

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

Thursday, 22 November 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the HOUSING MANAGEMENT SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE held at Guildhall, EC2 on Thursday, 22 November 2012 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Billy Dove (Chairman)
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Alderman David Graves
Peter Leck
Anthony Llewelyn-Davies
Angela Starling

Officers:

Caroline Webb	- Town Clerk's Department
Eddie Stevens	- Community and Children's Services
Jacquie Campbell	- Community and Children's Services
Carla Keegans	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Kettle	- Community and Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy Reverend Stephen Haines, Deputy Henry Jones and Gareth Moore.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 20 September 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2013/14

The Sub Committee considered a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services in relation to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Budgets 2013/14.

RESOLVED: That:

- i. the provisional 2013/14 revenue budget be agreed and submitted to the Finance Committee;
- ii. the draft capital budget be reviewed and approved; and

- iii. the Chamberlain be authorised to review the budgets to allow for further implications arising from departmental reorganisations and other reviews and implications arising from Carbon Trading Allowances.

5. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services outlining the first HRA business report which provided an overview of the key business performance as linked to the HRA Business Plan, which was approved by Members in March 2012.

Members discussed the Right to Buy scheme and raised concern that the scheme did not work in agreement with the City of London Housing Policy. Although no social housing properties had been sold through the Right to Buy, applications were at their highest level for several years and the Corporation had a legal obligation to inform tenants of the scheme. Members were informed that several London Boroughs had responded to the Secretary of State outlining their concerns.

RESOLVED: That a further report to include information on the restraints of the Right to Buy scheme, the implications and challenges this would have on City of London properties and to what degree, the restrictions on the properties that the Corporation could sell and the policy on how any money received from selling properties would be allocated and spent be submitted to the Community and Children's Services Committee.

6. **WELFARE REFORM**

The Sub Committee received a presentation from the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Welfare Reform highlighting the national context for the reforms, an overview of how it would affect the City and its residents and the implications and detailed impacts expected.

Debate followed the presentation and a number of points were raised, among which:

- The Disability Living Allowance would end for everyone of working age even if they had an indefinite period award. They would need to apply online for the new Personal Independence Payments (PIPs), raising concerns that not everyone would have access to a computer, the internet or even know that the new forms had to be completed. This increased the risk of higher rent arrears.
- The Benefit Team could administer discretionary Housing Benefit on a temporary basis, for example, if a tenant's situation was expected to change within six months in regards to the Bedroom Cap.
- Tenants were legally allowed to accept a lodger in order to occupy empty or spare rooms with permission from their Landlord. The option may not be suitable if the tenant had mental health problems and there were risks with accepting a lodger for example, if small children resided in the property. There was no legal obligation to carry out safeguarding checks.
- Of the 66 households affected by the Bedroom Cap, approximately ten households were thought to be in receipt of benefits close to £26,000 per

year which would be the total benefit cap from April 2013. Larger households would be more affected.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

9. **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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item Nos.	Exempt Paragraph	Paragraph(s) in Schedule 12A
10 - 12		3
13 - 14		-

Part 2 – Non-Public Agenda

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

11. **OUTLINE OPTIONS APPRAISAL - AVONDALE SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services outlining the options appraisal for the Avondale Square Redevelopment of the Community Centre.

12. **COMPREHENSIVE LIFT MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in relation to the comprehensive lift maintenance contract.

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

There were no non-public questions.

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

There were no non-public urgent items.

The meeting ended at 2.47 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Caroline Webb
tel. no.: 020 7332 1416
caroline.webb@cityoflondon.gov.uk