



Community & Children's Services Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2015
Time: 11.30 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOMS, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members:

Dhruv Patel (Chairman)	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Gareth Moore (Deputy Chairman)	Brian Mooney
Randall Anderson	Deputy Alastair Moss
Alex Bain-Stewart	Barbara Newman
Deputy John Barker	Deputy Joyce Nash
Revd Dr William Campbell-Taylor	Emma Price
Deputy Billy Dove	Chris Punter
Revd Dr Martin Dudley	Adam Richardson
Emma Edhem	Delis Regis
John Fletcher	Elizabeth Rogula
Deputy Bill Fraser	Virginia Rounding
Marianne Fredericks	James Tumbridge
Alderman David Graves	Michael Welbank
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines	Mark Wheatley
Ann Holmes	Philip Woodhouse
Deputy Henry Jones	James de Sausmarez
Alderman Sir Paul Judge	Patrick Streeter
Professor John Lumley	

Co-opted Members: Laura Jørgensen

Enquiries: Natasha Dogra tel. no.: 020 7332 1434
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Lunch will be served in Guildhall Club at the rising of the Committee

N.B. Part of this meeting may be subject to audio visual recording.

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Reports

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**
To agree the minutes of the previous Committee meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **PRESENTATION REGARDING THE PORTSOKEN FLOAT FOR THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW**

For Information
5. **PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES BILL**
Report of the Remembrancer.

For Information
(Pages 7 - 10)
6. **INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOMES - THE ROLE OF THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and City Surveyor.
The Policy and Resources Committee have approved this report.

For Information
(Pages 11 - 20)
7. **HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME 2015**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Decision
(Pages 21 - 42)
8. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES DESIGNATED OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 43 - 60)
9. **CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 61 - 72)

10. **PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 73 - 82)

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

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

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act as follows:-

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Reports

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous Committee meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 83 - 84)

15. **ROUGH SLEEPERS UPDATE**

Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 85 - 94)

16. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

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

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COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 11 September 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 11 September 2015 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Dhruv Patel (Chairman)	Alderman Sir Paul Judge
Gareth Moore (Deputy Chairman)	Professor John Lumley
Randall Anderson	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Deputy John Barker	Deputy Joyce Nash
Revd Dr William Campbell-Taylor	Chris Punter
John Fletcher	Delis Regis
Deputy Bill Fraser	Michael Welbank
Marianne Fredericks	Mark Wheatley
Alderman David Graves	Philip Woodhouse
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines	James de Sausmarez
Ann Holmes	

Co-opted Members:

Laura Jørgensen

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	Town Clerk's Department
Ade Adetosoye	Director, Community & Children's Services
Neal Hounsell	Department of Community & Children's Services
Chris Pelham	Department of Community & Children's Services
Jacquie Campbell	Department of Community & Children's Services
Gerald Mehrtens	Department of Community & Children's Services
Sarah Thomas	Department of Community & Children's Services
Ellie Ward	Department of Community & Children's Services
Marion Willicome Lang	Department of Community & Children's Services
Sam Cook	Remembrancer's Department
Mark Jarvis	Chamberlain's Department
Patrick Hegarty	City Surveyor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Deputy Billy Dove, Dr Martin Dudley, Deputy Henry Jones, Barbara Newman, Elizabeth Rogula, Virginia Rounding, Adam Richardson, James Tumbridge and Philip Woodhouse

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

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

4. **PRESENTATION: CARERS UK**

The Committee received a presentation from Madeleine Starr from Carers UK and noted that the City of London Corporation partnered with Carers UK to develop a robust evidence base on carers and caring to underpin a new carers' strategy for the City. Carers UK carried out a range of consultation and research activities including:

- a survey of carers and a carer focus group;
- a survey of key stakeholders and a stakeholder workshop; and
- an analysis of the demand for care and the availability, makeup and experiences of carers in the City of London, including the impacts they experience on their health and economic activity.

In response to a query, Members were informed that the Care Act 2014 included significant and welcome measures to improve the rights of adults caring for adults, including:

- A duty to promote their wellbeing;
- Simpler rights to assessments and parity with cared for;
- Eligibility set in law;
- Rights to information and advice, advocacy and preventative services; and
- A duty to provide services.

Received.

5. **CARERS' STRATEGY**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the City Corporation's priorities for supporting adult carers in the Square Mile for the next three years.

Members noted that the number of carers identified by the Census was significantly higher than those known to services provided by the City Corporation. In 2014/15 the City Corporation assessed the needs of 53 carers – about one in ten of those reported by the Census. Carers who are known to City services were more likely to be those providing higher levels of care (more than 20 hours weekly), those whose caring role is impacting on their health and wellbeing, and those who are older carers.

In response to a query, Members noted that the action plan driving the delivery of this strategy would be reported to and monitored by the Adult Wellbeing Partnership. Its delivery would be the responsibility of the Adult Social Care team and the City's commissioned providers. In response to a query, Members noted that Carers UK worked in partnership with a number of organisations to help early identification of carers and to help promote their welfare.

Officers informed Members that the Carers' Allowance was a taxable weekly benefit to help carers look after someone with substantial caring needs. Individual carers' allowances were awarded subject to an assessment of the

needs of the carer. These allowances were resourced through the Adult Social Care budget.

Resolved – that the Carers' Strategy 2015-18 be approved.

6. CARE ACT 2014 UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the Care Act 2014 and the City of London's work to implement this. Work had been under way at a local and regional level to prepare for the implementation of funding reforms in April 2016. Much of this work had been dependent on other organisations such as IT providers developing specific products to deliver the reforms.

Received.

7. WELFARE REFORM AND WORK BILL REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Remembrancer regarding the provisions of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill, which was introduced in Parliament shortly before the Summer Recess.

The Bill would implement the welfare reforms announced in July's Budget, including a reduction in the 'benefit cap', a five-year freeze in working-age benefits and the restriction of child tax credits to two children per family. Of most direct concern to the Committee is a requirement for social housing providers to reduce rents by one per cent in each of the next four years. Another measure affecting the Committee is the abolition of statutory duties concerning child poverty. In response to a query from Members, Officers said that updates would be provided to Members of the ward of Portsoken regarding child poverty and the Committee was due to receive an update report later in the year.

Members noted that the City of London Corporation's Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee received regular updates regarding the Welfare Reform Bill and the implications it had on housing within the City.

Received.

8. ST BOTOLPH BISHOPSGATE BALL COURT IMPROVEMENTS

The Committee received a report of the City Surveyor regarding The Ball court in the Churchyard of St Botolph without Bishopsgate which was the responsibility of the City to maintain. The court had reportedly reached a stage where a full resurfacing was required.

In response to a query, Members were informed that Section 106 funding was available to resurface the court and improve the surrounds subject to the provision of times on the court allocated for young people to use the facility. Working in partnership with the Church and the Department of Community & Children's Services, it was proposed to develop a scheme to carry out the improvement works and improve the promotion of the site. The opportunity

would be taken to update the maintenance agreement between the Church and the City of London for this site.

Members agreed that further use of the court during weekends and weeknights should be investigated by officers, to help promote a healthy lifestyle and community inclusion. Officers agreed to liaise with Fusion Lifestyle and St Botolph Bishopsgate regarding this matter.

Resolved – that Members:

- Approved the proposed works, in principle, to resurface the ball court and improve the court surrounds at the Churchyard of St Botolph without Bishopsgate
- Delegated authority to the Director of Open Spaces in conjunction with the Comptroller & City Solicitor to negotiate a new Churchyard maintenance agreement that includes provision for future maintenance of the ball court and provide for the old agreement to be of no further effect.

9. **BUSINESS PLAN: QUARTER 1 UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the progress made during Quarter 1 (Q1 – April to June 2015) against the refreshed 2015–17 Community and Children's Services Business Plan.

Received.

10. **DEPARTMENTAL RISK REGISTER 2015/16**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the risk management procedures in place within the Department of Community and Children's Services, which Members found satisfactorily met the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework.

Received.

11. **SIR JOHN CASS SCHOOL UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the expansion of Sir John Cass's School. Members were informed that the Town Clerk and Director of Community and Children's Services had met with the Foundation twice, and both meetings had been very positive. Officers expected to receive a decision from the Foundation regarding the expansion after their Board meeting in October. Members and Officers congratulated the pupils of the school on achieving a high standard of Key Stage 2 results in levels 5 and 6 this year.

Received.

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

There were no questions.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There was no urgent business.
14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION – it was agreed that
15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.
16. **PORTSOKEN PAVILION AND CAFÉ - LETTING AND MANAGEMENT CONTRACT**
The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children’s Services regarding the Pavilion and Café in the ward of Portsoken.
17. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
18. **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 12.30 pm

Chairman

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Community and Children’s Services	9 October 2015
Port Health & Environmental Services Committee	22 September 2015
Police Committee	25 September 2015
Subject:	Public
Psychoactive Substances Bill	
Report of:	For Information
Remembrancer	
Summary	
<p>The Psychoactive Substances Bill seeks to tackle the growing use of ‘legal highs’ by criminalising their production and supply.</p>	
Recommendation	
<p>To note the contents of this Report.</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. In May 2015, the Government was elected with a manifesto commitment to “create a blanket ban on all new psychoactive substances, protecting young people from exposure to so-called legal highs”. The Labour and Lib Dem manifestos contained similar promises.

Parliamentary Discussion

2. Introducing the Bill, Government spokesman Lord Bates noted that “the number of deaths has been growing at an alarming rate—from 29 in England and Wales in 2011, to 60 in 2013, with a further 60 deaths reported in Scotland in the year before last”. The open sale of psychoactive substances on the high street and the internet, he said, gave a “false impression that they are somehow safe to use”. Seeking to counter criticism of the Bill’s open-ended definition of ‘psychoactive substance’, Bates said “If we were to adopt too narrow a definition, we could, in a few months’ or years’ time, find ourselves having to bring forward further legislation because we were faced with a new generation of harmful substances that escaped the controls provided for in this Bill”. Peers directed much criticism towards this aspect of the drafting but the Bill completed its passage through the Lords unchanged. Labour’s Lord

Rosser gave his party's general support to the Bill. Reflecting many of the opinions across the House, Lib Dem Lord Paddick gave support to the Bill's general thrust but attacked it as being "far too broad and indiscriminate". Having completed its progress through the House of Lords, the Bill has now moved to the Commons for further consideration.

Current Position

3. Under the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act, substances can be controlled on an individual or on a group basis, following an assessment of their physical and social harms by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs. The Government considers this process as insufficiently flexible and too slow to react to circumstances where the chemical composition of legal highs can be modified to create a new substance which falls outside any existing drug controls.

The Bill

4. The Bill has three main aspects. First, the Bill defines psychoactive substances and makes them illegal. Second, the Bill sets out powers for the police and local authorities to serve notices on individuals or premises and, finally, provides for criminal and civil penalties.
5. The way the Bill seeks to define 'psychoactive' has garnered criticism as, unlike the scheme under the Misuse of Drugs Act, the provisions do not name the outlawed substances; under the Bill's open-ended definition, any substance that is not exempted (for example tobacco and alcohol) and that produces a stimulating or depressing effect on a person's central nervous system or affects the person's mental functioning or emotional state, could fall within the definition of a psychoactive substance.
6. If it comes into force in its current form, the legislation will exempt certain products from being psychoactive substances – tobacco, traditional and homeopathic medicines, caffeine and alcohol. Food and drink will be exempted from being psychoactive substances. Food or drink, however, with a "prohibited ingredient" would be banned. The drafting of this part of the legislation may lead to short term operational enforcement difficulties. The reason for this is the degree of ambiguity in the definition - the Bill relies upon whether the psychoactive substance is "naturally occurring" in the food and then whether or not it is "authorised by an EU instrument". Uncertainty may arise as to whether a substance is "naturally occurring" in a particular food or drink given that legal highs are often natural or close-to-natural substances.

7. The Bill does not criminalise simple possession. The Bill makes illegal the production or supply of a psychoactive substance. In the magistrates' courts the maximum penalty is a prison term of 6 months; in the Crown Court the maximum is 7 years' imprisonment.
8. The Bill provides four civil sanctions: a prohibition notice, premises notice, prohibition order and premises order. Under the Bill, authorities, including the City of London Corporation, would be empowered to issue such notices and apply for orders. Prohibition notices would require a person on whom it is served to desist from carrying out a prohibited activity, for example online sale of a psychoactive substance. Prohibition notices would be of indefinite duration unless served on a person under 18 years old (in which case it would remain in effect for 3 years). A premises notice, only to be served on those aged over 18, would require the recipient to take reasonable steps to prevent any, or specific, prohibited activities taking place at the premises. The Bill envisages that a premises notice might be served on the occupier or landlord of a premises selling or distributing psychoactive substances. Under the Bill, there are two routes by which an order may be made. First, a court may make an order of its own volition following a conviction or, second, on application by a chief police officer or local authority (including the City). An offence of failing to comply with an order may be punished by a maximum of 2 years' imprisonment.

Comment by London Drugs and Alcohol Policy Forum

The LDAPF actively engaged with policy makers in the run-up to the Bill and a number of the Forum's concerns are addressed in the Bill. If the proposals come into force, it is likely to be easier to close 'head shops' (the shops that sell these substances). We have found shops within the City that could be covered by the new law.

Conclusion

9. Subject to the proposed new powers to simplify the closure of 'head shops', the Bill is of limited interest to the City. The powers for police and authority officers to control those psychoactive substances which are within the scope of the Act will be of interest to enforcement officers in the City of London Police and at the Corporation.

Philip Saunders
Parliamentary Affairs Counsel
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Agenda Item 6

Committee	Dated:
Property Investment Board - For Information Community and Children's Services - For Information Policy and Resources – For Decision	14.10.2015 09.10.2015 24.09.2015
Subject: Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services The City Surveyor	For Information

Summary

At the last meeting of the Committee Members were advised (via the notes of the informal meeting of the Resources Allocation Sub-Committee) that in response to the housing shortage in the capital a report setting out the scope for the provision of additional housing was being prepared and would be considered in the autumn. This report, in response to housing shortage in the capital, the City of London Corporation, set out proposed ambitions to deliver more homes in the policy document "Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation."

The inability of the capital to supply sufficient housing to meet demand has led to problems of affordability for many households on low and medium incomes. This situation impacts not only London's communities, but is a risk to the capital's competitiveness and economy.

Meeting the housing needs of the capital requires the commitment and action of all local authorities to support new supply. The policy document before Members sets out the City Corporation's ambition to build on its presence and partnerships beyond the boundaries of the Square Mile to increase housing supply in the capital. It is an ambition that includes a commitment to increase the supply of homes on its social housing estates by 25 per cent, and provide 3,000 additional homes on development sites in the City Corporation's ownership. In doing so the City Corporation will deliver a range of homes – those that are social rented, homes that offer shared ownership and homes for market sale and rent.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the policy document "Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation"

- note the commitment of that document to provide additional homes through opportunities
 - I. on the City Corporation’s social housing estates
 - II. on other City Corporation sites with development potential
- note that where the delivery of this vision will require additional resources this requirement will be set out and brought to Members for approval
- note that the progress of developing detailed proposals to support the ambition set out will be reported to Members.

Main Report

Background

1. The imbalance of housing supply and demand has seen house prices and rental costs rise faster than wage inflation. Homes for sale at the lower end of the capital’s housing market are now only affordable to those whose incomes are in the top quartile.
2. It is estimated that London needs to deliver 49,000 homes each year for ten years to address the existing backlog and newly arising demand. This level of delivery has not been achieved in any year in the last decade. Issues of infrastructure investment, planning policy, skills and material shortages, site ownership and control, and the availability of debt financing have all contributed to constrained supply.
3. Such housing shortage not only impacts on the capital’s population, but is a significant risk to London’s economy as it threatens the successful recruitment and retention of staff.
4. Responding to this issue has become a priority for national, regional and local government.

Proposals

5. The policy document “Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation” sets out the contribution the City Corporation can deliver to respond to the housing challenges facing the capital. It acknowledges that no single organisation can deliver the homes London needs – rather it requires all of London’s local authorities to support delivery and maximise the opportunities for supply through their enabling role, their local plans and the formation of constructive partnerships.
6. In this context the City Corporation will play its role in meeting this challenge by identifying sites and partnerships through which new homes can be delivered. This includes opportunities both on its existing social housing estates and on other sites in the city’s ownership that offer the potential for development. In doing so the City aims to deliver the ambition set out in the Policy to provide 3,700 homes by 2025.

7. The Policy before Members sets out an ambitious commitment to provide homes of mixed tenures for those on a range of incomes. Within the City Corporation's social housing estates this programme will be funded through planning gain receipts, grant funding, borrowing within the Housing Revenue Account and cross subsidy from market sale of some new homes. On development sites outside of the HRA the City will explore the potential of private financing, joint ventures, borrowing or disposal to support the development of new homes.
8. The City Corporation will also work to enable private/public partnerships to maximise delivery of new homes. In addition the Policy sets out the City's intention to work with London Councils, central government and the Mayor of London to influence policy change to enable and support the market to respond to the scale of need that exists.
9. If approved, the implementation of the objectives set out will be overseen by the Housing Steering Group, jointly chaired by the Director of Community and Children's Services and the City Surveyor. This will provide the leadership alongside that of the Common Council to deliver this ambition.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The ambitions set out in "Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation" is consistent with the City's corporate priorities of supporting London to be the world's leading financial and business centre, and for delivering for London and the nation.

Implications

11. Delivery of the City Corporation's housing vision will require additional resources. These resources will be identified in the detailed proposal set out to support delivery and will be brought to Members for approval.

Conclusion

12. Tackling housing shortage in the capital is one of the most urgent issues facing all tiers of government in London. The City Corporation has the opportunity to contribute to addressing this issue by increasing the supply of homes on development sites across London. In doing so it has the opportunity to provide homes of mixed tenures for those on a range of incomes.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation

Simon Cribbens

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Increasing the supply of homes – the role of the City of London Corporation

1 Context

- 1.1 Housing shortage in London is one of the most pressing economic and social issues that the capital faces. Growing population and reducing average household size is driving an exponential increase in demand for housing. London has both more people living there and a growth in people living alone or in smaller households – meaning any given number of people will now occupy more homes than in previous generations. Forecast growth in the capital over the next ten years will see London absorbing an additional population that is greater than that of Birmingham.¹ The Greater London Authority estimates this growth, combined with an existing backlog of demand, will require the delivery of 49,000 new homes each year for ten years.²
- 1.2 Despite this, supply has not kept pace. Issues of infrastructure investment, planning policy, skills and material shortages, site ownership and control, and the availability of debt financing have all contributed to constrained supply, and therefore the effective response of the market. Some local authorities with ambition to develop homes have also been constrained by borrowing caps imposed by government, and concerns about the impact of right to buy.
- 1.3 Capacity for homes has been identified on brownfield³ sites, but such sites often need investment in remediation or infrastructure to unlock their development potential. Other more viable development opportunities are stymied by local opposition, and local and national politicians have been reluctant to consider contentious issues such as reviewing the scope and scale of some planning constraints.
- 1.4 This imbalance of supply and demand has seen house prices and rents rise significantly faster than wage inflation, resulting in issues of affordability or households having to allocate very high proportions of income to meet housing costs.
- 1.5 The relationship between house prices in London and the incomes of the majority places the purchase of a home out of reach for many not already on the housing ladder. In 2014 the cheapest ten per cent of homes were sold at a price that was greater than four times the salary earned by three quarters of those in full time employment. The resulting inability to buy has seen a transfer to private renting and the growth of that sector to the point that it is now, at 27 per cent of homes, larger than the capital's social housing sector.

¹ *Homes for London: The London Housing Strategy 2014*, Greater London Authority, April 2014

² *Housing in London 2014*, Greater London Authority, April 2014

³ Brownfield is a term used in urban planning to describe land previously used for industrial purposes or some commercial uses.

- 1.6 While the social sector represents almost a quarter of homes, access to them is limited and many local policies, such as that of the City Corporation, exclude households on incomes that are high in relation to social rents, but would not buy a family home in the capital.
- 1.7 The scale of exclusion from housing – particularly home ownership – requires a response that is beyond the means and role of publicly funded subsidised housing. It is necessary for the market to meet the needs of the majority. To achieve this requires the delivery of a significantly increased supply of homes to bring market prices within the range of those currently excluded.
- 1.8 The impact of housing shortage is not just an issue for London’s residential communities, but for its economy. Recent research undertaken and reported by London First⁴ illustrates the scale of concern among both businesses and employees. Three quarters of London businesses surveyed thought that housing supply and costs are a significant risk to the capital’s economy. This concern is underlined by the experience of employees, particularly those aged 25-39, 70 per cent of whom find the cost of their rent/mortgage makes it difficult to work in London – and half of whom would consider leaving London to work in another region.
- 1.9 The implications of such research is that London businesses may fail to recruit and retain the skilled workforce it will continue to need to compete internationally, and fail to house those of all skill levels whose work sustains the functioning of a large and diverse economy. In response the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry has called for increased supply within London, with a particular emphasis on delivering market homes to meet the needs of those with an annual income of less than £50,000 – an ambition achievable only through significant change in the balance of supply and demand.⁵
- 1.10 Housing in London is now a political priority for national, regional and local government. Policy responses have to date failed to deliver the quantum of supply needed, with many initiatives focussed on stimulating demand for market homes rather than driving delivery. Some initiatives have subsidised homes for a narrow section of the population on the lowest incomes, and done little for those on low and middle incomes. Those initiatives that have targeted specific “keyworker”⁶ groups have subsidised housing for some, without meeting the needs of those employed in the range of roles essential to the functioning of public and private sectors.
- 1.11 The government is responding to this priority. In its recently published productivity plan⁷ the government recognised the importance of an effective land and housing market to the nation’s economic productivity and prosperity. It reflected that the UK has been incapable of building enough homes to keep up with growing demand, and has set out plans to tackle this by addressing the “excessively strict planning system”,

⁴ *Moving Out – How London’s housing shortage is threatening the capital’s competitiveness*, London First, September 2014

⁵ *Getting our house in order: The impact of housing undersupply on London businesses*, London Chamber of Commerce and industry, May 2014

⁶ A key worker is a public sector employee who is considered to provide an essential service. The term is often used in the context of those who may find it difficult to buy property in the area where they work.

⁷ *Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation*, HM Treasury, July 2015

delivering higher density housing, improving co-operation between local authorities and releasing unneeded commercial land for housing.

2 Role of the City of London Corporation

- 2.1 The City of London Corporation has a role that goes beyond that of an ordinary local authority. The City Corporation works to support and promote London as the world's leading international financial and business centre and attract new business to the capital and the UK as a whole. It also works in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to improve long-term economic, social and environmental well-being across London.
- 2.2 It is for these reasons that the City Corporation wants to support the continuing development of an infrastructure, including housing, in which the City and the wider capital can continue to thrive.
- 2.3 For the City of London, the capital and the nation it is crucial that the right homes are delivered in the right places. The Square Mile has been granted exemption from the permitted development rights allowing the conversion of office space to residential units without planning permission. This exemption does not undermine the City Corporation's commitment to delivering more homes: it recognises instead that the economy is best served by supporting the agglomeration of the financial sector, and that the capital's housing needs will not be met by selective developments in the prime commercial market.
- 2.4 The City Corporation will build on its presence and partnerships beyond the boundaries of the Square Mile to deliver its commitment to increasing housing supply in the capital.

3 Housing vision

- 3.1 The City Corporation's vision is to deliver an ambitious programme of housing development, providing homes of mixed tenures for those on a range of incomes. Within our social housing estates this programme will be funded through planning gain receipts, grant funding, borrowing within the Housing Revenue Account⁸ and cross subsidy from market sale of some new homes. On development sites outside of the HRA the City will explore the potential of private financing, joint ventures, borrowing or disposal to support the development of new homes.
- 3.2 The City Corporation will use its close relationship with the finance sector and stability to enable partnership across the private and public sectors to maximise supply, and share innovation and best practice. The City Corporation will also work to shape and influence policy change that will enable supply and unlock opportunities.
- 3.3 By 2025 the City Corporation will deliver 3,700 new homes on sites across the capital.

⁸ The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a "ring-fenced" account held by the City Corporation and all local authorities that own council homes. It contains all the spending and income related to the dwellings owned by the City Corporation acting as social landlord.

4 Principles

- 4.1 The delivery of the City Corporation's vision for housing will be guided by five principles:

A focus on supply

- 4.2 London needs more homes. Delivering these homes requires all of the capital's local authorities to support delivery and maximise the opportunities for supply through their enabling role, their local plans and the formation of constructive partnerships. The City Corporation will play its role in meeting this challenge, identifying sites and partnerships through which new homes can be delivered.

Delivering a range of tenures to meet needs across the income scale

- 4.3 London needs to house a range of households, delivering the diversity of skills and labour required by the capital. Subsidised housing meets the needs of a limited group, while the failure of supply has locked those on low and middle incomes out of homes ownership. The City Corporation will deliver a range of homes – those that are social rented, homes that offer shared ownership and homes for market sale and rent.

Maximising site potential whilst delivering improved amenity

- 4.4 Delivering higher density housing is essential to meeting the capital's housing needs, and has been at the heart of the City Corporation's historic housing programme. Many of London's most desirable and affluent neighbourhoods are those that have the highest densities. Brownfield sites, surplus land, infill opportunities and the changing nature of town centres offer chances to intensify housing supply within the reach of transport hubs and other services. The City Corporation will continue to deliver high density homes in high quality environments, and use opportunities to intensify housing supply to deliver improved amenity.

Unlocking opportunities and partnerships

- 4.5 London housing issues cannot be tackled in isolation. The City Corporation will maximise the delivery of new homes by fostering and developing partnerships across the public and private sectors. It will build on the Corporation's existing experience of working in a number of London boroughs and leading partnerships that add value to local communities.

Securing value, assets and returns

- 4.6 Through delivering more social homes the City Corporation will increase the asset base within its Housing Revenue Account. It will deliver homes funded through Section 106 receipts, and cross subsidy from shared ownership sales and the provision of market homes. It will explore partnership ventures that unlock private funding while allowing the City to retain land assets. Where investment offers competitive long term returns, the City Corporation will explore the potential to fund new homes.

5 Objectives

25 per cent increase in homes on City Corporation housing estates

- 5.1 The City Corporation will deliver a 25 per cent increase in homes on its Housing Revenue Account estates by 2025. The City Corporation has already resumed the development of social housing, delivering 70 new homes since 2012.
- 5.2 Further delivery will be achieved by identifying sites for new homes on the City Corporation's own housing estates. An assessment of opportunities to increase the housing density within these existing estates has identified sites offering the potential to deliver more than 700 additional homes.
- 5.3 New homes will be delivered at "lifetime homes" design standards to ensure they meet both a range of needs, and needs that change over time. High standards of design will also ensure energy efficiency measures which will contribute to reducing fuel poverty, and contribute to the creation of attractive, well designed, accessible neighbourhoods that promote wider economic, health and social wellbeing.
- 5.4 The development programme will be supported by funding drawn from Section 106 receipts, grant funding from the Mayor of London's housing investment programme, borrowing within the Housing Revenue Account and cross subsidy from shared ownership and market sales. This approach will deliver a range of tenures to meet a variety of needs and incomes.

3,000 additional new homes

- 5.5 The City Corporation holds sites across many parts of London. Many are protected green spaces that are safeguarded and maintained by the City Corporation for the benefit of London's communities. Other sites, however, offer the potential to provide quality homes with improved local amenity and green spaces. Sites owned by the City Corporation have already been identified offering the potential to deliver 3,000 new homes by 2025.
- 5.6 The City Corporation will work with partner local authorities where it identifies potential sites and, where necessary and appropriate, discuss the re-designation of land where it has previously served other uses.
- 5.7 To deliver these new homes the City Corporation will explore the potential to partner with developers and housing associations. It will also explore the potential to establish a local housing company, either wholly owned by the City of London or in partnership with others, as a vehicle that could attract investment and deliver returns through the delivery of housing.
- 5.8 These homes will provide opportunities for home ownership and market rent, with additional affordable homes being provided in line with local planning requirements. The intention of this supply will be to contribute to meeting the needs of the vast majority of working households for whom subsidised housing is not and cannot be available.

Enabling private/public partnerships to maximise delivery of new homes

- 5.9 In the last parliament the government commissioned a review of the role of local authorities in delivering housing.⁹ One of the central recommendations, supported by government, is the development of closer partnerships between business and local authorities to unlock development opportunities and financing.
- 5.10 The City Corporation will support this work, building its own partnerships, and helping to enable them among others. This enabling support will be delivered in part through the City Corporation's proposed role as a founding member of the Housing and Finance Initiative (HFI). The HFI is a body focused on increasing the pace and scale of delivery of housing across all tenures by helping public and private sector bodies more easily form joint ventures through better understanding of needs and risks.
- 5.11 The City Corporation will also explore partnership opportunities and models that deliver both additional homes and added value to local communities and Londoners.

Influence policy change to encourage supply

- 5.12 Unlocking the supply opportunities the Capital needs requires policy makers in national, regional and local government to re-examine the barriers and constraints that exist. Public funding alone cannot resource the scale of additional housing that is needed, and therefore policy must enable and support the market to meet this need.
- 5.13 For the City Corporation this will mean working with London Councils, central government and the Mayor of London to influence change and debate. The City is committed to protecting the capital's quality green spaces, but recognises the need to look at the potential of land that is of lower quality and proximate to existing transport hubs to provide homes needed by Londoners.
- 5.14 The City Corporation will also work with partners to explore the role new housing supply and policy can take in promoting the better use of London's existing housing stock.

6 Implementation

- 6.1 A Housing Steering Group, jointly chaired by the Director of Community and Children's Services and the City Surveyor, has been established to lead the delivery of the City Corporation's housing vision. This will provide the leadership alongside that of the City Corporation's Common Council to deliver this ambition.

⁹ *From statutory provider to housing delivery enabler: Review into the local authority role in housing supply*, Department of Communities and Local Government, January 2015.

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Community & Children's Services	09.10.2015
Subject: The City of London Corporation Housing Allocation Scheme 2015	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Decision

Summary

This report, which is recommended to the Grand Committee by the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee, presents the revised City of London Corporation Housing Allocation Scheme. The Scheme has been revised following feedback from the Housing User Board and in response to legislative developments and also to the challenges faced by the Corporation from increasing demand for its limited housing stock.

The main changes include strengthening of the employment local connection rule. Amendment to the bands include removing from band 1 (high need) and placing into band 2 (medium need): *homeless households to whom the City Corporation has accepted a statutory duty to accommodate*. There is now also clearer recognition of members of the armed forces who may qualify without a local connection and in some circumstances given additional priority.

A two week consultation of the proposed revisions was undertaken. Responses supported the changes proposed.

The revised Policy supports the Department of Community and Children's Services strategic business priorities to develop strong neighbourhoods and ensuring people have a decent place to live.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the revised City of London Corporation Housing Allocation Scheme as attached in Appendix 1 to this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City Corporation's policy on housing waiting lists and nomination to affordable housing are governed by a number of Acts and Guidance. The most important ones are the Housing Act 1996; the Housing Act 2004; the Homelessness Act 2002; Localism Act 2011 and Guidance issued in 2012 and 2013.

2. The Corporation adopted its current Housing Register and Allocations Policy on May 2014. The 2014 Policy marked a significant change of practice for the City Corporation because it enabled the Corporation to utilise the new powers and flexibilities granted to local authorities by the Localism Act 2011 and Codes of Guidance issued in 2012 and 2013.
3. The 2014 policy made use of the ability for local authorities to set local connection qualification rules, to ensure homes go to households with a housing need and to set the allocation priorities to meet local needs and circumstances.
4. A range of local qualification rules were implemented at this time including local connection, household income savings limit, no rent arrears, no anti-social behaviour, as well as some others. Waiting list households were required to have a housing need as set out in the housing need priority bands 1-3.
5. The 2014 policy has been operating for almost one year. During this time, a number of issues have arisen which need to be addressed to enable the policy to operate more fairly and consistently. Furthermore, the local and national housing market has changed. Most notably an increase in private rental costs has placed more pressure on the City Corporation's Register and Housing Needs Service. Revisions to the policy are intended to reduce pressure.

Current Position

6. A number of changes were proposed to the policy and a two week consultation period was undertaken on the proposed revisions with the Housing User Board. Responses supported the changes proposed. The consultation and changes are detailed below.

Consultation

7. A consultation was undertaken with the Housing User Board. This took place in August 2015. All members of the Board were invited to take part in a survey. The survey detailed the proposed revisions to the existing policy and a link to the existing policy. The survey was available on line and on request hard copies of the survey were available to post to interested parties.
8. This report and the Scheme were discussed by Members of the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee on 14 September 2015. The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend the Scheme to the Grand Committee for approval.

Changes to Local Connection and Qualifying Criteria

9. Supplementary guidance issued in December 2013, encourages local authorities to implement a two year residency test. In line with this, the twelve month City residency local connection requirement will be extended from 12 to 24 months. An extension to the length of time of employment local connection will extend from twelve to 24 months. This change reflects a need

for applicants to demonstrate a stronger commitment to the City and better aligns this local connection with the residency qualification.

Local Connection and moving for work

10. On 9 March 2015, the Government announced that it would introduce “Right to Move” regulations to “ensure local connection requirements do not prevent social tenants from moving into the area to take up work or apprenticeships opportunities”. This new guidance also includes “an expectation for local authorities to set aside a proportion of their lets for social tenants who need to move across local authority boundaries for work related reasons”. The guidance sets a minimum expectation of 1% of lets, although it is for local authorities to decide on the appropriate proportion in the light of local circumstances.
11. To meet this, the revised allocation scheme will allow social housing tenants without a local connection to the City, but who are seeking a move to the City of London to take up work or be closer to work to approach the City Corporation for social housing. The City Corporation will make up to one per cent of its voids available to meet the needs of this group. Where such a household is accommodated a direct offer will be made for a property suitable for the household.

Armed Forces Personnel and Local Connection

12. In encouraging authorities to implement the two year residency test for social housing applicants, the guidance also states that authorities must make an exception for certain members of the regular and reserve Armed Forces. Therefore, this revised scheme now places into the priority band 3, members of the regular and reserve armed forces *without* local connection to the City or their bereaved spouses who need to move because of serious injury, a medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service. This new revision recognises the special position of members of the Armed Forces (and their families) whose employment requires them to be mobile and who are likely therefore to be particularly disadvantaged by local connection requirements; as well as those injured reservists who may need to move to the City to access treatment, care or support.

Changes to the City of London bedroom standard

13. Single person households qualify for a studio property only, unless there is a specific medical need or the applicant has parental responsibility for children who do not live with them. The majority (55%) of households registered for housing with the City Corporation need a studio property and we have a shortage of these. In order to reduce pressure on studio properties we are proposing that existing secure City of London tenants in a studio property will be eligible to register to transfer into a one bedroom property once they reach the age of 45. This should increase the amount of studio properties available for relet to the waiting list but also provide larger properties for City Corporation tenants as they grow older.

Changes to the priority bands

14. The following applicants will be removed from band 1 (high need) and placed into band 2 (medium need): *homeless households to whom the City Corporation has accepted a statutory duty to accommodate.*

They will be made a single, suitable direct offer, and if their application is successful, the City Corporation will discharge its homeless duty in accordance with legislation. However, in line with its Homelessness Strategy, The City Corporation will also seek to discharge its full homelessness duty where it can secure a reasonable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

Allocations made outside the process

15. The revised policy will raise the age of applicants entitled to sheltered accommodation from 60 years to the state retirement age for women. This will be in line with the eligibility criteria set for the City of London and Gresham Almshouses.

The Right to Buy

16. The revised Allocation Scheme takes into account the changes made to the Right to Buy legislation which came into effect in July 2014. The Scheme will stipulate that households who have previously exercised their right to buy or have received a cash incentive for a mortgage and then subsequently sell their property, will not be eligible to join the City Corporation Housing Register. Exemptions to this rule the circumstance when a homeless duty is accepted by the City Corporation under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The revised Policy supports the Department of Community and Children's Services strategic business priorities to develop strong neighbourhoods and ensuring people have a decent place to live.

Implications

18. The Localism Act 2011 requires the City Corporation to publish an allocation scheme for determining priorities and the procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. Guidance issued in December 2013, provides further assistance to local authorities on making full use of the flexibilities within allocation legislation to better meet the needs of their local residents. This revised Allocation Scheme aims to make better use of the assistance provided by the guidance. Specifically, this revised Scheme strengthens the employment local connection and includes some flexibility and exceptions to the local connection qualification.

Conclusion

19. This report presents the revised City of London Corporation revised Housing Allocation Policy. The revisions have been informed through consultation and in response to recently introduced legislation and guidance.

Appendices

Appendix 1- The City of London Housing Allocation Scheme

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City of London Corporation

**Housing Allocation Scheme
2015**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the City of London Corporation (the City Corporation) Housing Allocation Scheme. This determines the basis for allocating vacancies within the City Corporation's social housing stock, and housing association vacancies within the Square Mile to which it has nomination rights.
- 1.2 The aims of this Scheme are to:
- achieve a balance between the housing needs of existing City of London tenants and those applying to be new tenants
 - make the best use of our housing stock in this time of extremely high demand for social housing
 - be clear about who can go on our housing register, how we will prioritise households on the register, and the process for allocating homes
 - efficiently let our properties to reduce the amount of time properties are empty
 - help achieve our Business Plan aim to provide safe, stable and vibrant communities.

2 Legal Framework

- 2.1 The policies set out in this document are shaped by a framework of legislation including the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011). It also reflects regulations and guidance issued by government relating to allocations. The City Corporation is required by s.166A(1) of the Housing Act to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities, and for defining the procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation; and must allocate in accordance with that scheme (s.166A(14)).

3 Equalities

- 3.1 The City Corporation promotes equal opportunities and opposes all forms of unfair discrimination. Providing a clear and consistent policy for housing allocation supports the City Corporations to treat all applicants fairly. All applications and decision relating to them will be made in line with this policy and irrespective of their gender, colour, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, age or faith.

4 Policy changes and discretion

- 4.1 New government guidance and newly arising circumstances can require amendment to policies during their proposed lifetime. To make sure this allocation policy remains current and operates fairly and within the law, the Director of Community and Children's Services in consultation with the Chairman of Housing Management and Almshouse Sub Committee for Housing will be able to approve minor amendments. Major revision – such as that driven by legislative change - will be approved by the Sub Committee

4.2 This document aims to provide comprehensive information to ensure applicants are informed and understand the decision making process that will apply to the allocation of social housing. However, the allocation scheme cannot cover every eventuality. The City Corporation recognises that some exceptional needs may arise that are not addressed by this scheme. In such cases the Director of Community and Children's Services has discretionary power to award additional priority and approve offers of housing, taking into consideration all factors relevant to housing and social needs.

5 Eligibility

5.1 To support the application of its Allocation Scheme the City Corporation holds a "Housing Register" of applicants who are eligible to qualify for social housing – whether a council property or a housing association home.

5.2 Housing allocations can only be made to those who are both eligible for housing and a qualifying person.

5.3 Applicants over the age of 18 years are can apply to the City Corporation for housing. Those under the age of 18 may be considered in exceptional circumstances: the City Corporation will provide advice on housing options with these applicants and consider any exceptional circumstances in conjunction with children's social care services.

5.4 The following are applicants eligible:

- those who are resident in the City of London for a minimum period of 24 months, or who have been placed in temporary or supported accommodation provided by the Corporation for a minimum of 24 months
- those employed by the City Corporation for a minimum of 24 months (including interim or supported employment)
- those employed within the City of London for a minimum 24 months and who have been working for at least 16 hours per week (including interim or supported employment)
- those who are a child of a current City Corporation secure tenant and who has lived continuously within the household
- those who are a young person looked after by the City Corporation and placed in care.

5.5 The following are **not** eligible to join the Housing Register:

- those who are not entitled to access to public funds due to immigration status because:
 - they are subject to immigration control
 - only have the right to reside in the UK because they (or a member of their household) are a jobseeker
 - are not habitually resident in the UK

- have a right to reside in the UK of less than three months
 - Where an applicant who is eligible and qualifies for the Housing Register has a partner who falls into one of the above groups, they cannot, if successful in bidding for a home, have a joint tenancy with their partner.
- anyone who owns a property in the UK or abroad, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
 - households who have previously exercised their right to buy or have received a cash incentive for a mortgage and subsequently sell their property (unless a homelessness duty is accepted by the City Corporation under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996)
 - those who have an annual household income of £60,000 or more (before tax)
 - those who have household savings or capital of £30,000 or more
 - unless exceptional circumstances apply, applicants will be excluded from the City Corporation's Housing Register if their behaviour as a tenant of the Council, or the behaviour of a member of their household, has not been acceptable and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant will not be a suitable future tenant.

5.6 Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- owing serious rent arrears and failing to comply with a current or past tenancy agreement with a local authority (including the Corporation), housing association or private landlord
- conviction for illegal or immoral purposes
- causing nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or visitors and which results in court proceedings
- committing certain criminal offences in or near the home and still posing threat to neighbours or the community
- being violent towards a partner or members of the family
- paying money illegally to obtain a tenancy
- having lost accommodation provided in connection with employment due to conduct making it inappropriate for the person to reside there.
- obtaining a tenancy fraudulently
- committing tenancy fraud.

5.7 If an applicant is not eligible to go on to the housing register we will aim to notify of the decision and reasons in writing within 30 working days. They have the right to request a review of the decision within 10 working days.

5.8 In allocating its housing, the Corporation is committed to ensuring that certain categories of people have access to appropriate accommodation. This allocation scheme therefore ensures that the requirement for a local connection does not apply to the following persons so as to disqualify them from an allocation of social housing:

- those who are currently serving in the regular armed forces or who were serving in the regular forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an application of social housing.
- bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.

6 Reasonable Preference

6.1 The City Corporation's Allocation Scheme is required by legislation when determining allocation priorities to ensure that reasonable preference is given to the following categories of people:

- people who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need)
- people who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under s.192(3)
- people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, and
- people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).

6.2 The City Corporation will give additional preference to applicants in one of the reasonable preference priority groups and you are:

- at risk of domestic abuse in your current home

- a witness or victim of crime and at risk of intimidation
- harassed, threatened or attacked in the local area because of your race or sexuality.

6.3 The City Corporation will also give additional preference to a person with urgent housing needs who falls within one of the reasonable preference categories above who:

- is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service,
- formerly served in the regular forces,
- has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service, or
- is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.

7 Qualifying categories

7.1 The City of London will accept onto the Housing Register applicants who fall into one of the following groups:

I. existing City of London tenants who are under-occupying:

tenants who wish to transfer to another City of London property and who are 'down-sizing' by 1 or more bedrooms

II. low-paid City workers

people who have worked for a minimum of 24 months in a job(s) within the 'square mile' whose total household income is less than £26,000 per year (includes City of London Corporation employees wherever they may be based).

III. Sons and Daughters of current City of London tenants

Band 3 will be awarded unless an applicant qualifies for higher priority by meeting any of the other criteria in this policy

IV. Retiring City of London workers who have been in tied accommodation

V. Those carrying out a caring role (including adoption / fostering) with City children

8 Joining the Housing Register

- 8.1 To join the Housing Register applicants must complete a housing application form and where appropriate, medical and social need assessment forms.
- 8.2 Applicants who need help with completing the form can request an appointment with the Housing Needs Team (see below for contact details) who will be able to help them.
- 8.3 Applicants will be asked to provide information and evidence necessary to enable officers to check their eligibility and housing need. This will usually include:
 - photo identification
 - proof of identity for all household members and evidence of their right live in the UK if they are not British Citizens
 - proof of current address, for the last five years
 - national insurance number
 - proof of their residency or employment connection to the City
 - proof of savings
 - proof of earnings.
- 8.4 If the City Corporation is satisfied that the applicant is eligible to be on the housing register, an initial assessment will be made based on the information on the application form and any other information provided.
- 8.5 Applications will normally be processed within 30 working days, once all the required information has been provided in the requested form.
- 8.6 All those eligible will be assessed and placed in the appropriate bedroom category for their household size and in one of the four bands in date order. Applicants will be sent a letter explaining what band they are in, the points awarded to them and their date of application and guidance on how to bid for properties.
- 8.7 If an applicant feels that their application has been assessed incorrectly under the scheme and relevant circumstances have not been taken into account, they may request a review of the decision and must be able to provide supporting evidence. To request a review, the applicant should write to the Housing Needs Team setting out reasons for requesting a review within 10 days of their notification letter.

9 Who can be considered part of the household?

- 9.1 An application to join the Housing Register should include those people who normally live with the applicant as a member of their family.
- 9.2 In considering the size and type of housing need, the Corporation will only consider households members who reside with the applicant at the time of application, or who subsequently need to join applicant as they are dependent (not financially) on them to receive care.
- 9.3 A partner will be considered where they live in a permanent relationship with the applicant for at least 12 months, or for any period where they are married to the applicant or in a civil partnership.
- 9.4 Dependent children are those under to whom the applicant has a legal care responsibility (e.g. guardianship or a residence order) amounting to more than 50 per cent of the time.
- 9.5 A dependent relative is one who is unable to live independently and there are no other options available for their care. The City Corporation will seek an assessment and recommendation from its independent medical assessor or the Head of service of Adult Social Care to confirm this.

10 City Corporation's bedroom standard

- 10.1 Applicants on the housing register can only bid for properties that meet their assessed need. The City Corporation assess the number of bedrooms needed as follows:
- one bedroom for the applicant, and partner/spouse
 - one bedroom for any additional adult couple
 - one bedroom for any two additional people of the same sex under 16
 - one bedroom for any two additional people of the opposite sex aged nine and under
 - one bedroom for any additional person.
- 10.2 Single applicants qualify for a studio property. However, single applicants over 45 years old who are current City Corporation tenants seeking a transfer, or applicants who have care or custody for children who do not live with them qualify for a one bedroom property.
- 10.3 The City Corporation does not have any properties with over five bedrooms

11 Application update and renewal

- 11.1 Applicants must notify the Corporation of any changes in their circumstances as they arise, such as, but not limited to, a relationship breakdown, a child leaving home, or a new child being born, a change of address or employment.
- 11.2 When an applicant's change of circumstance has been re assessed, this may result in a change in the applicant's band or bedroom need. If an applicant

loses their local connection, increases their household earnings to more than £60,000 per annum, or owns a property, their application will be cancelled.

12 Giving false or misleading information

12.1 Under Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996, it is a criminal offence for an applicant to knowingly give false information or to withhold information relevant to their application.

12.2 This applies if:

- an applicant knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular
- knowingly, withholds information which the Corporation's housing team has reasonably required the applicant to give in connection with the exercise of its functions.

12.3 This applies at all stages of the application. If there is significant change in the applicant's housing circumstances then there is an obligation on them to inform the Housing Needs Team of this.

13 Help with registering and bidding for properties

13.1 Some applicants may need help with registering for housing and bidding for properties. In most cases applicants needing assistance will be identified through the application process. Officers will work with the applicant to identify someone appropriate who will act as their nominated helper.

13.2 The housing register application form includes a question asking whether an applicant may have difficulty in applying and bidding for a property themselves and whether they have someone who can help them.

13.3 Applicants who need help with registering or bidding for properties should contact the Housing Needs Team.

14 Priority for housing

14.1 Households accepted onto the Housing Register are awarded a band and points level that reflects their priority for housing. Priorities reflect the aims of this policy and preference the City Corporation is required to give by law to certain household types as set out above (see Reasonable Preference).

14.2 Where a household falls into more than one reasonable preference group, cumulative preference is recognised in the points awarded (as outlined above). The banding scheme allows for applicants with multiple housing needs to move between the bands described below, according to level of need.

14.3 In some exceptional circumstances the City Corporation will provide additional preference to households identified as having the most urgent need or multiple needs. The types of circumstances likely to be eligible for additional preference are set out in the Emergency Band described below.

15 How needs are assessed

15.1 The Corporation operates a banding and points scheme which takes into account applicants who should be given “reasonable preference”, additional preference groups and local letting priorities.

15.2 There are **four bands**:

Emergency Band

This is a time limited band and all applicants in this band will be kept under review. This band is limited to City of London tenants. Only one reasonable offer of accommodation will be made under this scheme.

Band 1- High

Band 2 - Medium

Band 3 – Low

15.3 Points and priority for a property will be awarded in the following way:

Emergency Management Transfer Band (4000 points)

- urgent need to move due to violence, harassment, protection issues
- severe or life threatening medical need

Band 1 – High (3000 points)

- overcrowded by 2 bedrooms or more as defined by the bedroom standard
- medical need has a severe impact on normal life and likely to deteriorate
- need for adapted accommodation
- moving on from supported housing / living
- care leavers
- under occupying City Corporation tenants
 - downsizing by 2 or more bedrooms
 - moving to older people’s accommodation
 - or whose household is affected by the removal of the “spare room subsidy”.

Band 2 – Medium (2000 points)

- homeless households for which the City Corporation has a statutory duty
- low income City workers with household incomes less than £23,000 per annum
- former members of the armed forces with a local connection to the City of London, through employment or residency
- overcrowded by 1 bedroom as defined by the bedroom standard

Band 3 – Low (1000 points)

- sons and daughters of secure City of London tenants who have resided continuously with their parents
- Members of the reserved forces without connection to the City of London or their bereaved spouses who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- qualifying homeless applicants found to be intentionally homeless

Discretionary Banding Criteria

The City Corporation recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the only way a housing need can be resolved is through the use of discretion. This will only be agreed if there are no other options available or feasible or if the applicant is in urgent need of housing.

Additional points

15.4 In addition to the bands above, additional points are awarded under the following:

Sharing

- sharing with family 5 points
- extra priority for sharing with non-family 1-4 people 10 points
- extra priority for sharing with non-family 5-9 people 15 points

Lack of accommodation

- bedroom 20 points per room

Preference points

- without tenancy 5 points

Welfare grounds

- domestic violence / harassment; other special reason for moving to city estates; near relatives/friends for support or special needs; property deemed unsuitable 0-30 points
- split family 20 points
- downsize - standard 30 points
- downsize - due to removal of spare room subsidy 50 points

Medical

- no medical priority 0 points

- low medical priority 20 points
- medium medical priority 50 points
- high / urgent medical priority 4000 points

16 Medical Priority

16.1 Applicants who indicate that they or anyone in their household has an illness or disability which is affected by their current home will be asked to complete a medical self assessment form. This is assessed and given a priority by an independent medical assessor.

16.2 Medical priority will kept under review and may change if:

- the applicant moves to another property
- there is a material change in the medical condition of an applicant or other member of the household
- the condition is acute and the applicant had been awaiting treatment and the treatment is now complete, thereby resolving the medical need.

17 Transfer applicants

17.1 Current secure tenants of the City of London can apply to join the Housing Register for a transfer. Priority for such a move will be awarded in line with the applicant's assessed housing need. It should be noted the City Corporation does not permit like for like transfer moves where there are no other welfare, medical or emergency needs.

Applicants with rent arrears will not be eligible to transfer and may be disqualified.

18 Choice

18.1 The Housing Act 1996 requires local authorities to offer choice of accommodation, or to give an opportunity to express reasonable preference in relation to accommodation. The Corporation will offer a choice of accommodation in line with its Choice Based Lettings scheme, which provides the opportunity to choose accommodation by expressing an interest in properties that are advertised on the home connections website (see below).

19 How vacancies will be advertised and let

19.1 Applicants who are accepted onto the housing register will be able to express an interest in a vacancy by making a bid. A guide to choice based lettings explaining the bidding process will be sent to these applicants.

19.2 Vacancies will be advertised every week in the following locations:

- the City Home Connections website
- the City of London Corporation Estates Offices

Each vacancy will have information on the location, size and type of property, and any other criteria that applicants must satisfy in order to be eligible for shortlisting.

19.3 Each bidding cycle begins every Thursday morning and closes the following Monday at one minute to midnight.

19.4 Applicants who bid for a property will be prioritised on the basis of their band and points. Applicants in the same band will be distinguished by the points awarded to them. Where their points are equal, priority is given to the applicant who has been in that band for the longest period.

19.5 If the applicant with the highest priority on a shortlist refuses the offer, the property will then be offered to the next eligible applicant on the shortlist.

19.6 Applicants will not be able to express an interest in a vacancy for which they are not eligible.

19.7 An applicant will be excluded from a shortlist on the following grounds:

- the applicant is not eligible in accordance with the bedroom standard and type of accommodation
- the applicant does not satisfy the advertising criteria included in the advert.

20 Allocation to housing association homes

20.1 Housing association homes to which the City has nomination rights will be advertised alongside City Corporation vacancies. Where an applicant is successful they will be subject to the lettings policies and procedures of that housing association, including their assessment of bedroom needs.

20.2 Applicants who take up a tenancy with a housing association will have their application to the Corporation's Housing Register closed and removed.

21 Allocations made outside of this process

21.1 The Corporation will aim to maintain the integrity of the allocation of property as set out above.

21.2 However, there will be occasions where direct allocations of properties are made where they have not been advertised and applicants have not made bids or where applicants will be required to submit a separate application. Such circumstances will include:

- specialist housing where an applicant has been identified and there is a need to house the applicant as soon as possible.
- sheltered accommodation where applicants have reached the state retirement age for women.

- so as to manage the supply of temporary accommodation and enable the Corporation to meet its statutory homeless duties, some properties may be allocated outside this allocation scheme.
- those occupying extreme insanitary or unsatisfactory housing conditions
- those with a City connection who face a critical or immediate need to move

21.3 The City Corporation may be approached by a tenant in social housing without a connection to the City of London, but who is seeking a move to the City of London to avoid hardship in order to take up work or be closer to work. The City Corporation will in any single financial year make up to one per cent of its voids available to meet the needs of this group where hardship can be demonstrated and employment or the offer of employment verified. Where such a household is accommodated a direct offer will be made for a property suitable for the household.

22 Statutory homeless households

22.1 The City Corporation will give households to whom it owes a full homelessness duty (under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996) will be given reasonable preference within this policy. Those found to be homeless but intentionally so will be placed in the lowest band.

22.2 The City Corporation's full homeless duty will be discharged if a homeless applicant successfully bids for a property. However, in line with its Homelessness Strategy, the City Corporation will also seek to discharge its full homelessness duty where it can secure a reasonable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector. In this circumstance the household's Housing Register application will be suspended for two years, after which it will be closed, or reactivated should the private rented sector tenancy come to an end during this period, through no fault of the tenant.

23 Local Lettings Plans

23.1 Section 167 (2E) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) enables housing authorities to adopt Local Lettings Policies and Plans. The Code of Guidance states that these lettings plans could enable a housing authority to allocate to specific groups, whether or not they fall into the reasonable preference categories. However, it also states that reasonable preference categories must be taken into account overall and that local lettings plans should not discriminate either directly or indirectly on any equality grounds.

23.2 The City Corporation may seek to develop local lettings plans for new build properties to allow flexibility to make lettings outside of the overarching allocations policy in line with the agreed local lettings plan.

23.3 Where the City Corporation considers that there is specific need to respond to local conditions, it will engage in and support the development of local lettings policies within its housing stock.

23.4 These policies will normally be time limited and the objectives may include targets to:

- increase the number of lets to those in employment or training
- lower child density
- balance the number and ages of children to avoid a large concentration of older or younger children
- make the best use of stock allowing a level of under-occupation / over-crowding
- enable new schemes to be allocated to a mixture of tenants in order to develop a sustainable community
- enable the City to manage particular business needs
- enable households to return to an area they left for redevelopment to take place.

23.5 This list is not exhaustive and local lettings plans may be agreed in other circumstances where there is evidence that the local community would benefit from such a plan and there is no significant adverse impact on other communities.

23.6 All local lettings and scheme-specific plans will be subject to formal approval. Each will have clear criteria and possibly their own qualification requirements, which are openly published. When a property which is being advertised is subject to a local lettings plan, this will be stated clearly.

23.7 Any local lettings plan will be agreed for a limited time, after which it will be reviewed, and lettings will revert to the main allocations scheme if appropriate.

24 Making offers to applicants

24.1 The Housing Needs Team will be responsible for contacting successful applicants, within 5 working days with additional detail of the property, a potential tenancy commencement date and details of how to view the property. Nominations under a housing association or in the private rented sector will be subject to the policies of that body.

24.2 If an applicant cannot be contacted or if they are unable to view a property within 5 working days, the nomination rights for that property will pass to the next priority applicant.

25 Refusal Policy

25.1 Applicants are expected to accept or reject an offer of a property at the time of viewing. Applicants who refuse two offers of suitable general needs accommodation, for which they have bid, will have their application reconsidered and will either not be able to bid for properties for a twelve month period or have their application cancelled. The twelve month period will begin at the date of the refusal of the second property or any decision on appeal.

- 25.2 The Corporation will discharge its statutory duty if applicants who have been placed in temporary accommodation, provided by the Corporation refuse one offer of suitable accommodation.
- 25.3 Applicants who have been placed in a band and awarded additional welfare points due to their current unsuitable accommodation and who refuse a suitable offer of accommodation will have their application reconsidered and their need to move removed. This will result in them being placed in a lower band.
- 25.4 Applicants have the right to appeal against any decisions to suspend bidding or remove priority.

26 Review of housing register and allocation scheme decisions

- 26.1 Applicants can request a review of a decision concerning their housing register application or suspension from bidding. Applicants must make a request in writing, to the Housing Needs Team at the address below:

The Senior Housing Needs Officer
Housing Needs Team
Barbican Estate Office
3 Lauderdale Place
London
EC2Y 8EN

27 Complaints

- 27.1 The City Corporation is committed to providing you with the best possible service and to working with you to find a solution to your housing need. If, however, you are not happy with the service you have received from us, you can find Information about how to make a complaint and our complaints procedure at:

<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/housing-and-council-tax/council-housing/contact-us/>

28 Housing advice and assistance

- 28.1 Anyone needing advice or assistance with their housing situation can contact the Housing Needs team to discuss their housing options:

- by email - hadvice@cityoflondon.gov.uk
- by telephone – 020 7332 3452/1237/1654
- in writing

The Housing Needs Team
Barbican Estate Office
3 Lauderdale Place
London
EC2Y 8EN

Agenda Item 8

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Community & Children's Services Safeguarding Sub Committee	09.10.2015 25.09.2015
Subject: Local Authorities Designated Officer Annual Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report will give Members information about the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity for the period of April 2014 to March 2015, which is contained in the annual report for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board. During this period there have been a total of five LADO referrals from various sources, which is lower than the City of London's statistical neighbours.

Members will be advised of the activity that has taken place to raise the profile of this role and the recommendations for 2015/2016 in relation to multi agency training. Outlining the progress that has already been made with these recommendations and how this has increased the number of referrals for this period from five the previous year to six, within a five month timeframe.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to: Note the Report

Main Report

Background

1. Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Role

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and the London Child Protection Procedures (5th edn. 2015, Chapter 17). All allegations made against staff, including volunteers, that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

In the City of London the LADO work is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager who reports directly into the Assistant Director People. Guidance and training on professional allegations is available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board website and agencies have access to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

The LADO would become involved when a professional or volunteer;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Current Position

2. LADO Activity for April 2014 to March 2015

There have been concerns raised by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board about the low number of referrals to the LADO, which has been scrutinised within the quality assurance sub group of the board. In total there have been five referrals during the period of 2014 to 2015. Two were historical allegations, with one relating to a historical allegation against a teacher currently working in the City, which was unsubstantiated. The other relating to an incident that occurred in the late 50's and early 60's, which was investigated by the City of London Police.

Due to the number of referrals it is difficult to discern any particular themes, but there has been an increase in the number of historical allegations, which reflects a wider national picture. Despite efforts to raise awareness around the LADO role there continues to be a low referral rate of professional allegations from

school's nurseries, voluntary agencies and commissioned services in the City of London.

For 2014 to 2015 the key priorities have been to raise the profile of the LADO role with staff across the City of London Corporation and with external partners. This has been achieved by;

- working closely with agencies around their safeguarding responsibilities.
- offering advice and support around individual case concerns.
- assisting agencies with the referral process to the LADO.
- providing support and guidance to maintained and independent schools in the City through the Education Forum in regard to the referral process and criteria re professional allegations.
- raising awareness with partner agencies who attend the Children's Executive Board.
- introducing a Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults in January 2014 which clearly sets out the guidance for professionals allegations.
- working with safeguarding champions across the City of London Corporation as to the role of the LADO.
- explaining the role of the LADO in briefing within the wider safeguarding campaign, "Notice the Signs".

The priorities for 2015 to 2016 will be to continue raising awareness; this will be achieved by;

- Ensuring that all professionals who work with children, from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors, are engaged and understand the LADO process. Training events will also be held.
- A Safeguarding Conference was to be arranged in the City; this has now taken place and has been well attended by partner agencies.
- Quality assurance of in-house and independent safeguarding training will be taken to ensure that it is to an appropriate standard.
- There will be a review of how agencies ensure that parents feel confident and able to raise safeguarding concerns about professionals.
- A peer review of City of London LADO cases will be completed by another local authority.

Conclusion

3. It has been concerning that there have been a low number of LADO referrals in the City of London, despite efforts to increase awareness. One of the recommendations from the annual LADO report was to increase awareness around professional allegations by delivering multi-agency training. Training sessions were commenced in August 2015 and further training is planned for October 2015 and February 2016.

Since April 2015 there has been a significant increase in the number of LADO referrals. For 2014 to 2015 there were a total of five referrals for the whole year and since April of this year there have been six. It is not clear at this stage whether the increase in the number of referrals is due to professionals having increased awareness, however this will be reviewed and the findings will be incorporated in the annual report for 2015 to 2016. Guidance on Local Authorities Designated Officer role is now on the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board web site.

Appendices

Local Authorities Designated Officers Annual Report for 2014 /2015

Background Papers

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/.../Working Together to Safeguard Children.](https://www.gov.uk/.../Working-Together-to-Safeguard-Children)

London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition, 2015, Chapter 17

www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/

City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer Guidance

www.chscb.org.uk

Pat Dixon

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City of London Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2014 - 15

1. Introduction

This report to City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board provides an overview of the work of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the City of London between April 2014 and March 2015. The report will review the progress that has been made to raise awareness around the safeguarding role during the year, as part of a wider safeguarding campaign. Identifying what action has been taken and the referral figures and outcomes.

2. LADO role

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in “Working Together” to safeguard children, March 2015 and the London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition, 2015, Chapter 17. All allegations made against staff (including volunteers) that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

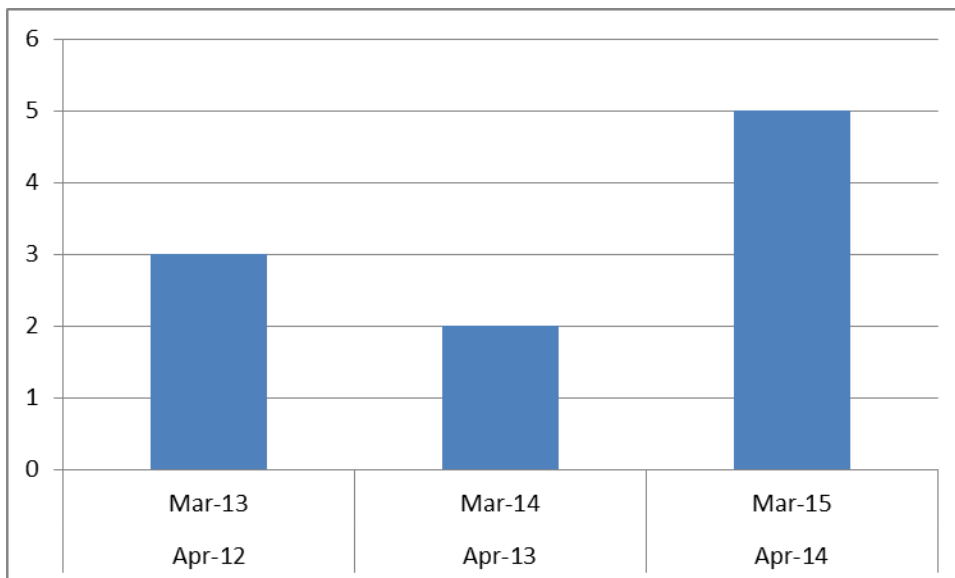
In the City of London the LADO work is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager who reports directly into the Assistant Director People. Guidance and training on professional allegations is available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board website and agencies have access to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

3. Referrals

Since the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Ofsted Inspection in March 2012 there have been concerns raised around the low level of referrals to the LADO. Fig 1 shows the number of referrals received for each year since 2012. In Fig 2 there appears to be an increase in referrals for 2014 to 2015, two were historical allegations, with one of the historical allegations referring to a teacher at the school. One was a LADO referral

from the Substance Misuse Partnership and two were contacts from other Local Authorities.

Fig 1 Referrals from 2012 to 2015



Significant efforts have been made to raise awareness of the LADO role since March 2012. Following the Ofsted inspection the LADO has visited nurseries, schools and youth service providers, speaking with agencies about the role of the LADO and the pathways for making referrals. There is still further work required in working with voluntary agencies, police and probation to ensure that all we engage with all agencies in the City.

City of London has one maintained primary school and five Independent Schools. Out of the five schools, two are secondary, one is a specialist music and drama school, catering for children from 8 to 18 years and two are preparatory schools, the majority of children attending these schools come from other borough's. There has also been an independent review of safeguarding in the schools that come under the governance of the City of London, which consists of four in the City and one based in Surrey. This was completed in 2013 and recommendations around safeguarding training were acted on by the school, which was evidenced by a follow up review in 2014.

There are also six private nurseries and one children's centre, which is attached to the maintained primary school. These settings have also been visited as part of the raising awareness of the LADO role. Safeguarding training has also been offered to these settings and has taken place at the weekend to maximise attendance, this training was well attended across the nursery settings. Recently there has been a safeguarding awareness campaign called "Notice the Signs", 477 City of London employees and external agency staff were spoken to during this campaign about the role of the LADO. A key message of these briefing's taking place was to raise

awareness around the corporate safeguarding policy, which outlined professionals responsibilities in regard to professional allegations.

Fig 2 Referral Sources for LADO referrals 2014 to 2015

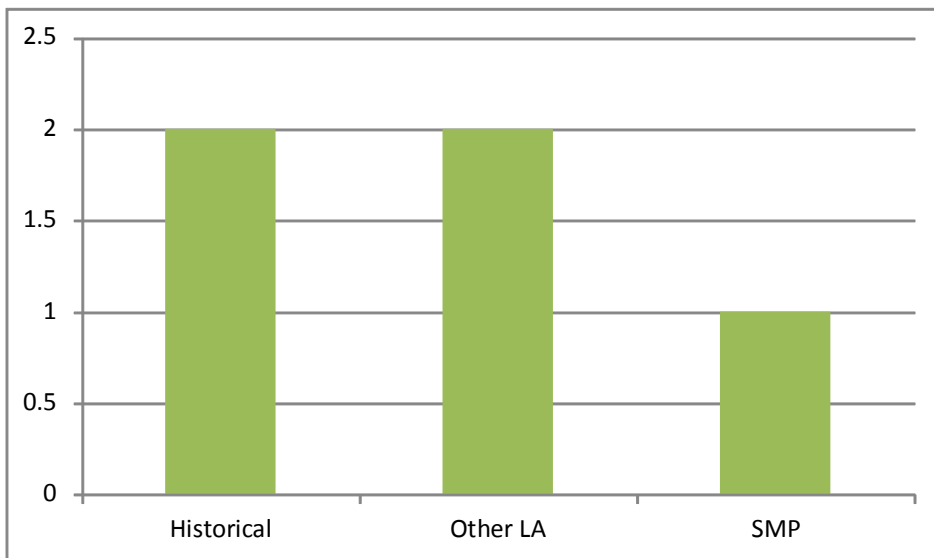
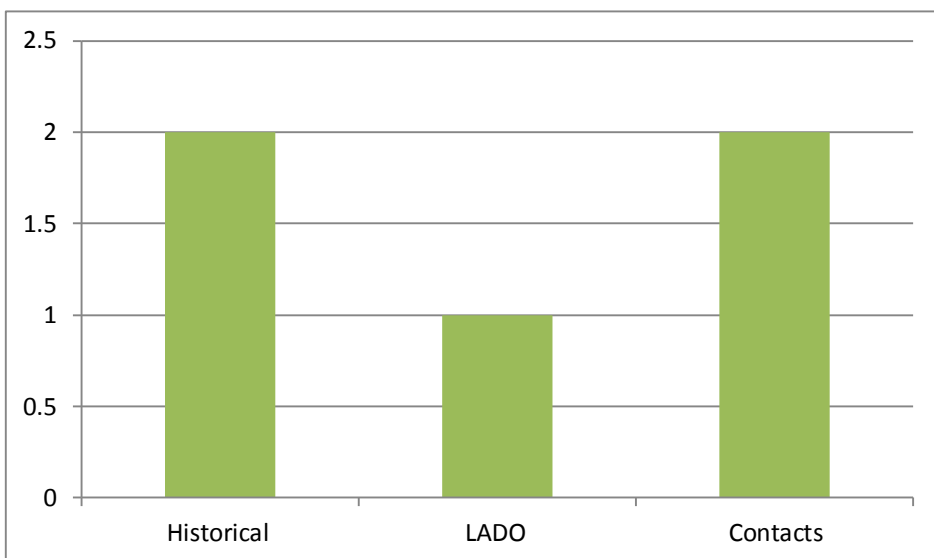


Fig 3 Referral type



This report identifies that there has been, and continues to be a sustained effort to raise awareness around the LADO role and professional allegations. When looking at the low referral rate from the Police and

Probation Service it is comparable with other local authorities for the year 2013 to 2014.

Hackney	- 0 from Probation Services	- 1 from the Police
Camden	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 4 from the Police
Enfield	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 0 from the Police
Haringey	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 0 from Police

As for health, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board is requesting information from health providers as to the low referrals rate from health visitors and this is currently being progressed.

4. Emerging themes

Due to the number of referrals it is difficult to discern any particular themes, but there has been an increase in the number of historical allegation, which reflects a wider national picture. As previously identified despite efforts to raise awareness around the LADO role there continues to be a low referral rate of professional allegations from school's nurseries, voluntary agencies and commissioned services in the City of London.

When analysing our data in comparison to other Local Authorities the City does have a low referral rate in relation to the numbers of referrals per percentage of educational establishments. When compared to other Local Authorities the City has two referrals less than the lowest cohort and approximately six referrals less than the highest.

A thematic review of the LADO referrals received has shown that parents have sometimes been reluctant to raise concerns around problems with staff. This has been due to their concerns that it may have implications on their child's place at the establishment. This is especially prevalent at the more prestigious independent establishments, when this has been raised as a factor, assurances have been given to parents.

Further scrutiny of the low referral rate has been undertaken through the s11 auditing process. This audit identified that there was full compliance around the handling of professional allegations by those agencies who completed the audit. However this does not prevent the need for continued scrutiny and training around professional allegations, which will be progressed during 2015/2016.

5. Multi-agency working

The City of London works closely with partners, schools and nurseries, who are represented on the City of London Executive Safeguarding Children's Board and the Education Forum, where safeguarding issues are

discussed. As part of the LADO role support and advice is offered to partners around their safeguarding duties, policies and procedures and individual case advice on potential referrals to social care. Training provided by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board has been taken up by agencies in the City as can be seen by the information below. The schools have also commissioned in their own safeguarding training. A key area for development for 2015 to 2016 will be to scope and quality assure the training that is taking place within the schools and nurseries.

Data collated from CHSCB on the 26th February 2015 has identified that;

Six attended from the City:

Two members of staff- Guildhall School of Music and Drama
One member of staff – Charterhouse Square School
One Member of staff – St Pauls Cathedral School
Two members of staff- The Prince’s Drawing School

10 October 2014 – five attended

One member of staff – London Islamic School
One member of staff– Outward Housing
One member of staff – Respect
One member of staff – St Pauls Cathedral School
One member of staff – Windsor Fellowship

6 May 2014 - seven attended

Four members of staff – Cass Child & Family Centre
One member of staff – Guildhall School of Music & Drama
Two members of staff – London Islamic School

In January 2014, the Department of Community and Children’s Services developed a corporate-wide safeguarding policy, which aimed to ensure that all areas of the organisation had a clear understanding of the shared legal duties around safeguarding for children at risk of harm. A key area for development for 2015 to 2016 will be to evaluate whether this has had an impact on increasing awareness across the corporation. This will be achieved by ascertaining whether there has been an increase in the number of contacts with the safeguarding champions across the City of London Corporation.

The LADO continues to develop positive working relationships with partner agencies, from the City of London Police, Community Paediatricians, Adult Safeguarding, HR, and Commissioning. The LADO also represents the City on City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Boards, Training and Development Sub Group and Quality Assurance Sub Group.

6. Increasing awareness of the Managing Allegations process

As can be seen by this report there have been initiatives to raise awareness around the role of agencies in managing professional allegations. This has been achieved through face to face meetings with the LADO and through safeguarding briefings, with City of London staff, schools and nurseries. In February/March 2013 the City of London's Town Clerk commissioned an independent review of safeguarding arrangements which was undertaken by an independent consultant. This review involved four of the independent schools who came under the governance of the City of London.

Recommendations from this report identified that one of the School's needed to have a designated Child Protection lead who had received safeguarding training commensurate with the role. Further safeguarding training was also identified for teaching staff and Governors within the organisation. The City of London supported the commissioning of safeguarding training and eLearning modules for staff, which when reviewed in 2014 had been completed. There is also a safeguarding lead who has received training on professional allegations by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board by employees.

7. Links in London and nationally

The City of London LADO is a member of the pan-London LADO group which meets on a quarterly basis. This is a sub-group of the London Safeguarding Children Board.

8. Police Notifications – Notifiable Occupational Scheme (NOS)

Between April 2014 and March 2015 there was one referral to the LADO, which came through the MARAC forum, relating to a young male who came to police attention for a matter related to an allegation of harm to a child, and his occupation met the criteria under this scheme.

Where the employer can be identified, the information received in the notifications is passed to the employing organisation to address, but the employing organisation is not always clear from the referral, and in these cases no further action can be taken.

It would add to the effectiveness of the Scheme if at the point when the police officer asks for the nature of the employment in order to assess whether to refer in relation to NOS, the officer also asks the name of the employer.

9. Update on 2014- 15 Development priorities

Worked closely with agencies around safeguarding responsibilities

- By offering advice and support around individual case concerns;
- Assisting agencies with the referral process;
- Support and guidance provided to maintained and independent schools in the City through the Education Forum;
- Partner agencies attend the Children's Executive Board where safeguarding priorities and initiatives within the Department Business Plan are reviewed;
- The City of London introduced a Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults in January 2014;
- Safeguarding Champions were identified across the City of London Corporations to support employees;
- A safeguarding awareness campaign called "Notice the Signs" was launched to raise awareness about safeguarding, including the LADO role. This campaign targeted all City of London employees and residents.

10. Service Development Priorities 2015/16

- Ensure that all professionals who work with children, from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors, are engaged and understand the LADO process.
- Review independent safeguarding training, in relation to quality and frequency.
- Safeguarding Conference to be arranged in the City.
- Training events for City of London employees and partner agencies around safeguarding and professional roles and responsibilities.
- Meet with Safeguarding Champions on a quarterly basis to review referrals.
- Review of how agencies will ensure that parents feel confident and able to raise safeguarding concerns about professionals.

- Peer review to be undertaken on LADO cases.

Pat Dixon, LADO
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN
Date: April 2013-March 2014

1. Total number of Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer			
Local Authority	City of London	Number of referrals regarding allegations and matters of concern	5
2. Number of Referrals about each or organisation			
Agency	Number		
1.Social Care	2 Two contacts made from other LA		
2.Health-hospital staff	0		
3.Health-community	0		
4.Education	1 Historical Allegation relating to a current employee.		
5.Early Years-Child-minder	0		
6.Early Years-Nursery Staff			
7. Foster Carer-IFA with other LA children or other LA in house carers living in City.	0		
8.Police	0		
9.Probation	0		
10.CAFCASS			
11.Voluntary Organisations Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	0		
12.Faith Groups	0		
13.Immigration/Asylum Support services	0		
14.Transport Transport provided to services through a contract	0		
15.Care Agency	0		
16.Other Dept. in City of London	1 LADO referral from substance misuse partnership		
17 Other	1 Historical allegation from alleged victim.		
18. Leisure Services	0		
19.Adult Services	0		
20.Housing Associations/ Providers	0		

3. Who made the Referral	
	Number
1.Social Care	2 Islington and Luton LADO's contact
2.Health-hospital staff	0
3.Health-community	0
4.Education	1 Historical allegation which came through School via an email in relation to current member of staff.
5.Early Years-Child-minder	0
6.Early Years-Nursery Staff	0
7.Foster Carer-IFA with City of London children	0
8.Police	0
9.Probation	0
10.CAFCASS	0
11.Voluntary Organisations Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	0
12.Immigration/Asylum Support services	0
13.Transport Transport provided to services through a contract	0
14.Care Agency	0
15.Other Dept's City of London	1 Referral from Substance Misuse Partnership.
16. Other	1 self-referral from alleged victim of historical abuse.
17.Leisure Services	0
18.Adult Services	0
19.Housing Associations/Housing Providers.	0

Number of referrals about an adult within specific employment/volunteer sector which reached a multi-agency strategy discussion and/or meeting and primary reason(s) for referral.

Employer	Physical <i>state whether concern arose from authorised physical intervention restraint or arrest</i>		Emotional	Sexual	Neglect	Behaviour which called into question person's suitability
	Yes	No				
Social Care						1 LADO referral SMP
Health-hospital staff						
Health-community						
Education-teaching staff				1 LADO referral from school, historical allegation-not proven		
Education-non teaching staff						
Early Years-child-minders						
Early Years-nursery staff						
Foster Carers-IFA with City children						
Police						
Probation						
CAFCASS						
Voluntary Organisations						
Faith Groups						
Armed Forces						
Immigration/Asylum Support Services						
Care Agencies						
Transport				1 Historical allegation, self-referral to		

				LADO, forwarded to Police for investigation		
Other						
Leisure Services						
Adult Services						
Housing Associations/Provider						
4. Number of referred cases that resulted in: <i>please note there could be more than one outcome</i>						
Being Substantiated	2					
Being Unsubstantiated	3					
Being Unfounded	0					
CSM held	2					
Met the threshold for LADO input but not for a Complex strategy meeting	Of the five referral received by the LADO, two were historical allegations, one of which was relating to a current member of staff at the school. Two were contacts where the City was not the primary LADO involved, and one was a LADO referral from the substance misuse partnership.					
Criminal investigation/joint work with CAIT	0					
Criminal prosecution	0					
Caution	0					
Conviction	0					
Acquittal	0					
Initial inquires by employers						
Disciplinary investigation	0					
Disciplinary meeting/hearing	0					
Suspension	0					
Dismissal	0					
Cessation of use	0					
Deregistration	0					
Training needs identified for member of staff or the agency.	1 - Concerns around the delay in referring to LADO, employee who reported incident appeared unclear as to his role.					
Risk Assessment completed by Employer	1					
Referral to DBS	1 referral made to DBS by LADO of lead LA, as he had misled employers' in regard to have a previous conviction. Agency in City seen by City LADO re there role					

	responsibility in checking DBS.
Referral to regulatory body e.g. GMC /Ofsted etc...	
5. At the point of conclusion, the number of cases that were resolved within the following timeframes	
1 month	4
3 months	1
6 months	

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Committee	Dated:
Community & Children's Services Safeguarding Sub Committee	09.10.2015 25.09.2015
Subject: Corporate Parenting Annual Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report presents to Members the document Corporate Parenting in the City of London - Annual Report 2014/15. The annual report provides an overview of the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care.

The Annual Report illustrates that the City provides good care to looked after children, supports their achievements and safeguards them from harm. It also sets out a number of priorities and actions for the coming year.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2014/15 provides Members with an overview of the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care. As a corporate parent the City has a moral and legal duty to provide support, care and encouragement to the children and young people we look after to help them reach their full potential.
2. The annual report is being presenting to Members of the Safeguarding Sub Committee, in its role as the Corporate Parenting Board, to enable scrutiny of the performance of the City Corporation in this role.

Current Position

3. The annual report provides an overview of the profile of the children in our care, and reports on the City's performance in meeting key measures of health and wellbeing, and providing stable, quality foster homes for our children to be cared in. It sets out the actions taken to safeguard children from harm, and the work undertaken to support children to maximise their educational attainment or their engagement with training and employment.
4. The report also reflects the strong oversight of the corporate parenting role through the Safeguarding Sub Committee, which acts as the City's Corporate Parenting Board. This role has been supported by development sessions for Members, to highlight their roles and responsibilities, and the development and approval of a new Corporate Parenting Strategy.
5. The City's support for the children in our care is strong. Statistical measures of performance are better than those reported nationally, or by local authorities considered to be our statistical neighbours. However, the City continues to strive to improve, and the report sets out a number of areas for development and priorities to be delivered in 2015/16.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

6. The City's role in supporting children in our care to achieve their full potential contributes to the fulfilment of the priorities of the Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan and the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Conclusion

7. The City of London continues to deliver a strong corporate parenting role that is helping the children and young in our care to thrive.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting in the City of London – Annual Report 2014/15

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Corporate Parenting in the City of London

Annual Report – 2014/15

1 Introduction and context

- 1.1 This annual report provides an update on the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care.
- 1.2 The City of London Corporation is a Corporate Parent to the children who are in its care. These looked after children are those children and young people aged 0 - 18 years who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the City Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Looked after children can include unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, looked after children and young people are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.
- 1.3 The City Corporation's legal and financial responsibility to the children and young people for whom it is a corporate parent extends into their lives as care leavers and as they transition to independence.

2 The children in our care

- 2.1 During 2014/15 the City looked after 11 children. Seven children were in care at the start of the year and a further four came into care during the year. One of those who came into care was looked after temporarily and subsequently returned to their home. Two others reached the age of 18 and continued to receive the support of the City Corporation as care leavers (both living in semi-independent accommodation).
- 2.2 The City's looked after children are predominantly older, with only one under the age of ten years at the beginning of the year. Four looked after children were aged 17 or 18 years, three were aged 14 or 15 years, and three were aged 12 or 13 years.
- 2.3 Ten of the 11 children looked after during 2014/15 were male.
- 2.4 The age and gender profile of the City's looked after children reflects the dominance of children who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) among this group. Seven of the 11 children looked after in 2014/15 were UASC, as were three of the four children who came into care during the year. Nationally, 89 per cent of UASC children are male and 76 per cent are aged over 16 years.
- 2.5 The number of UASC in our looked after population is also reflected in the diversity of ethnicities and countries of origin. Children of Asian origin represent the largest cohort (four of 11 children), three are of mixed origin and four identified as either white British or white other (Albanian). Although households of Asian origin are significant proportion of the City's population, such households are south Asian (Bangladeshi) in origin and diverse from the children of Asian origin in our care who are Afghani or Iranian.

- 2.6 During 2014/15 the City supported 13 young people who had left care – including the two young people mentioned above who at the age of 18 years became care leavers.
- 2.7 Five care leavers are aged between 21 and 25 years, and are being supported in full time education. The remaining eight are aged 18 to 21 years.
- 2.8 Twelve of the 13 care leavers supported by the City were male.
- 2.9 Our care leaver population is very ethnically diverse, and as with our looked after children, is markedly different from that of the City's resident population. This reflects their route into care, which for 12 out of 13 care leavers was as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child.

3 Corporate Parenting Board (Safeguarding Sub Committee)

- 3.1 Within the City Corporation the function of Corporate Parenting Board is undertaken by the Safeguarding Sub Committee which reports to the Community and Children's Services Grand Committee.
- 3.2 The Safeguarding Sub Committee meets four times each year, and in its capacity as the Corporate Parenting Board it is responsible for:
 - achieving improved outcomes for children in care and care leavers;
 - developing and overseeing implementation of the City Corporation's Corporate Parenting Strategy to drive improved outcomes;
 - providing challenge to ensure that the Council's duties as Corporate Parent are carried out effectively and consistently.
- 3.3 Membership includes the lead member for children, and the Chairman of Community and Children's Services Grand Committee. Over the past year the Sub Committee has considered reports on topics including:
 - safeguarding
 - child sexual exploitation
 - participation of children
 - educational progress of looked after children
 - health of looked after children
 - participation and engagement of looked after children
- 3.4 The Sub Committee formally received the Annual Report of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and the City Corporation's renewed escalation policy for safeguarding concerns.
- 3.5 A development session for members was also held during the year to highlight the City's role and responsibilities as a corporate parent. This took place alongside Member engagement sessions focussed on safeguarding as part of the City's "Notice the Signs" campaign.

4 Corporate Parenting Strategy

- 4.1 During the year the City Corporation developed a new Corporate Parenting Strategy which was approved by the Safeguarding Sub Committee. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the City will fulfil its commitment and ensure that children and young people have the support, care and encouragement to reach their full potential.
- 4.2 To achieve this, and deliver the City's role and responsibilities as a corporate parent the strategy sets out a number of actions and commitments grouped under the following headings:
- healthy and safe
 - learning, achieving and enjoying
 - listening and contributing
 - independence and working
 - individual and community.
- 4.3 Within the Strategy the City has developed a "Pledge" for its looked after children, young people and care leavers. The Pledge is the City's promise to provide the care and help that children and young people in its care have told the City they want. It also includes the commitments the City has already made in signing up to the Government's "charter for care leavers".
- 4.4 The Pledge to looked after children and care leavers was developed through consultation with children and young people and agreed at the first meeting of the City's Children in Care Council (see Engagement below). It sets out a number of promises that children and young people have identified which, if delivered, would make the City a good parent and carer.
- 4.5 Our Children in Care Council also developed a young person friendly version of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, which together with the Pledge, will help the children and young people in our care hold the City to account for the commitments it has made to them.
- 4.6 Once approved, the Corporate Parenting Strategy was presented to the Community and Children's Services Grand Committee. It has subsequently been presented to the full Court of Common Council in order to highlight both the responsibility of Members as corporate parents and the importance of this role. The strategy was also presented by the Director of Community and Children's Services to the City Corporation's Chief Officer Group, which identified two Chief Officers to act as champions for our looked after children.

5 Health and wellbeing

- 5.1 As corporate parents the City takes responsibility for assessing and promoting good physical and mental health among the children and young people in our care. This is achieved through annual assessments of health and dental health, and by ensuring children and young people are fully immunised. We have also changed the delivery of mental health services for this group, to better meet their needs, and we support

children to be happy and thrive. The City's performance in achieving health and dental assessments and immunisations exceeds national performance. Our children's emotional wellbeing is better than that measured nationally among other looked after children.

- 5.2 During 2014/15 all looked after children had a health assessment performed by a paediatrician. The latest reported national figures show that only 88 per cent of children were looked after for at least 12 months had had an annual health assessment.
- 5.3 Health reviews were also undertaken by the designated nurse for looked after children, who visits children and young people in their placements. All children looked after by the City for at least twelve months had been fully immunised, compared to 87 per cent of looked after children nationally. Of those who came into, and have remained in care during the year, one has received an immunisation booster package for UASC, and two remained outstanding at the year end.
- 5.4 Annual dental checks were conducted during the year for all those who were in care at the start of the year, compared to nationally reported performance of 84 per cent. Of those entering care, one was temporary and did not have a dental check-up during the period in care, two have had a dental check, and one remained outstanding at the year end.
- 5.5 The City's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) supports children and young people in our care. Our looked after children were all placed out of borough in 2014/15, but the CAMHS service specification was amended during the year so that it is now commissioned to provide support to our looked after children in their placement (wherever they are placed). Under this service all looked after children and care leavers receive a CAMHS assessment. These are undertaken in their placement and include the mental state of the child or young person. All relationships are also assessed. Assessments include diagnosis of common conditions such as ADHD, and Autistic Spectrum Conditions can be screened for and diagnosed if appropriate. Support is also given to foster parents and carers for crisis management on a case by case basis, as is teaching and training to foster parents and carers.
- 5.6 Seven of our looked after children were referred for CAMHS assessments during the year. Following assessment, two cases required no further intervention or support for mental health issues, one child was referred for support from local CAMHS services in their home area, and the remaining four received on-going therapeutic and medical support.
- 5.7 No looked after child, young person or care leaver was identified as having a substance misuse issue, and there were no conceptions.
- 5.8 Five of our children aged 4–16, who had been in care continuously for a year or more, completed "strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) during 2014/15 to assess their emotional wellbeing. A higher SDQ score indicates more emotional difficulties with a score of 0-13 range considered normal. The average SDQ score for City looked after children was 4.8 and all children fell into the normal range. This compares to a national picture where the average score is 13.9 and only just over half of looked after children fall into the normal range.

6 Safeguarding our children

- 6.1 The City Corporation is committed to keeping children and young people safe. During 2014/15 the City rolled out its “Notice the Signs” safeguarding campaign. This thought provoking and conversation-led approach sought to raise awareness of the signs of abuse and neglect of children and adults. The campaign, sponsored by the Town Clerk, engaged staff, Members and residents to make them aware of what we mean by abuse, who can be an abuser, where abuse can take place, and what anyone in the organisation can do in response to their concerns.
- 6.2 All our looked after children are allocated a fully qualified social worker.
- 6.3 During the year no allegations were made by children in our care of neglect or abuse by their carers or others, and consequently no referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer from or in relation to this group. The City has received no complaints from the children or young people in its care or its care leavers. None of the children we look after have had engagement with the police or criminal justice system during 2014/15
- 6.4 Over the period two looked after children went missing from their foster placements. One of these young people has frequent missing episodes. The Children and Families team has worked with the police, carers and the independent reviewing service to provide support and take actions to prevent or minimise further missing episodes.
- 6.5 Children who go missing can be at risk of serious harm. There are particular concerns about the vulnerability of missing or runaway children to sexual exploitation or other exploitative harm such as violence crime, gang exploitation or drug and alcohol misuse. Looked after children who go missing from placements are at particular risk and vulnerable to sexual and other exploitation. Therefore the children in the City’s care who went missing were considered vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and were reviewed by the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation group. This resulted in vulnerability factors being addressed in case planning and multi agency meetings.
- 6.6 CSE has been introduced as an important issue within the strategies that support the operation of Children’s and Families as they have been revised. Each renewed strategy is presented and approved by the Safeguarding Sub Committee to ensure Member awareness and support. This focus is evident in the renewed Thresholds document, and the renewed Corporate Parenting Strategy which commits to:
- provide specific training for staff to identify the risk and/or experience of child sexual exploitation that may be experienced by unaccompanied asylum seeking minors
 - ensure our foster carers are able to identify the risks of child sexual exploitation and can support online safety that includes the risks specific to children looked after
 - establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for looked after children.

- 6.7 The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board published the *City and Hackney CSE Strategy* in February 2015, and subsequently a specific *City of London CSE Operating Protocol* was developed and is being implemented.

7 Education and employment

- 7.1 The City is committed to, and ambitious for, the educational progress and attainment of children in its care. This ambition is driven by our Virtual School Head who during the years has reviewed the Personal Education Plans (PEP) of all our looked after children and attended the majority of PEP meetings. These meetings set PEP targets that are clearly focused on improving academic outcomes and measure progress. Sharp focus is given to the expected end of Key Stage outcomes. PEPs are now subject to close scrutiny by the Targeted Educational Resource Panel (TERP) to quality assure and drive up standards around the PEPs for our looked after children and care leavers. Social workers have received training during the year to support the completion and effectiveness of PEPs.
- 7.2 Six of our looked after children are school based, of whom half are pupils of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Two pupils are exceeding the national curriculum levels of attainment in end of Key Stage tests, and expected to exceed these levels in the next assessments. One ESOL pupil, is working to improve the current assessed levels and grades and is already expected to attain at least the nationally expected number of GCSE grades A*-C including English and mathematics. One other pupil who was subject to Key Stage tests did not achieve the expected national curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy, but is making significant improvements.
- 7.3 Attendance for all of the school based pupils was well above 90 per cent. One pupil was internally excluded for one day within school and one pupil was externally excluded from school for one day. School mentoring support has been provided in both instances and both pupils are keen that such incidents do not recur.
- 7.4 Pupil premium expenditure in the schools is being monitored by the virtual school head to ensure that the funding is specifically spent to improve academic outcomes and targets identified by PEPs. Specific areas that are supported by the grant in the schools include additional one to one support in literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching, additional science and mathematics tuition on a one to one basis or in small groups, learning support assistance across the curriculum, and mentoring is provided to support specific behavioural needs that arise.
- 7.5 Four looked after young people attend college based provision. Two young people are currently without college places having been permanently excluded from their placements. Both students were making good educational progress and social workers are working closely with the careers service to secure new college places.
- 7.6 The City also has high aspirations for the achievement of its care leavers. There is comprehensive support to minimise the risk of care leavers being not in employment, education or training (NEET). Educational participation among care leavers is excellent. The Virtual School Head co-ordinates a multi-agency meeting to review the progress of Care Leavers up to the age of 25 and supports social workers to review the educational/training part of the Pathway Plan. Support is also given to plan work

experience placements to develop skills for the work place. The multi-agency group agrees bespoke work packages for, and with, each young person, particularly those at risk of being NEET.

- 7.7 Eleven of 13 care leavers are attending college or university. Three care leavers are following career based courses in cookery, vehicle repair and maintenance and accountancy. One care leaver is in full time employment, and one was NEET at the end of the year.
- 7.8 Those at university (two) benefit from higher education bursaries and the City fund their accommodation and in one case have kept open their fostering placements for holiday periods. Our university students attend Portsmouth and Hertfordshire universities.
- 7.9 The planned establishment (both in 215/16) of a Virtual School Attainment Group, and the Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training Strategy, will further enhance our support to children and young people to ensure they achieve the best educational outcomes they can.

8 Assessments, case planning and permanency planning

- 8.1 The implementation of a Quality Assurance Framework in August 2014 has ensured the review and scrutiny of assessments, care planning and permanency planning for the children in our care.
- 8.2 Scrutiny of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service during the year has prompted a change in the delivery of this role, which will be brought in house in 2015/16.
- 8.3 A permanency policy and Panel has been developed to strengthen process, practice and oversight of permanency planning. This ensures that our children in care continue to be subject of Permanency Panel review on a quarterly basis until they are in a permanent placement, and six monthly once they are in placement to ensure that the permanency plan is working.

9 Accommodation

- 9.1 Stable and caring home environments help children in care. All the children the City Corporation looks after benefit from living with foster carers rather than residential children's homes. Foster placements are carefully commissioned on an individual basis in order to meet the needs of children and young people and we systematically monitor these arrangements to ensure they provide stable placements that meet the physical, emotional and social needs of children. Where it is appropriate to do so, siblings that are looked after (as was the case in 2014/15) are placed together.
- 9.2 Children are only placed with independent fostering agencies that are judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. Placement stability is excellent – with four out of five children whose care has been long-term, having been in their current placement for more than two years, which is a better performance than our statistical neighbours. There were no placement moves during 2014/15.

- 9.3 Care leavers are supported in a range of accommodation suitable to their needs. One hundred per cent of City of London care leavers are in suitable accommodation – a performance which is above the national and statistical neighbour averages of 88 per cent and 77 per cent respectively.
- 9.4 The City already supports young people to remain in foster care arrangements post 18 years - prior to new Government's guidelines. This reflects our commitment as a corporate parent to deliver for the young people that we look after the security and outcomes we would want for our own children. The "staying put" arrangements were formalised into a policy during the year. Three of our care leavers were staying at the outset of the year, one of which moved on into their own independent accommodation during 2014/15. Six other care leavers were living in independent homes of their own with the rest sustaining either semi-independent or university accommodation.
- 9.5 Young people are supported in independent accommodation through a joint protocol between housing and the Children and Families team which ensures clarity about roles and responsibilities. Young people have also benefited from increased tenancy sustainment provision during the year.

10 Engagement and participation

- 10.1 During 2014/15 the City developed a Children in Care Council (CiCC), which met for the first time in November 2014. The role and focus of the CiCC was decided by young people through a residential trip in the summer of 2014 for the City's children in care and care leavers. Three further meetings of the CiCC occurred in 2014/15 during which young people discussed, agreed and signed off their terms of reference, as well as writing the Pledge, agreeing the City's Corporate parenting strategy and a producing a young people's version of that strategy.
- 10.2 Participation has meant more than meetings. CiCC members have joined in a number of activities to get to know each other, form as a group and have fun together. These have included a pizza making session and bowling. Young people also attended a celebration lunch at the end of March 2015 with elected members of the safeguarding sub-committee, during which a speed 'get to know you' session ensures that every member of the CiCC got to meet and engage with the elected members present.
- 10.3 Our social workers have formed trusting relationships with the children we look after through regular contact. This has helped ensure children and young people have the confidence to share their views, and that these views can inform the planning of their care.
- 10.4 Through the year, social workers have supported our children and young people to meet their social and recreational needs. We encourage and support sporting, musical and other recreational pursuits. The City has used personal education awards to fund school skiing holidays and music lessons. Two children in care have been supported to pursue their interest in cricket by joining local teams, with the City funding their equipment. Young people have also been supported to attend cultural and religious groups to help build their sense of community and relationships with others.

11 Areas of development and priorities for the year ahead

11.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out the City Corporation's commitment to ensuring the children in and leaving its care meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. We will continue to drive the achievement of this in 2015/16 through continuing and enhanced services, and the delivery of targeted actions. These included:

- delivering a Care Leaver Education, Employment and Training Strategy to achieve 100 per cent participation in EET
- maximising participation of young people in service planning and delivery through individual review meetings, the CiCC and other initiatives
- delivering a new in-house IRO service to support and ensure the representation of the views of looked after children
- implementing the new Missing from Care, Home and Education procedures and practice guidance to minimise the risk and incidence of missing episodes
- work with the CiCC to develop a "coming into care" pack
- develop a "health passport" for our care leavers as a record of their health care
- ensure that our staff and partners remain trained to meet the health needs of children looked after, including sexual health, mental and emotional health, child sexual exploitation and substance misuse issues
- provide specific training for staff to identify the risk and/or experience of child sexual exploitation that may be experienced by unaccompanied asylum seeking minors
- establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for looked after children
- develop a Looked After Children and Care Leavers Service Improvement Group to provide co-ordinate and seamless services that deliver clear and measurable outcomes for children
- safeguard our children and young people from radicalisation and ensure staff and partners can identify and respond to such risks through the implementation of the Prevent Strategy
- completing "life story" work for all out looked after children.

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Community & Children's Services Safeguarding Sub Committee	09.10.2015 25.09.2015
Subject: Private Fostering Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report will inform Members about Private Fostering arrangement and the duties that are placed on partner agencies and parents and carers in notifying the local authority of any such arrangement or proposed arrangements. This report will explain the Local Authorities function in safeguarding children and young people when they have been Privately Fostered, by assessing the arrangements that have been put in place.

Member will be informed of how the City of London is meeting National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness around this agenda with professionals and City of London residents. This is being achieved through briefing sessions at multi-agency events, specific training and through established events for residents and City of London staff.

Recommendation

Members are asked to: Note the report

Main Report

Background

Definition of Private Fostering Arrangements

1. A Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of the local authority), for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt, or they may be a friend of the family or other non-relative, such as the parents of the child's friend. A person who is a close relative of the child, as defined by the Children Act 1989 (a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether by full or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent) will not be a private foster carer.
2. Examples of private fostering arrangements are:
 - Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their English or for educational opportunities;
 - Asylum seeking and refugee children;
 - Teenagers who, having broken ties with their parents, are staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non-relatives;
 - Children living with host families, arranged by language schools or other organisations;
 - Children living with members of the extended family, e.g. great aunt.
3. The primary responsibility of the local authority is to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and young people by:
 - Meeting the duty to promote public awareness of the requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements and, therefore, to reduce the number of 'unknown' private fostering arrangements;
 - Responding to notifications and assessing the private fostering arrangements; and meeting the duty to support private fostering arrangements.
4. This responsibility is underpinned by the Replacement Children Act 1989 Guidance Private Fostering; Children Act 2004 (Section 44 amends Section 67 in the 1989 Act); the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005.

Current Position

5. Over the last 12 months there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City; it is highly unlikely given the demographics of the City that this is a true reflection of the situation. The City of London is ensuring that it is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering, and this is an area that has been identified by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board (CHSCB) as being a priority for 2015/2016.
6. In May 2015 the CHSCB sent out a letter on behalf of Jim Gamble, the Independent Chair of the CHSCB, explaining to all partners the expectation placed on them to raise awareness and identify any private fostering arrangements in the City of London. This letter was accompanied by leaflets for professionals, parents/ carers and young people explaining what constitutes a private fostering arrangement and what was required should a private fostering situation be in place. The City of London has also instituted a rolling programme of awareness raising events for 2015/2016 to raise the profile of private fostering, which consists of;
 - Partnership events, where briefings are being given to partner agencies as part of a wider conference event.
 - Articles about private fostering in publications of magazines which will be going out to residents across the City of London.
 - Raising awareness with the police, schools, early years settings and general practitioners in the City through the distribution of posters and leaflets.
 - Training events for City of London Corporation staff and partner agencies which specifically focuses on private fostering. Two such events have already occurred and further events are planned for the City for 2015/2016.
 - Utilising partnership events to distribute leaflets to professionals and residents in the City.
7. Any contacts or referrals about private fostering would be directed to the Children and Families team and information on private fostering is captured as part of the performance data set.

Conclusion

8. As this report has identified there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for the period of April 2014/March 2015. There have been continued efforts to raise awareness around private

fostering in the City of London, with professionals and residents throughout this time period. This has been achieved through established events such as Health Watch information sessions and the “Notice the Signs” campaign.

9. The focus for 2015/2016 is to create a sustainable programme of events that will keep private fostering on professionals and resident’s agenda and support the City of London in ensuring it is meeting its responsibility in raising awareness about private fostering arrangements. In achieving this it is envisaged that any private fostering arrangement that is in place in the City will come to the attention of the Children and Families team.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Private Fostering Report

Background Papers

Private Fostering leaflet for Professionals, Parents and Carers and Children and Young People.

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Annual Report Private Fostering Arrangements 2014 to 2015

Context of City of London

The City has a relatively small resident population of approximately 7,600 (including 1,370 people who occupy a second home outside the City of London). There are approximately 4,400 households and large numbers of people of working age. The average household size is small and many people (56%) live alone.

The City has proportionately more people aged between 25 and 69 living in the square mile than Greater London. Conversely there are fewer young people. Approximately 800 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in the City. This is 10.84% of the total population in the area.

The resident population is predominantly white. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian/Bangladeshi and Mixed - Asian and White. The City has a relatively small black population, less than London and England and Wales. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 43.63% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.47% in the country as a whole.

DEFINITION OF PRIVATE FOSTERING

A Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of the local authority), for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private Foster Carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt, or they may be a friend of the family or other non-relative, such as the parents of the child's friend. A person who is a close relative of the child, as defined by the Children Act 1989 (a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether by full or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent) will not be a Private Foster Carer.

Examples of private fostering arrangements are:

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their English or for educational opportunities;
- Asylum seeking and refugee children;

- Teenagers who, having broken ties with their parents, are staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non-relatives;
- Children living with host families, arranged by language schools or other organisations;
- Children living with members of the extended family, e.g. great aunt.

The primary responsibility of the local authority is to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and young people by:

- Meeting the duty to promote public awareness of the requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements and, therefore, to reduce the number of 'unknown' private fostering arrangements;
- Responding to notifications and assessing the private fostering arrangements;
- Arrangements; and meeting the duty to support private fostering arrangements.

This responsibility is underpinned by the Replacement Children Act 1989 Guidance Private Fostering; Children Act 2004 (Section 44 amends Section 67 in the 1989 Act); the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005.

Meeting National Minimum Standards on Private Fostering,

Standard 1: The local authority has a written statement or plan, which sets out its duties and functions in relation to private fostering and the way in which they will be carried out.

The City of London's 'statement' on private fostering was reviewed and updated in 2014. A communications plan has been developed for 2015 to 2016 to ensure there is a sustained campaign to raise awareness about private fostering with professionals and potential carers.

Standard 2: The local authority: promotes awareness of the notification requirements and ensures that those professionals who may come into contact with privately fostered children understand their role in notification; Responds effectively to notifications; and deals with situations where an arrangement comes to their attention, which has not been notified.

The City has promoted private fostering with professionals through the distribution of leaflets and posters. Fig 1 shows the activity that has taken place in raising awareness about private fostering with City of London staff and residents and how this has been linked into established activities.

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board Independent Chair, Jim Gamble has also sent out an annual survey to all the Independent Schools to establish whether any of the pupils at the School are being privately fostered.

Fig 1

Event	Date	Resident or Professionals
City Library	18.08.14	Staff
Barbican Library	18.08.14	Staff
EIP Partnership Day	25.09.14	Staff
Health Watch, Artizan Library	15.10.14	Residents
Resident Celebration Day	18.10.14	Residents
Health Watch, Green Box	25.10.14	Residents
L&D Week Barbican	28.10.14	Staff
Health Watch, Dutch Church	29.10.14	Residents

Private fostering data is reviewed through the Quality Assurance Sub Group. To date there have been no notifications of any private fostering arrangements in the City of London as from April 2014 to March 2015. However, there are procedures in place to take referrals and staff in the Contact Centre have received training on private fostering. The CHSCB has identified that private fostering is a key priority for 2015 to 2016.

Standard 3: The local authority determines effectively the suitability of all aspects of the private fostering arrangement in accordance with the regulations.

The City has not received a referral for 2014 to 2015; however there are procedures in place for staff in regard to assessing the placement and ascertaining the young person's views. All assessments would include and cover the expectations within the National Minimum Standards:

- The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child about the proposed/actual private fostering arrangement.
- That the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development is appropriate and satisfactory.
- The child's needs arising from his religious persuasion; racial origin and cultural and linguistic background are being met.
- That consideration has been given and necessary steps taken to make arrangements for the child's education.
- The standard of care provided for each privately fostered child.

- The project ensures that all children and young people who are registered with the GP and all children and young people are registered with a dentist.

Where age appropriate the children would be seen alone by their Social Worker and their views obtained. Where children are considered to be at risk or in need of intervention those cases are considered in line with S17 and S47 Children Act 1989.

DBS checks would be completed on all carers.

As part of our assessment process and on-going case work the Children and Families Team will ensure that children are actively encouraged and involved in leisure activities, and that they receive appropriate stimulation in the Private Fostering arrangement. The allocated social worker will research age appropriate activities and inform the carers.

Standard 4: The local authority provides such advice and support to private foster carers and prospective private foster carers as appears to the authority to be needed:

The Children and Families Team social worker would assist and advise all private foster carers with general parenting skills, and provide advice on an on-going basis in regard to local resources and activities. There would also be assistance with practical issues for carers around benefits, housing and immigration status if required. The City would ensure that all carers had support in accessing education and health provision for the child or young person.

Standard 5: The local authority provides advice and support to the parents of children who are privately fostered within their area as appears to the authority to be needed:

Where possible all parents would be seen and spoken to during the course of establishing the arrangements (if living abroad contact would be made by telephone, if domiciled in the UK then the expectation is that a visit would take place).

A leaflet designed for parents and carers of children who are privately fostering would be provided and where possible this would be given to all parents.

Contact details of the allocated social worker would also be provided to all parents where possible.

Standard 6 Children who are privately fostered are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Privately fostered children are enabled to participate in decisions about their lives:

The allocated social worker would consult with all children and young people individually about their views and ensure that their private foster carers understood their needs and wishes. Children and young people's views and wishes would be incorporated into the assessment report.

As part of the on-going involvement the social worker would be expected to make termly contact with the education provision to discuss the child/ young person's progress.

If required the social worker would undertake direct work with the child or young person in the community.

Children who are subject to private fostering arrangements would be given information about what they should expect if they are being privately fostered, where age appropriate. Children and young people who are privately fostered in City of London will also have access to the advocacy service.

Contact details for the social worker will be provided to all children where appropriate and to all parents (who are in contact with the service).

Standard 7 The local authority has in place and implements effectively a system for monitoring the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering. It improves practice where this is indicated as necessary by the monitoring system:

All information pertaining to children and young people is placed onto Frameworki, the integrated children's system used by the Children and Families Team. There are no paper files and the information stored on this system can be utilised for performance reports and National Indicator returns for the Department of Education, PF1. This includes age of the child, place of birth, ethnicity, first language and any disability.

As part of the Quality Assurance Framework any private fostering arrangements would be subject to an auditing process and the qualitative and quantitative information obtained would be reported into the CHSCB quality assurance sub group. It is through this group that concerns have been raised around about the lack of referrals in the City and the low number of referrals in Hackney. A priority for the CHSCB for 2015 to 2016 will be to promote awareness around notification of Private Fostering for professionals, carers and young people.

Summary

Over the last 12 months there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City; it is highly unlikely given the demographics of the City that this is a true reflection of the situation. This has been identified by the CHSCB as being a priority for 2015 to 2016 and there will be concerted effort to raise awareness with professionals and residents in the City around their responsibility in notifying the local authority of private fostering arrangements.

Future plans

1. A key priority for 2015 to 2016 will be to strength links with Community Health, Hospital's, Independent Schools and Secondary Schools where City young people go or are placed when they leave Primary School. This will be achieved through establishing links close links with these agencies, to ensure that young people are tracked through schools and health establishments.
2. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board will be sending out leaflets and posters to all professionals outlining their expectation around professionals knowing their responsibility around notification. This is due to take place in City and Hackney in April 2015.
3. The City of London will develop the communication plan for Private Fostering for 2015 to 2016, establishing a rolling plan for notifying professionals and City of London residents about their responsibility in notifying the local authority about private fostering arrangements. This will be done by May 2015.
4. The City of London provides training for staff on Private Fostering, additional to the training provided by the CHSCB.
5. Provide an annual private fostering report to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Director of Children's Services.

Pat Dixon
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager
City of London

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