

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 21 October 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 Tuesday, 21 October 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Steve Goodman OBE (Chairman)
Deputy Ceri Wilkins (Deputy Chair)
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Deputy John Fletcher
Leyla Boulton
Deputy Anne Corbett
Sandra Jenner
Deputy James Thomson CBE

Officers:

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
Peta Caine	- Community and Children's Services
Beverley Andrews	- Community and Children's Services
Gregory Wade	- Community and Children's Services
Anna Donoghue	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Gwyther-Jones	- Community and Children's Services
Helen Chantry	- Community and Children's Services
Zoe Gayle	- Community and Children's Services
Paul Barton	- Community and Children's Services
Raymond Ozogolu	- Community and Children's Services
Liane Copey	- Community and Children's Services
Polly Dunn	- Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services
Chris Keesing	- Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Charles Edward Lord. Mark Wheatley and Philip Woodhouse gave apologies, but were observing the meeting virtually.

It was noted that the Social Housing Regulator Inspectors were observing the call.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

It was noted by Members that the references to “Arms Houses” should be amended to “Almshouses”. This was a typographical error.

Also, in relation to Item 16 of the minutes, reference to a refreshed “Housing Strategy” should be amended to “Housing Asset Management Strategy”. This was also agreed.

There were a few items of matters arising which were discussed, these being:

- The deadline for the lease negotiations policy was not in the tracker and should be added;
- With regard to Tenant Satisfaction Measures, there was commitment to an update in the next report, but this (and associated timeline) was not in the tracker;
- With regard to Item 11, officers confirmed that the Transformation Board had been convened urgently ahead of the summer recess and had already met three times. Dates for future meetings had been agreed.
- The cost benefit analysis mentioned under Item 14, Income Recovery Update, had not been included in the tracker.

It was requested that these matters be suitably referenced within the action tracker and an update provided for the next meeting, as appropriate.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the amendments stated, the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 30 July 2025, be approved as a correct record.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTION TRACKER

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

5. RENEWAL OF ROOF COVERINGS AT DRON HOUSE, TOWER HAMLETS

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services concerning a Gateway 6 Project Closure for the renewal of roof coverings at Dron House, Tower Hamlets.

It was requested that, in future, project closure reports include a breakdown of the total cost passed onto leaseholders.

RESOLVED, That Members:

1. Note the content of the report;
2. Note the lessons learnt; and
3. Authorise closure of this project.

6. DRON HOUSE WINDOW REPLACEMENT AND COMMON PARTS REDECORATIONS

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services concerning the Dron House Window Replacement and Common Parts Redecorations Project.

RESOLVED, That Members:

1. Note the content of the report;
2. Note the lessons learnt; and
3. Authorise closure of the project.

7. **HOUSING MATTERS UPDATE**

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning various housing matters. Specifically, for decision, Members were asked to review various housing-related policies. There were several other items for discussion, namely:

- Performance Dashboard (April – August 2025)
- Stock Condition Survey 2025 Update
- Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Update
- Residents with Diverse Needs Support Update
- Compliance Update – 3 October 2025

Policies

With regard to the Damp Policy draft – Members noted that the law had changed and required the housing provider to respond to any notification of mould within 10 days. Whilst this was reflected in the appendix document, it was felt it should be more prominent within the policy itself.

Noting that the Policy would only be as good as its implementation, the Sub-Committee was keen to see some regular reporting that monitored issues of damp and mould. Assurance was also sought, and subsequently provided by officers, that frontline staff had either received the relevant training, or would be in receipt of such training shortly – with regular refreshers.

With the stock condition survey underway, the City Corporation would get a good sense of the current state of properties and would not wait for residents to raise issues. Contractors doing the stock condition survey were briefed to report issues as they progressed. There were no catastrophic issues that had been identified to date.

It was noted that a lack of ventilation was a cause for damp issues. Longer term, the City Corporation were looking to address more systemic issues through the Major Works Programme, working closely with the Climate Action Strategy Group.

Performance Dashboard

Officers asked Members for feedback on the content and presentation on the dashboard, particularly whether there was too much or not enough information captured.

Members were reassured by the performance management taking place in a number of areas. It was felt that they did not necessarily need such a detailed report on each area, but the level of reporting was moving in the right direction. Instead, the Sub-Committee's focus was to be on areas of slippage, points of concern, and highlights of positive action.

It was also requested that there be some noting of income through service charge of leaseholders.

Since August (where the dashboard data ran to) there was positive progress on electrical testing and the stock condition survey. It was confirmed that the stock condition survey was only undertaken for tenants and communal areas, not for leaseholders. It did include balconies of tenants.

There was a brief update on an upcoming inspections, with regulators on site from 4-6th November inclusive. Lots of information had been shared in advance and the City of London Corporation was complying with any requests.

A deep dive on all the variety services provided to residents was underway with more to come, to ensure the services were working together, capturing referrals from start to finish.

Compliance Update

A few areas were highlighted to Members: electrical testing, fire risk assessment and legionella. In terms of actions in response to these: the Major Works Plan had been developed to look at electrical remedial works and was on target to complete ahead of schedule in some places. Safety controls were in place to mitigate risks until then.

The outstanding actions had reduced across all areas, with some completed and many progressed. Officers were confident more would be closed off by the end of the year.

With regard to cold water tanks, compliance was now at 73%. There had been some delays to gaining access where loft hatches were within private homes. Work was progressing positively with residents to gain access.

Assurance was given that the Fire Risk Assessments were being undertaken by a third party organisation and the City Corporation was working with them to ensure that robust quality assurance is in place. The City was reviewing and challenging outcomes as needed. Actions were being reviewed to ensure duplication of effort was avoided.

A question was raised over the obligation to self-refer if compliance levels were not at 100%. The Health & Safety Lead was responsible for advising when that may be necessary and the Executive Director was confident that the right processes for this were in place.

Members were keen to understand the priorities amongst the compliance issues, so they could prioritise appropriately.

RESOLVED, That Members:

- 1) Approve the new policy attached at Appendix 1; and
- 2) Note the content of the performance dashboard at appendix 2; the stock condition survey 2025 update; the Regulator of Social Housing Update with

appendix 3; the update on support given to residents with diverse needs; and the compliance update at appendices 4 and 5.

8. RENEWAL OF FLAT ROOF COVERINGS AT PETTICOAT SQUARE, MIDDLESEX STREET

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning the renewal of flat roof coverings at Petticoat Square, Middlesex Street.

RESOLVED, that Members

- 1) Note the content of the report;
- 2) Note the lessons learnt; and
- 3) Authorise closure of this project.

9. DECENT HOMES CALL-BACKS 2020-22

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning the Decent Homes Callbacks 2020-22.

RESOLVED, that Members:

- 1) Note the contents of the report;
- 2) Note the lessons learnt; and
- 3) Authorise closure of this project.

10. ALLOCATED MEMBERS TO THE CITY CORPORATION'S VARIOUS HOUSING ESTATES - OCTOBER 2025 UPDATE

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning the allocation of Members to the City Corporation's various housing estates.

It was noted that Mark Wheatley had nominated himself for the role of lead Member to the Lambeth housing estate; there were no other expressions of interest or nominations.

Members were keen for the appointed lead Members to the housing estates meet to share experiences and to understand how they might best exercise their duties.

RESOLVED, that Members appoint Mark Wheatley as the lead Member for the London Borough of Lambeth Housing Estates.

11. HOUSING RESIDENT VOICE GROUP

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning the Housing Resident Voice Group.

This group would be stand-alone and distinct from Resident Associations, with the objective of providing overview and scrutiny; and to act as a mechanism for residents to shape services in their totality. It is not to replace Resident Associations, but to enhance residential engagement. It was important that estates were represented; that discussions linked to lead Members for Estates; and that it linked with the lead Member for Residential Engagement for Policy & Resources Committee.

Members sought clarity on how the work of this Group would feed into the Sub-Committee.

Officers confirmed that the Group would meet tomorrow and that feedback would be welcome as they continue to adapt the Group to ensure it delivers what it needed.

Representatives were selected through the “Common Place” facility, which was a well established form of communication with residents. A flyer was also issued. 18 responses were received. Applicants were asked why they wanted to be involved, their background and skills.

There was no elected-Member input into this selection process, which Members were keen to review further.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

12. INSIDE EVERY HOME PROJECT - HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services concerning the Inside Every Home Project.

A question was raised on non-compliance caused by tenants’ refusal. It was noted that the City Corporation would need to take steps to understand why tenants refuse to engage (e.g. hoarding). There was also a brief concern raised regarding fraud through sub-letting.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

13. HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services concerning the progress of the Housing Major Works Programme.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

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

There was one question raised on the long delay on void property and what the cause of this was.

It was noted that this process touches on a number of areas in housing and that different services were using different systems. Officers had taken steps to map out the process from start to finish (initial notification to handing back the empty home) using the existing Civica system. A contractor, Chigwell, had also been involved as they were identified as having expertise in this area.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

15.1 Social Housing Tenancy Fraud Investigations: Annual Report 2024/25

Members received the Annual Report (2024/25) of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning Social Housing Tenancy Fraud Investigations.

This report was initially circulated in the non-public section of the agenda and consequently reviewed and made available publicly.

There was, however, one matter for update which remained sensitive and would be exempt from disclosure at this time.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – 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.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

18. GEORGE ELLISTON AND ERIC WILKINS HOUSES REFURBISHMENT

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning the George Elliston and Eric Wilkins Houses Refurbishment.

19. REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE - SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning an update on the repairs and maintenance service delivery.

20. SOCIAL HOUSING TENANCY FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS: ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Members received the Annual Report 2024-25 of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services concerning Social Housing Tenancy Fraud Investigations.

It was noted that this report had been moved to be considered in public session under item 15a.

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

There was one non-public question.

22. 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 12.44 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Polly Dunn
Polly.Dunn@cityoflondon.gov.uk