

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**
Tuesday, 12 January 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub
(Community and Children's Services) Committee held at VIRTUAL MEETING –
ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY on Tuesday, 12 January 2021 at 1.00 pm

Present

Members:

Mary Durcan (Deputy Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman David Graves
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Peter Bennett
The Revd Stephen Haines
Ruby Sayed

Officers:

Rofikul Islam	- Town Clerk's Department
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
James Gibson	- Chamberlains Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlains Department
Liam Gillespie	- Community and Children's Services
Paul Murtagh	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services
Steve Spooner	- Community and Children's Services
Jacqueline Whitmore	- Community and Children's Services

In attendance:

Martin Wright - Wates Construction

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Fletcher (Chairman) and Jason Pritchard.

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

There was none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the public minutes of the meeting held virtually on meeting
on 30 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

The Chair noted that there are several references to reports being referred to as to be presented to the Committee at a later date, and the Chair asked that for the future, such references should include a date for when the reports will be presented.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Assistant Director, Barbican Estate & Property Services, went through the list and updated the Committee on the action tracker. The Committee agreed to remove the following items from the action tracker, as they have now been completed;

- Tenancy Visits
- Fire Safety
- Housing Policies – Renewal Timetable
- Pets Policy – HRA
- Presentation from Wates Construction
- Estate Inspections Performance

5. PETS POLICY REVIEW

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Pets Policy Review.

A Member noted that the result of the consultation was very diverse with varied opinions. The Member asked if the policy will be applied across all the Estates or if this will be driven by the demands of each Estates. The Head of Housing Management responded that the policy would be applied across the board; the policy was based on the terms of the City Corporation's standard Secure Tenancy Agreement.

Another Member asked that the policy refers to residents having to seek permission, where can the applicants obtain the forms from. The Head of Housing Management responded that small pets such as cats do not require approval, but dogs will require prior written permission. The information on this is provided on the City of London's website and will be advertised in the resident magazine too, which is published twice a year. The Committee was also informed that Members are still welcome to comment on the policy's wording if they think any part is unclear, as this remains a draft document.

Another Member asked if the policy would have room for exemptions such as therapy dogs, which some people may use in a therapeutic way, such as assisting with mental health. The Members were assured by the Head of Housing Management that there is a provision in place to make exceptions on a case by case basis, for example, if the resident can provide supporting documents from their Doctors or a specialist agency. The approval for such exemptions can be granted by an Estate Manager and is not a lengthy process.

It was suggested that for future consultations, officers should look at consequences for owners of unruly dogs and how they might manage dogs' ownership if it were to be allowed.

RESOLVED – That the Committee;

- Approved the reviewed Pets Policy for use by the Housing Division; and
- Members indicated that more detailed consultation is considered necessary when the policy is next reviewed.

6. HOUSING ESTATE PARKING MANAGEMENT REVIEW - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Housing Estate Parking Management Review - Progress Update.

The Committee was informed that the review of this policy came from the need to review the City of London's Parking charges and as part of the decision made by Members to increase concession for disabled drivers by 100%. A consultant was commissioned to explore this further, and the report sets out the findings.

A Member asked if the report could have provided a variation of the charges rather than just a summary. The Member further commented that on the Golden Lane Estate, there is an ongoing piece of work with grants from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) to invest in bike storage and, as such, Officers should ensure that this policy does not hinder the ongoing application, which is being sponsored by the Member.

This was followed by another Member who agreed that the report did not appear to consider all the options and, as such, other alternatives may need to be explored beyond the current scope of this report. Another Member commented that consideration should be given to converting unused parking spaces into open spaces for residents.

The Head of Housing Management commented that Members would have access to the full report once the final version is ready. In terms of alternative use of space, this was beyond the scope of this report. The Department may consider this option for the future and look at recreational spaces for the residents.

The Chair asked if the full report can be circulated with the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the report.

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

Communication Strategy

A Member commented that out of the 550 flats on Golden Lane Estate, a recent communication was sent to just 150 homes as this is the number of email address Officers have access to. The email was the only method used to

communicate in this instance. Can officers develop an action plan to improve this coverage and ensure that all residents are kept up to date.

In light of the COVID-19, it is vital to ensure that the City of London can engage with all its residents, considering these viable options should be explored.

Assistant Director Barbican & Property Services replied that the Department is reviewing its own policy regarding its Communication Strategy. The Committee was informed that each of the e-mail addresses which the Departments hold are various purposes rather than for a generic issue. The Communication Strategy review will allow the Department to explore this further and allow a diverse use of communications with residents across the Estates.

Anti-Social Behaviour on Avondale Square Estate

A Member commented that there seems to be an increase in anti-social behavior within the Estate, with a recent trial patrol service decommissioned. The patrol had added value to Estate and increased the quality of life for the residents.

The Head of Housing Management responded that the Department is aware of the increase of the anti-social behavior. It introduced the patrol service on a trial basis in response to this issue. The pilot scheme was always due to end in late 2020. Steps are being taken to commission a new service to help address the issues on the Estate. This will involve consulting residents. Regrettably, the patrol ended without a replacement service in place, but residents were informed the trial service was time-limited.

Officers apologised for the way the end of the trial contract was communicated with the residents and have assured Members that this will be more clearly communicated in the future.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other 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 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

10. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the public minutes of the meeting held virtually on meeting on 30 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

11.1 Wates Living Space

The Committee received a presentation on the Repairs Service from Officers and the Managing Director of Wates Living Space.

11.2 Post Presentation Discussion

The Committee discussed the information contained in the presentation on the Repairs Service.

11.3 Crescent House/ Cullum Welch House Heating Replacement

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the Crescent House/ Cullum Welch House Heating Replacement Project.

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

There were no non-public questions.

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

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 3.04 pm

Chairman

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