

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 26 November 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 26 November 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Steve Goodman OBE (Chairman)
Deputy Ceri Wilkins (Deputy Chair)
Leyla Boulton
Deputy Anne Corbett
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Deputy John Fletcher
Sarah Gillinson
Sandra Jenner
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP
Philip Woodhouse

Observing Virtually

Mark Wheatley

Officers:

Peta Caine	- Community & Children's Services Department
Paul Barton	- Community & Children's Services Department
Sam Bedford	- Community & Children's Services Department
Helen Chantry	- Community & Children's Services Department
Lianne Coopey	- Community & Children's Services Department
Anna Donoghue	- Community & Children's Services Department
Rachel Evans	- Community & Children's Services Department
Wendy Giaccaglia	- Community & Children's Services Department
Sadhari Perera	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Gregory Wade	- Community & Children's Services Department
Judith Dignum	- Town Clerk's Department
Kelila Perry	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy James Thomson.

Mark Wheatley observed the meeting virtually.

Members were advised that the Regulator of Social Housing was observing the meeting as part of their inspection.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

With sincere apologies from the Town Clerk, the Chairman advised the Sub Committee that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 21st October 2025 had not been finalised and would be deferred to the next meeting.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTION TRACKER

The Sub Committee received the outstanding action tracker.

The Chairman advised Members that officers would update timeframes.

RESOLVED – That, the action tracker be noted.

5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY UPDATE AND SPOTLIGHT ITEM

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the landlord's responsibilities using a victim centred approach, reflecting ASB Statutory Changes from the 2025 Police Bill and considering the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing Community and Safety Standard.

Officers also gave a presentation about ASB on Avondale Estate, including data and information about engagement and ongoing actions to address ASB.

In response to Member's questions about ASB:

- Officers advised that staff last underwent ASB training in April 2024 and the next training is planned for April 2026.
- Officers acknowledged a point raised by a Member that DIY noise is a particular concern, and they would investigate this issue with contractors.
- In response to a question how ASB is determined given that residents may have different thresholds of tolerance, officers noted that when resident's report ASB, it is often an issue that has escalated over time. Officers hope that the ASB campaign planned for early 2026 encourages residents to report incidents earlier so they can be managed at a lower level. A key message for residents is that they can report ASB anonymously.

In response to Member's questions about ASB on the Avondale Estate:

- Officers noted the mural project has been well-received by residents, and residents have asked for an anti-graffiti cover to protect the mural. Officers would circulate photos of the mural to the Sub Committee.
- Officers are happy to take suggestions on a south London football club that could be involved in the planned youth engagement work.
- Officers noted there were challenges working with the Metropolitan Police, for example when requesting data, however they were working

on improving the relationship. Officers would also be working with Community Safety and Safer Neighbourhood teams in Southwark Council to manage ASB on the estate.

- Officers advised that short-term funding would focus on managing areas that are hot spots for stashing drugs and weapons.

Members requested to see the full ASB policy and to be provided data about ASB on other estates to compare and identify trends. Officers agreed to share the full policy when this issue next comes back to the Sub Committee, and to provide data on other estates.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the report and shared responsibilities between Housing Management and Community Safety (Appendix 3 to the report).
- Approve the policy amendments and new insertions covered in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report.

6. **GATEWAY 6 REPORTS - CLOSURE OF LEGACY PROJECTS**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, introducing four Gateway Six reports seeking authority to close four legacy projects as delivered between 2020-2023 by the Housing Major Works Team which remain live on the City's reporting and financial systems.

The Sub Committee agreed to consider items 6a) – 6d) together.

A Member noted it would be helpful to understand the cost the leaseholders. The Chairman confirmed officers would do this moving forward.

RESOLVED – That, Members note the report and authorise approval of the following four Gateway Six reports:

- Balcony Door & Screen Replacements in Petticoat Tower, Middlesex Street Estate
- Fire Door Replacements in Petticoat Tower, Middlesex Street Estate
- Cold Water Distribution System Replacement at Middlesex Street Estate
- Cold Water Distribution System Replacement at York Way Estate

With regard to 6a (Petticoat Tower Balcony Screens):

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the contents of this report,
- Note the lessons learnt,

- Authorise closure of this project.

With regard to 6b (Petticoat Tower Fire Doors)

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the contents of this report,
- Note the lessons learnt,
- Authorise closure of this project.

With regard to 6c (Middlesex Street Estate - Cold Water Distribution System Replacement)

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the contents of this report,
- Agree and authorise closure of this project.

With regard to 6d (York Way Estate - Cold Water Distribution System Replacement)

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the contents of this report,
- Agree and authorise closure of this project.

7. TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES - PERCEPTION MEASURES ACTION PLAN

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services in relation to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM), updating Members on the improvement plan and actions to ensure continued improvement.

Regarding the TSM survey, officers advised Members that the goal response rate is 475 (25% of tenants), meeting the statutory requirement, and they aim to collect 80% of responses online and 20% by telephone. This year's survey had received 321 responses so far, and the deadline would be extended to the end of December 2025. A potential issue affecting response rates is that residents may not answer the researcher's call, so leaflets with the researcher's contact number had been shared so residents would know the why they are being contacted. Posters had also been put up, and gift vouchers are being provided to incentivise engagement.

A Member enquired about what was being done to address challenges regarding staff communication and responsiveness. Officers noted these issues

were raised in the Pennington Choices review of customer services and are addressed in the Annual Plan and the Housing Strategy. Staff are undergoing the Mary Gober programme of customer care training which is used across the sector to give managers and staff the tools to promote and improve customer service. Eighty eight staff were trained last year and an online refresher course has been launched. Officers hope to track resident's experience of customer service through the TSM survey.

There was discussion about response timeframes for fixing damp and mould issues. Officers advised the stock condition survey led to a jump in cases from 8 to approximately 50-60, so contractors were experiencing challenges meeting repairs deadlines. They explained the survey identified cases not reported by residents, however very few were considered 'significant hazards' under Awaab's Law. The Chairman asked for a report on this at the next meeting.

Members asked for more specific information on targets and timelines, noting the importance of clear delivery dates, and whether there were any differences between estates. The Action Plan provides more detailed information and officers agreed to share this at the next meeting. Officers will also share a deep-dive paper on the results, noting that Golden Lane Estate and York Way Estate scored the lowest.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

8. RESIDENT VOICE GROUP UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services updating Members on the progress of the Resident Voice Group.

Officers corrected an error in the report about where members of the group are from, clarifying they are from Southbank Estates, Golden Lane Estate, Isleden House, and Avondale Square Estate.

During discussion, Members sought clarification from officers about purpose of the group. Officers advised the group intends to enable strategic scrutiny across all estates, and the group would be given training to understand how to strategically assess issues all residents are facing. The group does not intend to replace the role of estate-specific residents associations.

The Chairman highlighted the importance of bringing the Sub Committee up to date with the work of the group. A report would be brought to the next Sub Committee meeting about the different ways the Corporation communicates and consults with tenants.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

9. QUARTERLY FIRE SAFETY STATUS REPORT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing a quarterly oversight of status and outcomes of fire safety management in the Corporation's social housing.

In response to questions from Members, officers advised:

- All City of London blocks have up to date fire risk assessments.
- The Resident Services Team and Estate Officers are responsible for advising residents what to do in case of a fire, and communicating fire safety compliance to residents.
- In relation to the stay put policy, Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for residents with vulnerabilities and additional government funding would be provided in 2026 to do more work and training on this. These plans will also be updated as part of the Household survey. Members noted the importance of residents knowing what their responsibilities are.

Officers would provide a written response to questions from Members about:

- What training is given to estate supervisors.
- What contractual relationship is in place with leaseholders regarding their responsibilities in relation to fire.
- How long it will take to get through the backlog of actions.
- What a 'good' state of the fire safety status would look like.

Officers agreed to bring a more detailed report back to the next meeting. This would include information about timescales for completing each priority of actions, as this was currently being reviewed.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

10. HOUSING COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing a comprehensive overview of Housing Complaints data covering Quarters 1 and 2 of the 2025/2026 financial year, progress made by the Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team to date and the team's objectives for the remainder of the year.

Officers advised Members there was incorrect data on page 5 of Appendix 1 and provided revised information.

During discussion, Members commended the improvement in response times and how complaints are responded to. In response to a query about the Quarter 1 complaint that was acknowledged out of timescale, officers explained the complaint was handed over late to the Housing Complaints team. A Member highlighted that many complaints arose from dissatisfaction with contractors, to which officers responded they were sharing feedback and lessons learnt with Chigwell to address contractor issues. Officers also advised Members that they attend meetings with complaints staff from other London councils to share best practice and lessons learnt. The Housing Ombudsman attended one of these meetings recently.

There was a discussion about the disparity between Housing Complaints data and TSM data on how satisfied tenants were with how their complaint was handled. Officers noted TSM data covered a different timeframe (complaints

made in the 12 months prior to September 2024). The Housing Complaints and Customer Feedback Team carried out monthly transactional surveys, which have highlighted longer term issues that officers are following up on. Officers are also working on improving follow ups, meeting weekly with the Repairs Team and keeping complaints open until the resident has verified it can be closed.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

11. RENT CONVERGENCE AND GOVERNMENT RENT SETTLEMENT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services briefing Members on the Government's proposed reintroduction of rent convergence from April 2026, outlining implications for the Corporation's housing stock, and presenting modelling scenarios to inform strategic planning and resident communications. Officers were still awaiting the release of Government guidance.

Officers advised the decision about whether to apply rent convergence and at what rate would go to the Community and Children's Services Committee. Officers would contribute information about this decision to a budget report going to the next meeting of the Community and Children's Services Committee in January 2026.

During discussion, officers clarified the working assumption of £2 per week uplift for properties below formula rent levels would contribute towards the Housing Revenue Account. There were 648 tenants paying below formula rent levels, with the majority living in Southbank Estates, Dron House and York Way Estate. Officers noted some tenants were paying £30-£40 less per week than their neighbours.

Members highlighted the significance of this decision to residents and to the Corporation's finances. They noted that it would be helpful if the future report outlined current rent levels to contextualise increases and suggested the draft questionnaire be reviewed for plain English.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

12. HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services updating Members on the progress that has been made in sustainability housing projects to date and advise on upcoming work.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

13. HOUSING MATTERS UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services updating Members of key issues being dealt with by the Housing Team.

Decent Homes – Current Status and Future Changes

Officers advised Members the revised standards are forecast to come into action between 2035 to 2037, so the Corporation has time to prepare. Officers have used data from the last stock condition survey in 2018, which found 80% of homes were up to standard, responsive repairs data and planned works data is being used to estimate how many homes meet the standard.

Members highlighted the importance of identifying the capital investment and work required to meet the decent homes standard and address the lack of repairs and maintenance to date, particularly in relation to damp and mould. Officers responded there is work being done to estimate the financial impact of repairs and secure funding through the Major Works Programme and the Climate Action Strategy. They are also identifying less funding-intensive work specified by the revised standard. Major Works Programme funding will be considered at the next Court of Common Council meeting.

Tenant Handbook Update

A Member asked if the handbook would include information about fire safety. Officers responded that it would cover health and safety, which includes information about flammable obstructions, and would refer to the stay put policy. However, there will be separate fire strategies for high-risk buildings, sheltered homes and almshouses, which the handbook will refer to.

Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Update

Officers advised Members that the Regulator of Social Housing would observe the next Resident Voice Group meeting.

Performance Dashboard – April – September 2025

Officers advised Members the most recent Electrical Safety testing update in November 2025 showed completion rates were up to 86% against the target of 100%.

Housing Key Risk Matrix – October 2025

Officers noted the Major Works programme is the highest risk. Members requested a report be brought to the next meeting detailing what work was being done to build up the programme. The programme would be considered by the Court of Common Council, and members noted the importance of commencing resident involvement and consultation as soon as funding is secured.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

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

There were no public questions.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no public urgent items of business.

16. 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.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

With sincere apologies from the Town Clerk, the Chairman advised the Sub Committee that the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 21st October 2025 had not been finalised and would be deferred to the next meeting.

18. 36 PROCTOR HOUSE, AVONDALE SQUARE ESTATE, SE1 5EZ

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services regarding 36 Proctor House, Avondale Square Estate, SE1 5EZ.

19. ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services regarding the Accessibility Programme – Progress Report.

20. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE

There were no non-public questions.

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

There were no non-public urgent items of business.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm

Chairman

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