HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Monday, 13 April 2026

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 Monday, 13 April 2026 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:
Steve Goodman OBE (Chairman)
Deputy Ceri Wilkins (Deputy Chair)
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Leyla Boulton
Sandra Jenner
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP
Mark Wheatley

Attended virtually:
Deputy John Fletcher

Officers:

Judith Finlay	-	Executive Director, Community & Children's Services
Peta Caine	-	Community & Children's Services
Bev Andrews	-	Community & Children's Services
Paul Barton	-	Community & Children's Services
Helen Chantry	-	Community & Children's Services
Zoe Gayle	-	Community & Children's Services
Gregory Wade	-	Community & Children's Services
Jack Joslin	-	City Bridge Foundation
Julia Pridham	-	City Bridge Foundation
Kelila Perry	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**
   Apologies were received from Deputy John Fletcher, who attended the meeting virtually, and Anne Corbett.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
   There were no declarations.

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**
   RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 January be approved as a correct record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTION TRACKER**

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

5. **REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING INSPECTION - OUTCOME, BENCHMARKING AND IMPROVEMENT RESPONSE**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing and update on the outcome of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) inspection, benchmarking of the Corporation's result against other London local authority landlords, and the actions being taken to address the findings.

Following the inspection results, officers shared action plans with the RSH. Next steps would include further engagement with the RSH and developing an improvement strategy.

There was a discussion about the pathway and timeline for upgrading to a C1 grading. Officers advised it was possible to jump from C3 to C1, and the RSH thought that the Corporation may be able to address the issues identified on a faster timescale than the four-year inspection cycle. Officers would drive improvements as quickly as possible.

Members commented on communication and engagement with residents, advising there should be open and transparent communication about progress, and that residents should be updated on a regular and ongoing basis. They thanked officers for the newsletter to residents updating them on the RSH inspection. Concern was raised about the tone of communication, with Members advising this should be framed around the impact on residents. Officers confirmed they would use more resident-focused language. Officers also noted that they planned to engage with the Resident Voice Group and Resident Associations.

Officers confirmed that an update would also be provided to the Community and Children's Services Committee.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Note the outcome of the Regulator of Social Housing inspection and the C3 Consumer Standards grading.
- Note the benchmarking position of the City of London Corporation relative to other London boroughs.
- Note the improvement actions underway and the governance arrangements in place to provide assurance and oversight.

6. **HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-29 YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN - END OF YEAR UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on delivery of Year 1 of the Housing Strategy Action Plan (2025–26), highlighting achievements, areas of partial delivery, actions carried forward and the overall impact on housing services.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

7. **HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-29 - YEARS 2 & 3 ACTION PLAN**

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services seeking approval of the draft Years 2 and 3 Housing Strategy Action Plan (2026-28), which sets out the key priorities, deliverables and performance measures for the next phase of the Housing Strategy 2024–29.

Members commented that it would be useful to understand the priority of each action. They also noted that actions should have specific and measurable KPIs and it would be helpful to develop estate-based targets. Officers responded that they would look into identifying vital actions, and they were continuing to develop KPIs which would be included in the plan.

A Member asked about resourcing, to which officers confirmed they were confident they could deliver the plan in two year subject to receiving the extra resources identified.

Regarding communications and engagement, a Member noted that success for residents will be when they can see and feel differences being made. Residents should be regularly updated, and communications should get to the heart of what they want. Officers responded that they would reflect this in the improvement strategy.

A Member asked whether there was a planned preventative maintenance schedule for each estate and if this could be priorities. Officers responded that there were minor plans for some estates but acknowledged the need for wider roll out. They would replan once the Stock Condition Survey was completed.

The Chair commended a statement in the report: the draft action plan had been informed by "the need for a step change in the quality of the housing services provided to residents".

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approve the draft Housing Strategy Action Plan for Years 2 and 3 (2026-28), appended to the report.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee, to make minor amendments to the Action Plan arising from post inspection engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing.

8. **APPROVAL OF A LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY - BEAN TREE COURT AND OTTO CLOSE (SYDENHAM HILL) AND THE EXTENSION OF THE LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY FOR BLACK RAVEN COURT (COLPAI)**

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services seeking approval of two Local Lettings Policies (LLPs) to support the allocation of newly built social rented homes at Bean Tree Court and Otto Close, Sydenham Hill Estate, and Black Raven Court (CoLPAI), Golden Lane.

Members enquired about the rate of uptake. Officers responded that 23 offers had been accepted at Black Raven Court and 14 offers had been accepted at Bean Tree Court and Otto Close. Members were concerned about the pace of uptake, given the number of families in temporary accommodation. Officers advised that the lettings teams were working at pace, however several factors had affected the rate of uptake:

- Black Raven Court – some properties were being held for MGO board removal.
- Bean Tree Court and Otto Close – Lewisham Council's nominations process takes five weeks. Regarding City of London nominations, some people said the homes were too far away. Furthermore, some ex-Mais house residents did not wish to return.

Officers advised that the LLPs were not superseded by the standard Allocation Policy and lettings officers could continue to allocate according to the estates that are closest.

A Member asked why the homes were predominantly one-bedroom, to which officers responded that this property type was the most needed one when the schemers were being designed.

Officers agreed to provide an additional briefing that would provide further information about the above questions, and answer additional questions from Members regarding:

- The split of uptake across City of London, Islington and Lewisham properties.
- Of the properties being held at Black Raven Court, the number of City of London properties versus Islington properties.
- Whether the current policy was flexible enough to promote uptake, and what would be the appropriate governance process if changes were required.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Approve the Local Lettings Policy for Bean Tree Court and Otto Close (Sydenham Hill).
- Approve the extension of the Local Lettings Policy for Black Raven Court (CoLPAI).
- Note that Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for both Local Lettings Policies.

9. **QUARTERLY FIRE SAFETY STATUS REPORT**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing quarterly oversight of the status and outcomes of fire safety management in the Corporation's social housing, including the fire risk assessment programme, the fire strategy programme, an update on fire safety management in respect of higher risk buildings within social housing, and emerging legislative responsibilities.

A Member enquired about balcony hoarding at Golden Lane Estate, to which officers responded that there had been further visits and letter drops, and they

were consulting with legal officers. An update would be provided in the next report.

A Member asked what impact the fire risk assessment programme would have on resourcing. Officers advised that they were developing a fire safety works programme that would form part of the Housing Major Works Programme.

There was a discussion about Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (RPEEPs), with Members asking at what point these were established and how often they were reviewed. Officers responded that RPEEPs were established when the resident moved in and were reviewed annually or sooner if the resident advised that their situation had changed. Residents were regularly reminded that RPEEPs were available through newsletters, the tenant's handbook, and through estate officers. Officers were also undertaking a survey of residents' needs that would inform a plan for establishing RPEEPs.

A Member noted it was difficult to differentiate the RAG status in the printed agenda. The Town Clerk would address this in future reports.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

10. **DRAFT RESIDENT SAFETY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services sharing a draft of the Housing Services Residential Engagement Strategy.

In response to a request from a Member, officers agreed to discuss the draft strategy with the Resident Voice Group.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

11. **HOUSING OUT OF HOURS SERVICE - CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services updating on Housing Out of Hours provision, setting out what arrangements are currently in place, what is not working as intended, and the next steps to improve consistency, coordination and assurance.

There was a discussion about residents being unable to contact the repairs Out of Hours service over the bank holiday weekend. Officers acknowledged there had been shortcomings and advised that for future bank holidays they would make sure the service was sufficiently resourced and had an up-to-date status on lifts.

Members asked how quickly the improvements would be made and what would be done in the meantime to ensure a good service. Officers would provide a report responding to these questions at the next Sub Committee meeting.

In response to a question about communication to residents, officers advised they would explore how to communicate improvements the service the broader improvement strategy.

RESOLVED – That, Members note the report and note that a full review of Housing Out of Hours provision and return to Committee with recommendations developed with residents to strengthen assurance, coordination and oversight.

12. **HOUSING COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing an overview of Housing Complaints data covering the 2025/26 financial year.

A Member acknowledged that the handling of complaints had improved but said it was unclear from the data whether the issue that caused the complaint had been resolved. Officers responded that while a complaint could be upheld, some issues were complex and may take time to resolve.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

13. **HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME 2026-36**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing a progress update on the development of the Housing Major Works Programme.

Officers anticipated that the restructure would be completed by summer 2026.

Members commended the report. A Member asked that future reports detail progress being made on specific projects.

In response to queries about leaseholder contributions, officers advised they had been engaging with the Chamberlain's and legal officers on this matter and would bring a report with further details to the next Sub Committee meeting. A Member expressed concern about including the total sum of leaseholder contributions in reports.

A Member queried why multidisciplinary consultants were needed. Officers responded that this was standard practice for local authorities and Housing Associations, as the skillsets required, such as design, surveying and architectural skills, need to be procured from private practice. If these skills were sourced in-house, the cost of management and delivery would be much higher.

There was a discussion about when the planning application for Crescent House would go before the Planning and Transportation Committee. Charles Edward Lord declared that he would not take part in any discussion about Crescent House due to being a Member of the Planning and Transportation Committee. Officers advised that the next Planning and Transportation Committee meeting was in late June, and they were escalating this matter with planning officers.

The Chair commented on the various ways that the work would be monitored and managed and requested that officers inform the Sub Committee of any obstacles or delays at these levels.

RESOLVED – That, Members note the report and give consideration to future commitments, targets and challenges in delivering the Housing Major Works Programme 2026-36.

14. **HOUSING MATTERS UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on key issues being dealt with by housing officers.

Allocated Member / Senior Management Team Leads

The Allocated Members for Lambeth and Lewisham requested that officers confirm arrangements for meetings with their respective residents' groups.

Warm Homes Plan

Members requested further information about what could be done to address overheating. Members also requested that related organisational policies be incorporated into this work, noting that the Health and Wellbeing Board had considered a policy to address overheating. Officers advised that this issue could be considered as part of the Stock Condition Survey and updating the Asset Management Strategy, however it would require additional funding.

Social Rent Convergence Update

In response to a question about funding, officers advised that this work would not be included in the Housing Revenue Account budget for the 2026/27 financial year.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There was one question submitted in advance of the meeting asking what arrangements were in place to access properties during an emergency when the resident is not home. For example, leaks in one flat causing flooding in neighbouring flats.

In relation to tenants, officers advised that access would depend on the seriousness of the emergency and the terms of the tenancy agreement. Currently, 24 hours' notice was needed to access the property and if the risk was deemed non-serious, then they would need to send a letter before acting. This issue would be looked at through the updating of tenancy agreements and tenant's handbook. In relation to leaseholders, access depended on the terms of the lease and in some cases forced entry may not be possible.

The Chairman said it would be useful to clarify what risks were considered serious. Officers noted that leaks would be considered a serious risk.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There was no other business.

17. **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.

18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 January be approved as a correct record.

19. **PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A HEALTH AND FIRE SAFETY TEAM**
Members received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services.

20. **CHARITY TRUSTEE DUTIES IN RESPECT OF THE CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES**
Members received a report of the Managing Director, City Bridge Foundation.

21. **UPDATE ON POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION REVIEW: CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES**
Members received a report of the Managing Director, City Bridge Foundation.

22. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**
There were no non-public questions.

23. **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 12.54 pm

Chairman

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