

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, 12 February 2018**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub  
(Community and Children's Services) Committee held at Guildhall at 2.00 pm

**Present**

**Members:**

Randall Anderson (Chairman)  
John Fletcher (Deputy Chairman)  
Mary Durcan  
Marianne Fredericks  
Alderman David Graves  
Barbara Newman  
Susan Pearson  
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula  
Deputy John Tomlinson

**Officers:**

Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlains
Chris Keesing	-	Chamberlains
Jacquie Campbell	-	Community and Children's Services
Paul Murtagh	-	Community and Children's Services
Jacqueline Whitmore	-	Community and Children's Services
Liam Gillespie	-	Community and Children's Services
Martin Goodwin	-	Community and Children's Services
Mohammed Hussain	-	Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	-	Town Clerk's
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**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Dhruv Patel and Deputy Henry Jones.

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

Susan Pearson declared a general non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 9 (Management of Golden Lane Community Centre) by virtue of her membership of the Golden Lane Steering Group.

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 27 November be approved as a correct record.

**Matters arising**

The Town Clerk advised that Ms Rogula had submitted apologies for the last meeting.

In respect of Members' request for an additional meeting, the Town Clerk suggested, and Members agreed, to remove the meeting scheduled for 2 July 2018 and replace it with two new meetings: 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and 23 July 2018, both of which were clear in the City Corporation's Committee Diary. This would take the current number of meetings each year from 5 to 6, spread evenly.

#### 4. **ALMSHOUSES UPDATE**

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

Members noted that, in respect of the Almshouses waiting list, offices are offering St Clements Danes the voids, to help them clear their waiting list.

Since the publication of this agenda, officers contacted Lambeth in respect planning application to replace the Almshouses windows but were advised that it would be rejected. Officers were therefore considering secondary glazing, but this option would offer less energy efficiency savings. Members noted that the Almshouses were in a Conservation Area and therefore the appearance of the glass was protected and, since it was very old, it was difficult to source a like for like replacement. Given this application had only been to 'pre-planning' and there had been no consultation as yet, Members asked for a full cost analysis, including energy saving comparisons, to be presented to their next meeting. Members were also concerned that secondary glazing would make the windows very heavy and difficult to open and suggested that it might be worth making a full application and appealing the decision, if unsuccessful.

RESOLVED, that:

1. Members receive a full cost analysis, including energy saving comparisons, at the next meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee, with a view to submitting a Planning Application for replacement windows at the City of London Corporation' Almshouses.
2. The Almshouses be included in the 1% rent reduction, at a cost of £2410, to the City of London Corporation Almshouses Trust.

#### 5. **HOUSING UPDATE AND RISK REGISTER**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided an update on housing service performance against key areas of work and the housing risk register. Members noted strong performance in responsive repairs and new software being trailed to enhance monitoring and reporting of anti-social behaviour.

In response to questions, Members noted that, in addition to the 3 sites highlighted in the report for potential development; i.e. York Way; Avondale and Sydenham Hill; Windsor House would be included in a different Committee reporting cycle. Members also noted that all vacancies at Great Arthur House would be filled.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

**6. HARMAN CLOSE - DECENT HOMES - GATEWAY 3/4- OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of Harman Close Decent Homes project, which had been approved by the Projects Sub Committee on 17 January 2018. A Member had recently visited the site and had found it to be very well managed.

Officers advised that the condition survey covered both kitchens and bathrooms. Members noted that some residents had indicated a preference for a walk in, rather than standard bathroom, and this would be discussed with support staff and addressed in the specification as necessary.

RESOLVED, that – Option 2 be approved; i.e. to carry out replacement of facilities as required in each flat, as identified in the Department of Community and Children's Services Survey carried out in the Summer of 2017.

**7. MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which outlined the purpose of the Mutual Exchange Policy.

RESOLVED, that – the Mutual Exchange Policy be approved for use by the Housing and Neighbourhoods Department, as part of Estate Management practice.

**8. SHIFT ALLOWANCE POLICY**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which outlined the purpose of the Shift Allowance Policy.

RESOLVED, that – the Shift Allowance Policy be approved for use by the Housing and Neighbourhoods Department, as part of Estate Management practice.

**9. MANAGEMENT OF GOLDEN LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the refurbishment programme for Golden Lane Community Centre. Members asked for assurance of a smooth transition and noted that staff relocation was due to be discussed by the Director of Community and Children's Services and the Residents' Steering Group next week. Members noted Artizan Street Library and Community Centre, which was working well, and accepted that the new regime might take a while to bed in.

In respect of the three new accessible homes, to be built on the ground floor of Great Arthur House, Members discussed the proposal to make one of these available for ad-hoc supported living; i.e. short time convalescence following discharge from hospital. Members asked if they could be provided with

frequency of use statistics and noted that, if a decision was taken not to include an ad-hoc facility, there would still be three new accessible homes available.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**10. FIRE SAFETY UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of progress made on fire safety matters since the last update reports submitted in July, September and November 2017. Members noted that all immediate works had been completed, the risk assessment reports from Frankhams had been returned, and an action plan was being prepared.

The Assistant Director advised that the hard-wired alarm had been installed at Great Arthur House but around 30 residents have not provided access to their homes. This means that although the alarm system is functional, there is no individual detection or alarm system in those flats where access has not been granted. Members noted that residents were likely to be in breach of their lease/tenancy agreements by continually withholding access and the Fire Brigade had offered their support. Members were concerned as to why these residents continually refused and suggested that they might be more receptive to a visit from a Fire Brigade officer, rather than a City of London Corporation officer. A Member of the Sub Committee kindly offered to call on all remaining residents. Members noted that Great Arthur House's compartmentation issues were to be the subject of a further Committee report and a summary of the action plan was set out in this report. The Assistant Director advised that he was due to meet with the LFB shortly to confirm the installation of the new fire alarm system and to agree to the removal of the 'Walking Watch'.

Members noted that recruitment was underway for additional resources to undertake tenancy visits, using agency staff who would be readily available, and the team would be managed by a seconded Community and Children's Services Manager. The Assistant Director offered to share the checklist and questions with Members and invited their comments.

In respect of fire safety doors, the Assistant Director advised that they could be fitted with letter boxes, although the use of centralised post reception points was becoming more popular.

The Assistant Director advised that Counsel's opinion, in respect of re-charges to Leaseholders, was being actioned and Members asked for an update as soon as possible.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

**11. HOUSING 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.

Further to Members' requests at the last meeting, a new works delivery forecast had been provided and Members were pleased with the new format as it would show a position change at each meeting.

Members noted that one of the major causes of slippage was due to a lack of interest from Contractors. The Assistant Director advised that he had been working with City Procurement; i.e. conducting soft market testing and engaging with contractors, to seek a framework for future major works tenders.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

In response to a question about fire regulations generally; i.e. the provision of an extra staircase in new residential blocks and new limits on the distance from staircases, the Assistant Director explained that all flats in the City had met the requirements of the fire risk assessments, even if they had just one staircase. Furthermore, there had been no reference to providing extra staircases within the preliminary Grenfell report.

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

The Chairman had agreed to an additional item of business which had been provided to Members in a supplementary agenda pack.

**Social Housing Tenancy Fraud – Anti-Fraud and Prosecution Policy**

Members considered a report of the Chamberlain in respect of amendments to the above Policy, which were summarised in the report and shown in tracked changes in the appendix. Members noted that the report had been approved by the City of London Corporation's Audit and Risk Management Committee in November 2017.

In response to questions about short term holiday lets, the officer explained that the holistic approach in this Policy recognised this, as it would constitute a sub-let which could compromise tenure. However, Members asked if it could be specific in the Policy.

RESOLVED, that – the changes to the Social Housing Tenancy Fraud – Anti-Fraud and Prosecution Policy be endorsed, subject to the inclusion of a specific reference to short term holiday lets, as set out above.

**14. 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**  
15-19

**Paragraph**  
1,2 & 3

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**  
**RESOLVED** – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2017 be approved as a correct record.
  
16. **MAIS HOUSE DECANT PROGRAMME UPDATE**  
Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services
  
17. **HOUSING INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS UPDATE**  
Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
  
18. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**  
There were no non-public questions.
  
19. **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.