents' needs and liaison. One to one work would take place with residents and families to identify wishes and best solution. Suitable arrangements would be identified and all costs covered. Compensation would be offered as appropriate (currently £5,300 for permanent move) and the entire process could take up to 2 years.

Members noted that if agreed, the programme of support work for residents would be presented to Members once it had been agreed. Members also noted that they would receive regular updates regarding Mais House.

Resolved – that the redevelopment of Mais House as a lifetime homes scheme of one bedroomed units, prioritised for older people, be agreed and the Director of Community & Children's Services be requested to proceed.

8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

10. 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 the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

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

There were no questions.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 1.15 pm

Chairman

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