

Meeting of the

Tower Hamlets Council

Supplemental Agenda

Wednesday, 29 September 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

VENUE

Council Chamber, 1st Floor,
Town Hall, Mulberry Place,
5 Clove Crescent,
London E14 2BG

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London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Council

Wednesday, 29 September 2021

7.00 p.m.

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

3 - 14

The Council's Constitution provides for the Elected Mayor to give a report at each Ordinary Council Meeting.

A maximum of six minutes is allowed for the Elected Mayor's report, following which the Speaker of the Council will invite the leaders of the opposition groups to respond for up to two minutes each should they so wish. Following those contributions, the Mayor may reply for up to two minutes.

7. ADMINISTRATION MOTION DEBATE

15 - 16

Amendment proposed by Councillor Andrew Wood

10 .3 Proportionality and Allocation of Places on Committees of the Council

17 - 18

Updated Committee allocations table.

12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

19 - 22

Amendment proposed by Councillor Danny Hassell to the Motion on One Housing Group.

Agenda Item 6

Mayor's Report to Council

29th September 2021
John Biggs, Mayor of Tower Hamlets

Key Events/Announcements

It has been a busy period as the Council and community are showing signs of coming to physical rather than virtual life again. I would like this to develop faster, subject to careful risk management, and I think many people in the borough would like this too. I am aware that there is still a tangible Covid-19 risk, but that it is a lot lower than it was previously.

The borough is getting busier in both good and bad ways. We are waiting for the end of furlough for a further sign of the economic damage caused to our businesses and our communities. This is a time of high risk.

Community safety and reassurance: There have been a number of serious incidents across the borough over recent weeks, sadly with one fatality on East Ferry Road. A Tension Monitoring Group meeting was held and we continue to work closely with the police and our other partners. Reassurance patrols are also ongoing.

It is with great sadness that as a community we are mourning another life lost. In recent weeks along with two murders, there has also been a small number of violent incidents across Tower Hamlets, which are all part of ongoing police investigations.

We cannot underestimate the impact violent crimes have on our community and we understand as a council that there will be concern and unease as a result. We want to assure residents that we are working closely with police, community, local third sector organisations and faith leaders and there is a robust policing plan in place, which includes increased patrols on the ground.

I would also urge residents not to share misinformation, particularly on social media, which can create further panic and worry among our communities. As a council we are here for our community. We will continue to work to provide information, reassurance and support community cohesion.

Sabina Nessa: Sabina was a young teacher with a great future, killed in yet another appalling act of male violence, in South London. On Friday evening myself and a number of other councillors attended a vigil at Weavers' Fields. Other cabinet members also attended a vigil at the Maryam Centre. We must continue to do all we can to raise the profile of and tackle gender-based violence.

Afghanistan: The situation in Afghanistan is deeply distressing, and the Government's lack of action and planning has been appalling. We are in conversation with the Government, and with other local councils across London, about what we can do to help offer support to some Afghan refugees. As you can imagine, lining up the services, including health and housing, takes a great deal of planning. We have a proud history in Tower Hamlets of being a welcoming place, and I'm very keen that we do our bit to help. Housing costs and shortages mean however that the tradition of Tower Hamlets receiving larger numbers of refugees and asylum seekers is for the foreseeable future unlikely. We have, like many other London Labour Councils, announced we will take responsibility for up to 5 families initially.

Liveable Streets: We continue to support the principles behind Liveable Streets of better, safer, calmer streets, with a reduction of rat-run traffic in residential areas, fewer unnecessary journeys made by car and a focus on improving the local environment and

people's health with better air quality. We do this mainly to tackle our poor air quality but also to improve the local street environment.

A pause was recently announced because we need to take some time to reflect on the impact the schemes have had on some journeys, to assess this and see what if any changes are needed.

We need to quickly review the programme and get it right and while we don't think it will need a large-scale reversal or abandonment of existing schemes, it does mean we will not be developing the future phases of Liveable Streets as we had planned

The seven projects currently underway are in Bow, Bethnal Green, Wapping, Old Ford West, Shadwell, Brick Lane and Barkantine.

As a result of a quick assessment, we want to proceed with most of the proposals made and agreed in the current live projects. There will be a small number of changes to make road access in some places easier for residents. To be clear:

- The schemes at Barkantine and Wapping which are largely complete should remain unaltered. We are looking at options for a resident exemption permit for the Wapping bus gate.
- The Shadwell scheme is awaiting the analysis of consultation responses.
- The Brick Lane scheme should proceed largely as agreed, but with further consideration of a small (but high profile) element, the question of part-time closures of Brick Lane itself.
- The Bethnal Green scheme will include further consideration of a small number of changes to make North-South journeys for residents easier, possibly involving resident exemptions from a small number of closures.
- The bow scheme and the Old Ford West scheme should proceed other than a need to delay and remodel some of the proposed closures at the request of TfL. At the time of doing this we will also look at resident journeys and whether possible adverse effects can be mitigated.

In addition, the council will continue to focus on other areas such as its School Streets programme which closes roads outside schools during drop off and pick up times and has resulted in reducing air pollution and making streets safer. 20 are already in place and 30 more are on the way by Spring of 2022, reaching most of our primary schools. The Council will still support other local calming and highway projects where consultation has taken place.

I visited Harry Gosling Primary School last week to have a look at our school streets programme and to see the difference it's making. It was a wonderful event and it's very clear that the children and teachers are very pleased with the results of the programme.

Free School Meals: Last week I visited Marner Primary School to talk to children and teachers about our Free School Meals programme. We fund 19,000 school meals for children who otherwise wouldn't be eligible, meaning no primary child in Tower Hamlets pays for their meal. We are only one of 4 boroughs to do this.

This programme, at a cost of around £3m per year, makes a huge difference to many families in the borough and I am proud that we've been able to protect the scheme despite the huge budget pressures we face.

Poverty Review: We have just completed our Poverty Review, led by Cllr Mufeedah Bustin. This was informed by a series of workshops led by community researchers and Toynbee

Hall (a leading charitable institution that works to address the causes and impacts of poverty in the East End) with residents with experience of living on a low income. A reference group of residents, and partners including the Child Poverty Action Group and Age UK East London provided expert advice to the review team.

You can read the report here:

<http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s191230/6.2a%20Appendix.%201%20for%20LB%20Tower%20Hamlets%20Poverty%20Review.pdf>

This is a really important piece of work to guide our next steps, but it also highlights the huge amount of positive work we do to tackle poverty in the borough.

Black History Month: October marks Black History Month and the council will be hosting and supporting a varied programme of activities. Full listings are available at:

https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqnl/leisure_and_culture/Black-History-Month/Black-History-Month.aspx

Battle of Cable Street, 85th anniversary: This anniversary is fast-approaching and I will be attending a number of events to mark the occasion. This is a huge part of our history in Tower Hamlets, when our community rallied together to face down Oswald Mosley and his British Union of Fascists.

The importance of standing firm together against those who would seek to divide us is just as relevant today as it was then, and I am incredibly proud that our East End spirit of togetherness continues to shine.

Big Clean Ups: As a council we relaunched our programme of Big Clean Ups in July, following a pause due to the Covid-19 crisis, and asked residents to name a local litter hotspot. Almost 160 residents responded, and these suggestions will be used for future clean ups.

These clean ups are happening all over the borough. One event last week, on the Isle of Dogs, saw more than 100 volunteers out tackling litter and fly-tip hotspots.

Like elsewhere in London, littering and fly-tipping is an issue here in Tower Hamlets and we spend more than £690,000 a year on clearing and getting rid of illegally dumped waste, which is money that could be spent on other services.

We want to see a cleaner and greener borough and we are cracking down on fly-tippers and have increased on-the-spot fines to the maximum of £400 allowed under law.

We also have dedicated street cleaning teams working seven days a week and work with the local community and our partners in our Big Clean Ups programme.

Adult Social Care Strategy 2021: We are developing a new strategy in adult social care. This will set out our plans over the next 3-5 years, outlining what we will do differently and what difference it will make. If you would like to help shape the new strategy, share your views through our online consultation: https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/asc_strategy_2021

Goodman's Fields health centre: I was delighted to visit the new health centre in Aldgate last week, which is funded by Tower Hamlets Council and will provide high quality health services to the borough's growing population. This is another example of investment in local services and our work to address the barriers to good health that many of our residents face.

Individual Mayoral Decisions taken since last meeting

- [22 Sep 2021 2.22 p.m.](#) - Agenda; 211 - Island Gardens new build Café with public accessible toilets
- [9 Aug 2021 3.00 p.m.](#) - Agenda; Decision Nos 207-210:
 - Food and household goods purchases
 - Spitalfields Neighbourhood Plan – Examiner’s Report and Referendum
 - Cyril Jackson Primary School Academy Conversion
 - Making of Article 4 direction for the removal of permitted development rights for the change of use from E-class uses to residential (C3)

Mayor’s engagements and meetings

Below is a summary of my main engagements and meetings from 21st July to 29th September 2021.

21 July 2021

- Bethnal Green Liveable Streets Meeting
- Meeting with One Housing
- ICS Leaders Working Group
- St. George Leisure
- Full Council meeting

22 July 2021

- Chief Executive Will Tuckley
- Mayoral Voluntary & Community Sector Meeting
- Ask the Mayor: Building Safety

23 July 2021

- Councillor Rachel Blake
- London Government Summit on tackling youth violence

26 July 2021

- Corporate Induction
- Scrutiny Pre-meet
- Informal Labour Group catch-up
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee

27 July 2021

- Central London Forward Breakfast Board meeting
- Mayor John Biggs/Deputy Mayor Rachel Blake/James Purnell re East Bank/LCF building
- Pre-Meet St. George's Leisure
- RSE meeting (East London Mosque & London Muslim Centre)
- St. George's Leisure Meeting
- Royal Mint Court Residents Association (RMCRA) follow-up meeting

28 July 2021

- Thames Estuary Growth Board Update June 2021
- Food For Health Awards Virtual Event
- Planning Meeting
- Pre-Cabinet meet with the Mayor
- Induction for young mayor candidates
- Mayors Advisory Board
- Cabinet

29 July 2021

- Chief Executive Will Tuckley, Mayor, Marcus Barnett - Bi-monthly Catch Up
- Life-sciences at Whitechapel Road
- Freedom of the Borough Panel Meeting
- Chief Executive Will Tuckley
- Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh
- Carbon and climate taskforce
- Hybrid Audit Committee Meeting

30 July 2021

- Meeting with Lord Bob Kerslake
- London Councils Labour Group Meeting
- 200k vaccines photocall

31 July 2021

- Redchurch street event

9 August 2021

- Meeting with Janet Fasan (Director of Legal Monitoring Officer)
- Partnership Exec Group
- Cressy Place - Stifford Centre Meeting
- Revised draft petition response for review

- IMD signing
- Briefing on Proposals for Republic
- Susmita Sen (Tower Hamlets Homes Chief Executive Officer)
- Strategic Forward Planning
- Derai Thana Development Organisation

10 August 2021

- A Level Results Day George Green School
- Visit Introducing The Utilize Project
- All Points East - Mayoral, Lead Member and Ward Councillors briefing
- TH Partnership Executive Group meeting
- Children Education & Youth Services Portfolio Meeting
- Mayor's Portfolio Culture, Arts & Brexit Meeting
- Community Meeting - Policing / Community Safety / Partnership in Tower Hamlets
- St George's Leisure Meeting

13 August 2021

- Mayor's Political Cabinet
- Chief Executive Will Tuckley
- Growth Borough Partnership

15 August 2021

- Bengali National Mourning day
- CEG (Children Education Group) - CEG UK Carrom Championship 2021

16 August 2021

- Arnold Circus update
- Mayor's Surgery
- Councillor Asma Begum
- My London Interview
- Ridhima Tomar (British Council & Common Purpose Bangladeshi Leadership Programme in the UK)
- Informal Labour Group

17 August 2021

- Photocall with the borough commander
- Visiting New Youth Contract Providers
- Mayor's COVID recovery fund photocall
- Ocean Estate Walk About
- COVID 19 Local Engagement Board

18 August 2021

- Southern Housing Group- Pre-Meet
- Southern Housing Group - land ownership
- The Great Eastern Parks Route
- Mayor and Marcus Barnett Met Police Catch up
- Mayor's Traffic Meeting
- Denise Radley (Corporate Director Health, Adults and Community)
- Walkabout in Wapping

19 August 2021

- Adults, Health & Wellbeing - Mayor's Portfolio Meeting
- O & S Chair Cllr M. Pappu
- Regeneration Portfolio Meeting
- Sharon Godman
- Cavell St Visit
- Brick Lane Liveable Streets

20 August 2021

- Catch up with Cllr Rachel Blake
- Co-Op Commission Meeting Rob Bates and Jake Richards

21 August 2021

- Labour party council candidate taster session
- Anti Racist Summer event

29 August 2021

- Greater Sylhet Upazila Cup 2021 organised by Sonali Othith UK

31 August 2021

- Interviews Labour Group Political Advisor
- All Points East In the Neighbourhood
- Denise Radley (Corporate Director Health, Adults and Community and Deputy Chief)
- Mayor's Surgery
- Aberfeldy Masterplan

1 September 2021

- Resources Mayor's Portfolio Meeting
- Mayors Housing Meeting
- Poplar HARCA Meeting
- Poplar Rate Mural event with Sister Christine
- Mayor's Political Cabinet
- Mayor John Biggs and Councillor Asma Islam Poplar HARCA Quarterly Meeting

- Mayors Advisory Board
- Grants Determination Sub -Committee Meeting
- LCF

2 September 2021

- Phone call with resident
- ICS Leaders Bi-Monthly Meeting
- Planning Meeting
- Whitechapel meeting
- Liveable Streets Meeting
- Photo for Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund
- Brick Lane mural photocall
- BAME Inequalities Commission follow up

3 September 2021

- Catch up with Cllr Rachel Blake
- London Councils Labour Group Meeting
- MHCLG Ministerial Webinar
- Waste Meeting

4 September

- Re-opening event of Bethnal Green Police Station
- GCSE/A level AWARDS ceremony
- Poplar rates rebellion refurbished mural launch
- Invitation to Cap Foundation's Dinner Event

6 September 2021

- Mayors Surgery
- Regeneration Board
- Wapping Projects
- Truman Brewery Meeting

7 September 2021

- Councillor Rachel Blake
- Councillor Asma Begum
- Freedom of the Borough Panel Meeting
- Children Education & Youth Services Portfolio Meeting
- Recognition Award Tower Hamlets Carers Association

8 September 2021

- Central London Forward Partnership Board
- Social Inclusion Portfolio Meeting

- Cabinet Pre-Meet
- Mayor's Political Cabinet
- Secondary School Provision on the Isle of Dogs
- Mayors Advisory Board
- Cabinet

9 September 2021

- Every Child Online
- Chief Executive Will Tuckley
- Liveable Streets meeting
- Councillor Sirajul Islam
- RSE meeting
- Waste meeting
- Shortlisting, Adults & Social Care Director
- Poplar and Limehouse CLP

20 September 2021

- Adult Social Care Practice Week
- TH Partnership Executive Group meeting
- Meeting with Will Tuckley and Apsana Begum MP
- Mayor's Portfolio Culture, Arts & Brexit Meeting
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee

21 September 2021

- Preparedness Review Meeting
- Newlon Housing Meeting
- Meeting with Will Tuckley and Rushanara Ali MP
- Homes England Meeting
- Resident Visit
- Labour Group

22 September 2021

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- Mayor's Traffic Meeting
- Capital Strategy Board
- Marner Primary School
- Cabinet run through
- Chief Executive Will Tuckley
- Mayor's Political Cabinet
- Waste Meeting
- Cabinet

23 September 2021

- Practice Week with Supporting Families
- Stoptober Campaign
- Press Conference
- Mayor's Portfolio Adults, Health & Wellbeing Meeting
- Cascade Conversation with Sir Steve Bullock
- CLF Board Members dinner

24 September 2021

- Ann Lucas, THH
- Will Norman, TFL
- School street event
- Opening events for new health clinics at Suttons Wharf and Goodman's Fields

25 September 2021

- Norman Grove street party
- Friends of Meath Gardens event

26 September 2021

- Wapping Clean up

27 September 2021

- Leisure Centres
- Mayor's Surgery
- Chat with Cllr James King
- New Town Hall Members Consultative Steering Group Tour
- Dave Hill, On London blog
- Councillor Mellen catch up
- Executive Committee
- Labour Group

28 September 2021

- LGA Meet & Greet Peer Review/Corporate Health Check – Placeholder
- Discussion re GLPC Agenda
- Maria Future for London Catch up
- Limehouse Mosque Matter Meeting
- Peer Review Interview
- Meeting with Stifford Centre Representatives
- Phone Call to resident
- Catch up with Susmita Sen Tower Hamlets Homes
- Mayor's Portfolio Civil Contingencies & Emergency Planning Meeting
- LGA Peer Review/Corporate Health Check End of Day Meet – Placeholder

- Spitalfields Housing Association Meeting

29 September 2021

- Introduction to interim Human Resources Director
- Mayor's Housing Portfolio Meeting
- Shortlisting for Director, Supporting Families
- Waste Meeting
- Communications Portfolio Meeting
- LGA Corporate Health Check Feedback Session – Placeholder
- Mayor's Community Safety Portfolio Meeting
- Council

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Agenda Item 7

Conservative Amendment

7 – Administration Motion for Debate - regarding the closure of Poplar JobCentre Plus

Proposer: Cllr Andrew Wood

Seconder: Cllr Peter Golds

This council notes:

1. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) intends to close the JobCentre Plus branch based at Dod Street, Poplar.
2. That the reasons for the closure are due to the landlord not renewing the lease **due to the intended redevelopment of the site for much needed new housing.**
3. The submission in late 2019 of planning application PA/20/00123/A1 for 13-15 Dod Street to build an 8-storey residential building with 84 homes where the single storey job centre is now (plus the 3-storey office building behind it)
4. The Applicant engaged in four meetings with the Council's planning team. The pre-application meetings were held on 12th July 2019, 27th September 2019, and 22nd November 2019.
5. That on the 5th November 2020 the Development Committee voted unanimously to approve the application to re-develop the site. That in the Committee Report it said "The current occupiers are due to vacate the site and relocate their services to Mansell Street, E1"
6. That on the 1st November 2019 the Council approved an earlier permitted development application for 35 homes on this site.
7. That in the DWP Estates Proposals 26.01.2017 v1.0 it was proposed to retain Dod Street as well as Mansell Street job centres in Tower Hamlets plus centres in Hackney, Stratford, and Canning Town.
8. That the 29th August 2019 update on job centre closures in 2018 by the DWP did not include any closures in London but did mention co-location with local authorities as a way of finding new premises.
9. That in 2021 the DWP set up temporary jobcentres to deal with increased demand including at 100 Leman Street, this is to provide more space for safe meetings
10. The failure since 2019 to identify and then offer an alternative location to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in one of the many planning applications to go through LBTH
11. That the possibility of offering the DWP space in the new Town Hall at centre of Whitechapel has never been raised with Town Hall Steering Group
12. That Tower Hamlets for the 2nd year running has missed the housing delivery targets set by the Mayor of London as a result of which there is now greater pressures on us to deliver new housing.
13. The **closure transfer** of this branch will result in **longer travel times for some residents needing** of a critical layer of support for our residents in Tower Hamlets, at a time when Universal Credit uplift ends, the furlough scheme closes, and the government imposes an increase in National Insurance.

14. The central position of the Dod Street branch is located close to some of the areas of highest deprivation in our borough: the closure transfer will may result in increased deprivation through residents not claiming the benefit support that they are entitled to.
15. That while Dod Street has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4 (where 6B is best and 1 worst) due to its bus connections on Burdett Road it is not that well connected to the DLR or Underground network. We should aim for it to be relocated to an area with a higher PTAL and which is more prominently located and visible.
16. That access to welfare support is becoming increasingly digitised and those in most need of support are maybe less likely to have the digital capability to access that support.
17. That LBTH has itself closed many opportunities for face-to-face support or over the phone and moved services online

This council believes:

1. The DWP's JobCentre Plus branches provide vital face-to-face support to residents who are unemployed and/or are claiming benefit support.
2. Within Tower Hamlets, there are just 3 JobCentre Plus branches, both all three in Poplar & Limehouse constituency, which provide vital support for many Tower Hamlets residents.
3. The recently published "Poverty Review" highlighted that residents were not always aware of the benefit support available to them, and that there is high correlation between illiteracy, digital exclusion and poverty. Face to face advice is often vital for many residents to understand and access the support they need.
4. That provision of employment and welfare support can be conducted in a variety of buildings and places that are accessible and welcoming to residents, and closer working between the DWP, council frontline services, and the borough's advice centres, can only benefit our residents.

This council resolves:

1. To ask the Mayor and Lead Member to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey MP and the Minister for Employment Mims Davies MP to:
 1. To welcome the redevelopment of the centre for housing and
 2. express concern at the closure of Dod Street JobCentre Plus, and
 3. offer support in finding alternative suitable accommodation perhaps including at the new Town Hall
2. To call on our local MPs to raise our concerns with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions about the failure since early 2019 of LBTH and the DWP to find an alternative location.

Agenda Item 10.3

Updated Paragraph 3.6 with full allocations set out

- 3.6 Applying the above principles, the proposed allocation of places on the Committees established by the Council for the municipal year 2021/22 and covered by the requirement for proportionality, are listed below. The allocations for the remainder of the municipal year or until the next review of proportionality, whichever is the sooner, is as follows:

Committee	Total	Labour	Aspire	Conservative	Ungrouped
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (plus 6 co-optees)	9	8		1	
Audit Committee	8	7			1
Development Committee	7	6	1		
Strategic Development Committee	8	7	1		
General Purposes Committee	9	8		1	
Licensing Committee	15	14		1	
Pensions Committee	7	6	1		
Standards Advisory Committee (plus 5 Co-optees)	5	4			1
TOTALS	68	60	3	3	2

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Agenda Item 12

Proposer: Cllr Danny Hassell

Seconder: Cllr Mufeedah Bustin

12.2 Motion regarding One Housing Group Takeover by Riverside Housing

Association

Proposer: Cllr Peter Golds

Seconder: Cllr Andrew Wood

The Council notes that in July the troubled One Housing Group, which manages 17,312 homes announced that it was to be taken over by the Riverside Housing Association based in Liverpool which currently manages 58,671 homes.

The Council further notes that:

This followed the revelation that One Housing had recorded a loss of £25.5 million in the last financial year and that the Regulator of Social Housing has downgraded the status of One Housing, which is a serious reputational loss to One Housing as an organisation.

There is a significant impact on the finances of One Housing in relation to building and fire safety works.

At the time of the stock transfer the four estates of the Isle of Dogs; the Barkantine, Kingsbridge, St John's and Samuda, were all managed by Toynbee Island Homes. In 2007 Toynbee Island Homes merged with the Community Housing Association to form One Housing. One Housing also own other homes across the borough.

Based in Camden Town, One Housing has frequently appeared remote to residents of this borough. This remoteness caused irreparable damage to the reputation of One Housing when, despite repeated denials, it was revealed that the organisation was secretly planning to replace the 2,000 homes on the four estates of the Isle of Dogs with 8,000 new properties. This resulted in the Regulator of Social Housing reporting in 2013 that, "the board (of One Housing) needs to enhance its oversight and scrutiny of the group's activities to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements"

The Council further notes that:

The original announcement of the takeover of One Housing by Riverside was reported to Councillors and covered in a press release, tenants were not notified by One Housing until later. Tenants of the four estates were initially notified by the proposer of this motion by way of leaflets delivered by volunteers to their addresses.

There appear to have been no other options explored apart from this takeover, by Riverside, an organisation which itself has faced criticism for "taking away tenant's voices."

Tower Hamlets tenants and leaseholders of One Housing have expressed concerns regarding:

- The lack of meaningful consultation
- Inability to produce impact data for lessees
- Poor estate management
- Misleading brochures and information, which lack information on exactly how services to residents can or will be improved as part of the merger.
- Failing to share financial data with residents.

Despite the failure of Project Stone, One Housing have continued to propose redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Estate and before the takeover became known terminated a resident led steering group, whilst continuing to promote a ballot on a proposed redevelopment.

Following a letter to the Chief Executive of the Regulator of Social Housing by the proposer of this motion, to delay the takeover and cancel the ballot on the Kingsbridge development, the regulator has responded to say:

“The matters you raise about One Housing Group have now been assessed by our Consumer Regulation Panel in accordance with our Serious Detriment procedures. The panel was unable to conclude whether there has been a breach of the Consumer Regulations standards which has or could lead to serious harm to tenants.”

“As such, further consideration is required and your complaint has been passed to our Investigation & Enforcement team, who will be contacting One Housing Group for further information. Once our Investigation & Enforcement team has investigated your concerns, they will contact you again within a further 20 working days from the date of this email with a reply or revised deadline.”

During this period and despite increasing concerns, residents have received a brochure urging them to support the takeover with a promise of financial investment, after the takeover.

The Mayor, the Cabinet Member for Housing and local councillors have written to One Housing highlighting their concerns and those of residents.

This Council believes:

Residents should be applauded for their hard work over many years to scrutinise One Housing and to hold them to account for their performance as a landlord and the delivery of their services.

Residents deserve to have access to information which enables them to make an informed decision on any mergers.

Consultation on issues such as mergers should be comprehensive and seek to engage residents in many ways with a dialogue about the issues involved.

One Housing and Riverside have not clearly set out the improvements that will be delivered to residents from the proposed merger.

The Council therefore agrees:

To call on the Regulator of Social Housing to delay the takeover until they are satisfied that this takeover is in the best interest of tenants and residents.

To ask the government that for future such mergers that tenants and leaseholders are given real and meaningful choices ~~including a referendum vote. That residents be offered three options~~The range of options could include:

- 1. The A recommended merger partner, who then has an incentive to make commitments about their future performance in order to win the vote
 - Joining another local housing association or local housing provider where one is willing to accept them (and for the government to make necessary funding available to enable this).
 - Use of referendum ballots on the decision.
2. To join any Council run housing provider (if one exists) which for many estates may well be a choice to reverse the decision they made in the stock transfer process
3. To join a locally based housing association willing to take them

That if the government truly believe in consumer choice and giving homeowners and tenants greater involvement in the management of their homes (as we see in the moves towards Commonhold) that logically this should apply to all residents of homes regardless of tenure.

To call on the Regulator and the Minister to ensure that in these discussions tenants and residents come first and are consulted properly and independently as to the future management of their homes.

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