

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Friday, 8 July 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee held at VIRTUAL MEETING – ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY on Friday, 8 July 2022 at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Marianne Fredericks (Chairman)
Timothy James McNally (Deputy Chairman)
Jamel Banda
Mary Durcan
Helen Fentimen
Deputy John Fletcher
Florence Keelson-Anfu
Deputy Susan Pearson

Officers:

Paul Murtagh -
Liam Gillespie -
Jason Hayes - Head of Major Projects

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Henrika Priest and from Ruby Sayed.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 be approved as a correct record.

On item 10.1, the meeting heard that a report was to be submitted to the Community & Children's Services Committee during July 2022.

On item 13, a Member noted that there were still issues on Golden Lane with obtaining refunds and asked how many rebates were being processed. The meeting heard that 339 claims (including about 100 former tenants) had been raised of the current 1900 tenants, of which 290 had been raised for payment so far. A Member suggested that there was merit in re-contacting tenants, and the meeting heard that a further communications would be forwarded to eligible tenants.

A Member asked whether a breakdown by estate could be provided, and the meeting heard that estate representatives would act on those figures and continue communicating with eligible tenants (see outstanding actions).

On item 15, the meeting heard that it was important to work to a timeline in order to avoid missing any funding opportunities.

A Member asked for an updated on CILNF funding, and the meeting heard that those funding opportunities were being pursued alongside other funding opportunities.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received the report of the Clerk.

'Member estate visits' – the meeting heard that visits were scheduled for 11 July 2022, and that further visits would be organised.

'Great Arthur House – cladding works' – the meeting heard that a detailed report, including background information, on the issue was to be submitted to the Community & Children's Services Committee at the end of July 2022. That would include recommendations for future action to avoid such a situation arising again.

'Vehicle charging points at Middlesex Street and Golden Lane' – a report on this is expected in October 2022 to include infrastructure considerations. A Member commented that it was important to ensure that charging points were not located at sites that were likely to change their purpose. A Member commented that

'Portsoken Community Centre' – the WiFi issue has been resolved

'Installation of Ring doorbells' – a report is expected in October 2022.

5. **HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

A Member asked whether sprinklers should be included in the report and whether there was a study on the effectiveness of sprinklers, and the meeting heard that sprinkler information would be included in future, and that a Gateway report was expecting to be submitted during 2022. The meeting heard that a Q&A 'mythbusting' information sheet had been circulated on sprinklers, noting that they were important safety devices and that a sprinkler project manager had been appointed.

A Member asked whether advance orders had been placed in view of the probably cost increase in doors, as discussed in earlier meetings. The meeting heard that only two blocks were outstanding as far as surveys were concerned, and that advance orders would be placed once the final figures had been received.

Customer satisfaction surveys on doors had revealed that the satisfaction rate was 99.6% rate (with a 69% response rate).

On future programmes, a Member asked whether the Committee might be given the chance to debate the priority areas. The meeting heard that guidance would be provided on what is statutory in order to inform further debate.

6. UPDATE ON HOUSING SERVICE PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES

The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services.

A Member asked for greater detail on project start dates and timescales together with a named responsible person, and the meeting heard that such information would be included in future.

On sections 17 and 18 of the report, a Member commented that the door system was not automatic on the Portsoken estate (the lock-release system only released the lock and did not actually open the door), thereby trapping those with accessibility issues and discriminating against such people (as well as those with young children, for example), and commented that a plan was needed to remedy the situation together with timescales. The meeting heard that a detailed response would be submitted to the Committee that covered all the estates based on security audits (see action point).

A Member asked why action was not being taken immediately, and the meeting heard that security audit recommendations would be considered and prioritised in line with the resources available and the requirements that were statutory once information on all estates was available.

7. PORTSOKEN COMMUNITY CENTRE - HEALTHWATCH REFUND - VERBAL UPDATE

The meeting heard a verbal update on the Healthwatch refund for Portsoken Community Centre.

A Member asked whether the update fell within the Committee's remit. The meeting heard that the update was in response to a question asked at the Committee.

The meeting heard that a response was awaited from Healthwatch.

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

A Member asked whether residents at the Middlesex St estate had been informed that the estate would be managed by temporary agency staff, and

sought further details on the arrangement bearing in mind the sense of dislocation at that estate.

The meeting heard that the five estate supervisors across the estates were all recruited on a permanent basis and that a permanent estate supervisor would start in late July to replace the current interim one at Middlesex St. The meeting also heard that only three of the five planned resident services officers had been recruited due to recruitment difficulties in, and that a further two permanent staff were to be recruited with revamped job descriptions by October 2022. Estate-specific training was provided, and contact details for estate supervisors had been circulated.

A Member commented that the training should include customer service training, and the meeting heard that training needs in that area was expecting to be refreshed.

A Member commented that a small ball games area existed on the Golden Lane estate that appeared to not be managed appropriately, and queried whether a policy existed around the timings during which play areas could be used, whether the CoLPAI MUGA was accessible only to tower block residents, and whether railings were secure taking into account safety and suicide risks.

A Member asked whether housing was considered at CoL suicide prevention risks, and the meeting heard that all tall buildings were taken into account.

The meeting heard that timings and management for the play area would be confirmed, and signage opportunities would be clarified and that the terms of a local lettings plan in respect of people transferring to CoLPAI would be confirmed, which was responsible for the MUGA, whose management plan was expected to be submitted during July 2022. It was expected that the MUGA would not be accessible to non-tower block residents, and that decision was down to the school. The meeting noted that the issue was likely be raised at a CCS meeting. The meeting heard that railings complied with all applicable regulations and that further information would be provided to the Committee.

A Member asked what elements of those issues related to London Borough of Islington, and the meeting heard that LBI and CoL had 50% of nominations for estates, with LBI having larger flats.

A Member asked whether all options had been explored for giving all residents support during the winter period in view of insulation issues and energy prices. The meeting heard that the matter had already been raised at Grand Committee level and would be discussed further.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds

that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the meeting of 26 May 2022.

12. WINDSOR HOUSE WINDOW REPLACEMENT AND COMMON PARTS REDECORATIONS

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

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

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

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

Chairman

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