

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

Monday, 4 July 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 4 July 2016 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson
John Fletcher
Ann Holmes
Gareth Moore

Dhruv Patel
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Virginia Rounding
Mark Wheatley

Officers:

Philippa Sewell	- Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Paul Chadha	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Olajumoke Williams	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Jacquie Campbell	- Community & Children's Services Department
Amy Carter	- Community & Children's Services Department
Liane Coopey	- Community & Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community & Children's Services Department
Paul Jackson	- Community & Children's Services Department
Adam Johnstone	- Community & Children's Services Department
Anne Mason	- Community & Children's Services Department
Paul Murtagh	- Community & Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy the Revd. Stephen Haines, Deputy Henry Jones, and Deputy Catherine McGuinness.

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

Mr Gareth Moore declared an interest in housing matters, as a tenant of Golden Lane Estate.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. A list of Members eligible to serve was read out and Virginia Rounding, being the only Member indicating her willingness to serve, was declared to have been elected for the ensuing year.

4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30. A list of Members eligible to serve was read out and Ann Holmes,

being the only Member indicating her willingness to serve, was declared to have been elected for the ensuing year.

The Chairman welcomed new Members to the Sub Committee, Deputy John Barker and Deputy Billy Dove, and thanked the outgoing Members the Revd. Dr Martin Dudley and Alderman David Graves.

5. **TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ALLOCATED MEMBERS**

Members received the Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Community & Children's Services Committee at their meeting on 13 May 2016, and the Allocated Member guidelines and list for 2015/16, which was confirmed for another year.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 25 April 2016 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Members noted that the waiting list for sheltered housing was not suspended, but that anyone wishing to join it was advised of the very long wait. In practice only those with exceptional circumstances were being added to the list.

7. **SOUTHWARK MEDIATION - LOOK AT MEDIATION SERVICE OVER LAST YEAR**

Members noted this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

8. **MAIS HOUSE DECANT PROGRAMME - UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services which provided an update on the Mais House Decant Programme. In response to a Member's query, officers advised all but one resident, who was currently abroad, had completed a housing application.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. **WELFARE BENEFITS UPDATE & FINANCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMME**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding the impact of the reforms to the welfare benefits system, the work taking place to help residents with the introduction of universal credit, and the Financial Inclusion Programme. In response to Members' queries, officers confirmed that payments were not borough-based and therefore the City of London Corporation paid for all residents of its estates, within and without the Square Mile.

Members discussed the report, and noted that Government funding to support local authorities through the impact of welfare benefit reform was reducing, which would severely limit the Corporation's ability to support vulnerable households. Members also noted that the grant of £37,000 awarded to the City Corporation by the Department for Work and Pensions to help pay for the cost

of extra support for residents affected by the changes was only paid at the end of the financial year, resulting in it appearing as an underspend in the budget, and risking it being lost to central resources. The intention is that these funds be used to appoint a case worker on a fixed term basis to provide specific support to households affected by the change to Universal Credit. If the funds are subsumed into central CoLC resources, this will not be possible. Therefore, the Sub Committee agreed unanimously to pass a resolution to the Grand Committee to ask for their support in urging the carry forward of these funds into next year's budget, so that they can be used for the purpose for which they were granted by the DWP.

RESOLVED – That the Community & Children's Services Committee be asked for their support in urging that the DWP grant allocated for Universal Credit Personal Support in 2015-16 but only received in March 2016 be carried forward into next year's budget in order to continue the financing for support given to vulnerable households transitioning to universal credit.

10. HOUSING SERVICE REVIEW - LEASEHOLDERS AND FREEHOLDERS

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding the review of Housing Services, which had identified a need to tailor services to meet the requirements of leaseholders and freeholders in different ways. Members noted that one of the proposals included was to appoint a Home Ownership Manager to work solely on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and provide a single point of contact for leaseholder queries.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. HOUSING AND PLANNING ACT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding the Housing and Planning Act. Members discussed the report, noting that the Act required the sale of 'higher value' council homes to fund the Right to Buy for Housing Association tenants, increased social housing rents for tenants earning over £40k, replaced lifetime tenancies with fixed-term tenancies, and introduced a new type of affordable housing: Starter Homes. Members also noted that the details as to what this would mean on a practical basis (for instance, off-site provision for starter homes, or the definition of 'higher value') were yet to be specified, but it was likely that a substantial amount of the City Corporation's housing stock would be subject to the levy.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12. MIDDLESEX STREET ESTATE PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REDECORATION

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services regarding internal and external refurbishment works programme at the Middlesex Street Estate. In response to a Member's question, officers confirmed that a communication strategy was being prepared

for this project and the Lift Refurbishment project (item 13). This would come to the Sub Committee meeting in September for consideration.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) it be noted that there will be separate Gateway 3/4 reports submitted for each project;
- b) it be noted that the options appraisal for each project may vary slightly to the original options appraisals outlined in the Gateway 1/2 report, as the original options may no longer be relevant; and
- c) revised budgets totalling £51,740, an increase of £40,470, be approved.

13. LIFT REFURBISHMENT - MIDDLESEX STREET ESTATE

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children’s Services regarding the refurbishment of lifts at the Middlesex Street Estate.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) Option 1 is approved for proceeding to Procurement and Gateway 5;
- b) the estimated budget of £1,012,500 is noted; and
- c) a budget of £8,000 is approved to reach the next Gateway.

14. CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES TRUST RISK REGISTER 2016

The Sub Committee considered the risk register for The City of London Almshouses Trust charity.

RESOLVED – That the Risk Register satisfactorily sets out the risks faced by The City of London Almshouses Trust charity, and appropriate measures are in place to mitigate those risks.

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

There were no questions.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

17. 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	Paragraph
18-21	3
22-23	-

18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2016 be approved as a correct record.

19. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PATROL SERVICE**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

20. **HOUSING - ALL ESTATES - DRAINAGE AND GULLIES WORKS**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

21. **THAMES WATER**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

22. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no non-public questions.

23. **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 2.48 pm

Chairman

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