

# Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

## Agenda

**Thursday, 16 February 2023 6.30 p.m.**  
**Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel**

### **Members:**

**Chair:** Councillor Abdul Mannan

**Vice Chair:** Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

Councillor Musthak Ahmed, Councillor Ahmodul Kabir, Councillor Faroque Ahmed,  
Councillor Marc Francis and Councillor Asma Islam

### **Co-opted Members:**

Mahbub Anam ((Tenant representative)) and Susanna Kow ((Leaseholder  
representative))

**Deputies:** Councillor Bellal Uddin, Councillor James King, Councillor Mohammad  
Chowdhury, Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled, Councillor Suluk Ahmed and Councillor  
Leelu Ahmed

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

### **Contact for further enquiries:**

justina.bridgeman Democratic Services Officer (Committees),

justina.bridgeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk

020 7364 4854

Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ

<http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk>



## Public Information

### Viewing or Participating in Committee Meetings

The meeting will be broadcast live on the Council's website. A link to the website is detailed below. The press and public are encouraged to watch this meeting on line.

**Please note:** Whilst the meeting is open to the public, the public seating in the meeting room for observers will be extremely limited due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions. You must contact the Democratic Services Officer to reserve a place, this will be allocated on a first come first served basis. No one will be admitted unless they have registered in advance.

### Meeting Webcast

The meeting is being webcast for viewing through the Council's webcast system.

<http://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

### Electronic agendas reports and minutes.

Copies of agendas, reports and minutes for council meetings can also be found on our website from day of publication.

To access this, click [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee) and search for the relevant committee and meeting date.

Agendas are available on the Modern.Gov, Windows, iPad and Android apps



Scan this QR code to view the electronic agenda



## **A Guide to Overview and Scrutiny**

The Local Government Act 2000 established the overview and scrutiny function for every council, with the key roles of:

- Scrutinising decisions before or after they are made or implemented
- Proposing new policies and commenting on draft policies, and
- Ensuring customer satisfaction and value for money.

The aim is to make the decision-making process more transparent, accountable and inclusive, and improve services for people by being responsive to their needs.

In Tower Hamlets, the function is exercised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC). The OSC considers issues from across the council and partnership remit. The Committee has 3 Sub-Committees which focus on health, housing and grants.

### **Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee**

The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee will undertake overview and scrutiny, pertaining to housing matters. This will include:

- (a) Reviewing and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's housing functions;
- (b) Advising the Mayor, DCLG Commissioners or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to housing reports due to be considered by the Mayor, DCLG Commissioners or Cabinet;
- (c) Making reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Mayor, DCLG Commissioners or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of housing functions;
- (d) Delivering (c) by organising an annual work programme, drawing on the knowledge and priorities of the council, registered providers and other stakeholders, that will identify relevant topics or issues that can be properly scrutinised;
- (e) Holding service providers to account, where recent performance fails to meet the recognised standard, by looking at relevant evidence and make recommendations for service improvements;
- (f) Considering housing matters affecting the area or its inhabitants, including where these matters have been brought to the attention of the sub-committee by tenant and resident associations, or members of the general public.
- (g) The Sub-Committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work.

### **Public Engagement**

Meetings of the sub committee are open to the public to attend, and a timetable for meeting dates and deadlines can be found on the council's website.

# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

Thursday, 16 February 2023

6.30 p.m.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

#### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (PAGES 7 - 8)

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, please see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded to declare the nature of the interest and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it's the Members' responsibility to declare any interests and to update their register of interest form as required by the Code.

If in doubt as to the nature of your interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services

#### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

#### 3. OPEN ACTIONS

#### 4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

##### 4.1 Residents from Polydamas Close - Swan Housing Association

Presentation from Swan HA – TO FOLLOW

##### 4.2 Future of Housing Management Services - Consultation Outcome (Pages 21 - 30)

##### 4.3 Homeless Applications - How can the service be improved?

Presentation – TO FOLLOW

##### 4.4 Developing a new Local Plan (Pages 31 - 42)

#### 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Next Meeting of the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee**

Thursday, 27 April 2023 at 6.30 p.m. to be held in Council Chamber - Town Hall,  
Whitechapel



The best of London in one borough

**Tower Hamlets Council**  
Tower Hamlets Town Hall  
160 Whitechapel Road  
London E1 1BJ

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 1

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER**

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

### **(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)**

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

**DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests.** In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

### **(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)**

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

### **(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.**

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

### **Guidance on Predetermination and Bias**

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

### **Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting**

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

**Further Advice** contact: Janet Fasan, Acting Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4800.

## APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either—  (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or  (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

## LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

### MINUTES OF THE HOUSING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBERS – TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5  
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG

#### Members Present in Person:

Councillor Abdul Mannan (Chair)

Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

Councillor Musthak Ahmed

Councillor Ahmodul Kabir

Councillor Marc Francis

Councillor Asma Islam

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

#### Co-Optees Present in Person

Mahbub Anam -(Tenant Representative)

Susanna Kow -(Leaseholder Representative)

#### Officers Present in Person

Mark Slowikowski -(Senior Strategy and Policy Officer)

Justina Bridgeman -(Democratic Services Officer, Committees)

#### Officers Present Remotely:

Karen Swift -(Director, Housing and Regeneration)

Shalim Uddin -(Partnerships Officer, Strategy and Policy)

#### Guest:

Andrea Baker -(Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF))

Helen Wilson -(Head of Housing, Clarion Housing)

Ana Otesanya -(Interim Chief Executive Tower Hamlets Homes  
(THH))

Hillary Kelly -(Head of Repairs Tower Hamlets Homes (THH))

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

Michael Killeen

-(Director, Asset Management, Tower Hamlets Homes (THH))

## 1 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

## 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

### RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the sub committee meeting held on 20 October 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

## 3. OPEN ACTIONS

### 3.1.4. Letters to the Mayor and Clarion Housing Association: 20 October 2022.

– Councillor Nathalie Bienfait queried if the Mayor sent a letter to the chair of Spitalfields Housing Association to investigate concerns. Karen Swift, Director of Housing and Regeneration, could not confirm this, although Shalim Uddin, Partnerships Officer, Strategy and Policy confirmed that a meeting arranged with the Mayor was postponed and will be rescheduled in due course. The sub committee will receive an update when available.

Councillor Bienfait also requested an update on the Tower Hamlets Homes consultation. Karen Swift confirmed the summary findings were sent to the Mayor and the public document will be made available on 24 January 2023.

5.1. Challenge Sessions Recommendations: 20 October 2022. – The submission of the full breakdown on the associated £463k with a rationale on why it was apportioned to the HRA. Karen Swift explained the cost submitted at the last sub committee was an estimate. Further work has been undertaken and a lower revised cost breakdown will be made available in the budget report for Cabinet in January.

All consultation work related to housing stock is apportioned to the HRA, as specified by the finance and legal comments detailed in the report. Councillor Francis requested the sub committee consider if it is appropriate to apportion the cost to tenants and leaseholders once the report is available.

The Mayors Future Meetings with Housing Associations: 20 October 2022. – The Chair to request an invitation to any future meetings with the Mayor and Housing Associations and to provide an update to the sub committee. The Chair noted that the planned meeting was postponed and further updates will be submitted at the next sub committee meeting.

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

5.4. Approach and Support to Homeless Applications: 20 October 2022. – The Submission of the councils KPI for customer satisfaction, response times and performance, including a breakdown on how personal housing plans are measured by quality of service. Karen Swift apologised for not submitting updates and requested details be reviewed at the next meeting. Discussions with Councillor Francis took place on the matter outside of the meeting. All questions will be submitted at the next meeting scheduled for 16 February 2023.

B/F Safety Action Plan: 15 March 2022. – Sub committee members suggested that the Fire Safety Group submit the draft action plan for review before Cabinet in July 2022. Karen Swift confirmed that the recommendations were approved by Cabinet on 30 November 2022 and officers are scheduled to complete all actions by the end of 2023.

**RESOLVED that**

1. The sub committee will review the details of the consultation and consider if it is appropriate to apportion costs to tenants and leaseholders once the Cabinet report is available.
2. The Chair to request an invitation to any future meetings with the Mayor and Housing Associations and to provide an update to the sub committee.
3. Karen Swift to forward questions regarding the approach and support to homeless applications to the sub committee.
4. The presentation be noted.

**4 REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**4.1 Social Landlords Performance Report**

Shalim Uddin, Partnerships Officer, Strategy and Policy, introduced the performance report for quarters 1 and 2 for Registered Providers (RP). This included a summary of the key strengths, challenges and general updates reflected in the report:

Further to questions from the sub committee, Shalim Uddin, Andrea Baker, Chair of THHF and Helen Wilson, Head of Housing for North London, Clarion Housing:

- Clarified that in regard to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's), 10 of the 22 measures are produced by the landlord's and are scheduled to commence in April 2023. At present six of the RP's who have not yet submitted data have been requested to complete a survey, specifying what information will be provided to the council for the next 12 months and at what frequency.

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

- Confirmed that all RP's are ultimately responsible for the performance of repairs outsourced to external contractors.
- Explained that the current KPI's compiled were established by THHF's Benchmarking Sub Group. Details are collected quarterly. As the council does not regulate the RP's, the validity of the data cannot be accurately assessed.
- Noted that Clarion complaints data submitted related to housing stock within the borough. Targets for response times fell during the cyber-attack, although the majority of emergency repairs were undertaken. The response times for Q3 will be significantly higher and more operations staff are now in place to deal with recent boiler issues.

Following comments from Officers, the sub committee requested:

- Details on the definitive set of RP's TSM's to be brought to the sub committee once published.
- Details on the additional costs incurred to residents provided with temporary fan heaters will be submitted for Bow East and West wards.

Ana Otesanya, Interim Chief Executive, Tower Hamlet Homes (THH), then gave a brief overview on performance, an update on day-to-day repairs and details on improving the resident experience of service.

Further to questions from the sub committee, Ana Otesanya, Hillary Kelly and Michael Killeen:

- Conceded that THH are experiencing challenges regarding higher levels of Members Enquiries compared to other RP's. Those issues were reflected in the presentation.
- Explained the call times on repairs stated are an average, although this does not take into account residents who have waited longer. The data is derived from the contact centres wait time reports. More resources have been put in place and further work is required to deal with this issue.
- Clarified that the turnaround time for domestic replacement boilers is three days. A communal plant failure could take much longer, as it would depend on the severity of the situation and would fall into the category of major works. In that instance a temporary plant would be provided to fulfil the resident's needs. Residents would also be provided with temporary fan heaters in the interim.
- Explained that contractors are monitored with quality checks and post inspections by engineers to ensure good service. Further details on this can be provided to the sub committee.

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

- Clarified that better engagement with residents regarding the 'out of hours' contracted and sub contracted services is required. This issue is currently under review.
- Explained that the major works programme is under review to establish which projects have been deferred and why. The contractual costs have risen and a comprehensive report will be brought back to the sub committee.

Following comments from Officers and invitees, the sub committee;

- Thanked Clarion Housing and THH for acknowledging the performance concerns raised with repair waiting times and Member Enquiries.
- Requested urgent improvement to ensure major works are delivered in a timelier manner, and detailed information on the Capital programme of works be submitted.
- Noted that a view on the merits on stronger accountability for residents and elected members should be taken at a subsequent meeting.

#### **RESOLVED that**

1. RP's TSM measures be brought to the sub committee once published.
2. Details on the additional costs incurred to residents who were provided with temporary fan heaters to be submitted for Bow East and West wards.
3. Further discussions with THH and sub committee members on poor response times and contractor issues to take place outside of this meeting.
4. A comprehensive report on the THH major works programme to be brought back to the sub committee.
5. The presentation be noted.

#### **4.2 PARKING ON HOUSING ESTATES**

Andrea Baker, Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF), and Helen Wilson, Head of Housing for North London, Clarion Housing, introduced presentations reviewing parking on housing estates.

Following questions from the sub committee, Andrea Baker and Helen Wilson:

- Clarified that RP's parking enforcement powers differ greatly from the local authority, and Poplar Harca in particular only have powers to issue PCN's,

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

contact the DVLA to establish who the driver is and go through a legal process to obtain the penalty fines.

- Confirmed Clarion use the National Parking Enforcement (NPE) to manage parking on estates and operate the online telephone service and CCTV.
- Clarified that Poplar Harca's Board has reversed its electric vehicles only policy, which will come into effect in April. All parking charges will be waived and designated bays removed. Residents will now be permitted to park in estate parking bays.

Following the comments from invitees, the sub committee;

- Noted concerns with the digital process to register vehicles and apply for parking bays. The placement of CCTV cameras and the lack of parking enforcement within estates has been controversial.
- Suggested TMO's can assist in tailoring its approach to the needs of each estate, as improving the disparity between RSL parking is a priority for the Mayor.

**RESOLVED that**

1. The presentation be noted.

**4.3 DAMP AND MOULD – ACTION TAKEN**

Karen Swift, Director of Housing and Regeneration, introduced the report which examined the council's response to the Social Housing Regulators directive on damp and mould by the Secretary of State. This included a summary of the background details leading to the initial response on 30 November 2022 and the subsequent response due on 27 January 2023.

Following questions from the sub committee, Karen Swift, Andrea Baker, Helen Wilson, Ana Otesanya and Michael Killeen;

- Clarified that all RP's responded to the Secretary of State by 19 December 2022 and are currently undertaking a stock condition analysis workstream to focus on diagnostics. This includes the use of smart technology to establish the temperature and humidity of the homes. Staff are obligated to report any cases of damp and mould, specifically with vulnerable residents.
- Explained that other provisions to tackle damp and mould include using gas safety checks to also look for damp, mould and condensation issues. Clarion have established resident liaison officers assisting with decant and access issues to enable remedial works to progress.

COMMITTEE, 12/01/2023

- Confirmed that THH does have a process to record roof leaks and stock condition surveys are undertaken as part of the Capital programme. The external fabric of a building is one of many contributing factors to the life cycle of homes at risk of fire and is one workstream. Damp and mould requires separate workstream and analysis, as mould is not currently classified as a life cycle of an element and further validation is required. Checks on both need to be incorporated prior to any investment programme.
- Explained that all boroughs have high density issues and specific buildings create damp and mould. The Mayor is seeking larger affordable housing and existing stock needs to be reviewed, including knocking through homes to ease overcrowded families.
- Clarified that all residents in temporary accommodation (TA) have been advised to report any issues of damp and mould to their RP and housing officer. Providers of TA have been informed of the findings and to treat reports received with the utmost urgency. A survey has also been issued to residents regarding the condition of the property to identify worst cases.

Following comments from Officers and invitees, the sub committee;

- Clarified that damp, mould and condensation issues have been ongoing, and the problem relates to disrepair unfairly deemed a resident lifestyle issue. Other factors include major works repairs and unidentified leaks.
- Indicated that appropriate inspections and remedies are required. Temporary accommodation inspections placed in and out of the borough also require an urgent review.
- Requested an update on action taken from all RP's within five months to the sub committee.

**RESOLVED that**

1. A damp and mould update on action taken from all RP's to be brought to the sub committee within five months.
2. The presentation be noted.

**5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Francis requested Officers submit an update on residents of Polydamas Close, who experienced fire safety issues for several months with Swan Housing (now L&Q). The Chair will discuss with Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED that**

1. The Chair will discuss the matter with Councillor Kabir Ahmed outside of the sub committee meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.16pm  
Chair, Councillor Abdul Mannan  
Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee



Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2023

**Open Actions:**

No.	Reference	Action	Assigned to:	Due Date	Response
<b>2022/2023 – Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee</b>					
<b>Previous Meeting - 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022</b>					
3	<b>Open Actions</b>	The Chair to request an invitation to any future meetings with the Mayor and Housing Associations and to provide an update to the sub-committee.	Cllr Abdul Mannan Chair	February 2023	The Chair noted that the planned meeting was postponed, and further updates will be submitted at the next sub-committee meeting.
3	<b>Open Actions</b>	Councillor Nathalie Bienfait queried if the Mayor sent a letter to the chair of Spitalfields Housing Association to investigate concerns.	Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director  Tracy St. Hill RP Partnerships Development Officer	TBC	A meeting between the Mayor and CEO of Spitalfields HA has been re-scheduled for March 2023.
3	<b>Open Actions</b>	<i>Challenge Session Recommendations</i> - A full breakdown on the associated £463k with a rationale on why this was apportioned to the HRA be submitted.	Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director	February 2023	The sub-committee will review the details of the consultation and consider if it is appropriate to apportion costs to tenants and leaseholders once the Cabinet report is available.
3	<b>Open Actions</b>	<i>Approach and Support to Homeless Applications</i> - The council's KPIs for customer satisfaction, response times and performance, including a breakdown on how personal housing plans are measured by quality of service, be submitted to the next Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee meeting.	Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director	February 2023	To be provided as part of a more detailed committee discussion on homelessness to be scheduled into the forward plan.

Page 47

Agenda Item 3

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2023

4.1	<b>Social Landlord's Performance Report</b>	Details on the definitive set of RP's TSM's to be brought to the sub-committee once published	<p style="text-align: center;">Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shalim Uddin Partnerships Officer Strategy and Policy</p>	TBC	This will be a briefing paper for Members once the measures have been finalised.
4.1	<b>Social Landlord's Performance Report</b>	Details on the additional costs incurred to residents provided with temporary fan heaters will be submitted for Bow East and West wards	<p style="text-align: center;">Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shalim Uddin Partnerships Officer Strategy and Policy</p>	TBC	
4.1	<b>Social Landlord's Performance Report</b>	Further discussions with THH and sub-committee members on poor response times and contractor issues to take place outside of this meeting	<p style="text-align: center;">Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tracy St. Hill RP Partnerships Development Officer</p>	TBC	
4.1	<b>Social Landlord's Performance Report</b>	A comprehensive report on the THH major works programme to be brought back to the sub-committee.	<p style="text-align: center;">Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tracy St. Hill RP Partnerships Development Officer</p>	TBC	

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2023

<b>6</b>	<b>Damp and Mould – Action Taken</b>	A damp and mould update on action taken from all RP's to be brought to the sub-committee within five months	<p style="text-align: center;">Karen Swift Housing and Regeneration Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shalim Uddin Partnerships Officer Strategy and Policy</p>	TBC	
<b>B/F</b>	<b>Fire Safety Action Plan</b>	<p><i>(15 March 2022)</i></p> <p>Sub-committee members suggested that the Fire Safety Group submit the draft action plan for review to the subcommittee before Cabinet in July 2022.</p>	<p>Karen Swift, Housing and Regeneration Director</p>	<p>November/ December 2023</p>	<p>Sub-committee members suggested that the Fire Safety Group submit the draft action plan for review before Cabinet in July 2022. Karen Swift confirmed that the recommendations were approved by Cabinet on 30 November 2022 and officers are scheduled to complete all actions by the end of 2023.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>Housing &amp; Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b>  16 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	
<b>Report of:</b> Karen Swift, Director of Housing and Regeneration	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Future of Housing Management Services – consultation</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Nicola Klinger, Programme Lead – Housing Management Strategic Review
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## Executive Summary

Between 24 October and 18 December 2022, the Council ran an 8-week consultation on the future of services for people living in council homes. Residents supported the Council’s proposals to bring services back in-house, with 86% of tenants and leaseholders participating in the survey supporting this.

The Council will continue to engage with residents and stakeholders to shape and improve housing management services and work is being undertaken to consider a resident engagement strategy and governance arrangements, should services be brought back in-house.

### Recommendations:

The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the results of the consultation on the future of services for people living in council homes.
2. Discuss and provide input to work in the following areas:
  - Resident engagement
  - Governance arrangements
  - Shaping and improving services

## 1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee is an important stakeholder in the programme to review the future of housing management

services for Council tenants and leaseholders. Officers are committed to engage with the Committee at key stages in the programme and present a report on the outcome of the consultation with tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders on the future of services for people living in Council homes.

## **2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee could decide not to engage with the programme to review the future of housing management services to review the future of housing management services for Council tenants and leaseholders.

## **3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

### **3.1 Background**

- 3.1.1 The Council has a Management Agreement with its Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO), Tower Hamlets Homes (THH), to provide housing management and maintenance services to its 22,000 council homes.
- 3.1.2 The current management agreement expires in March 2024 (with the option of a four-year extension).
- 3.1.3 In May 2022, to prepare for a decision on whether to extend the management agreement or provide services in a different way, the Council reviewed the options for providing housing management services. The review concluded that the preferred approach would be to bring services back in-house, with the other option to extend the management agreement for an additional 4 years.
- 3.1.4 In the autumn of 2022 (24 October to 18 December), the Council ran a consultation with residents on the future of services for people living in council homes. The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee ran a challenge session with officers on the consultation, with the Committee inputting into the methodological design and information materials for the consultation. The Committee asked that officers return to a committee meeting with a report on the outcome of the consultation once the consultation concluded and will continue to input into the programme across its lifecycle.
- 3.1.5 A decision on the future of housing management services will be taken in Cabinet on 22 February 2023.

### **3.2 Consultation methodology and results**

- 3.2.1 The consultation on the future of housing management services ran for 8-weeks between 24 October and 18 December 2022. It aimed to test the opinion of stakeholders (predominately council tenants, leaseholders, and freeholders) on two options:

- To bring housing management services back in-house under the direct control of the Council
- To extend the Council's management agreement with THH

3.2.2 A mixed method approach was used which included collecting stakeholders' views and feedback via a survey, drop-in events, a dedicated email address, information webinars and a focus group with THH's Board. The consultation was extensive, exceeding previous consultations on establishing the ALMO or extending the management agreement.

3.2.3 All tenants and leaseholders were posted an information pack, survey with unique reference code and calendar of events. A dedicated email address was established and the survey and information – including in Easy Read and translated versions – were available online, at Idea Stores, at drop-ins and via mail (on request). The consultation was publicised across all Council and THH communications channels (including newsletters, social media, and websites). A reminder letter was sent to all residents and posters were placed on estates.

#### 3.2.4 Survey responses

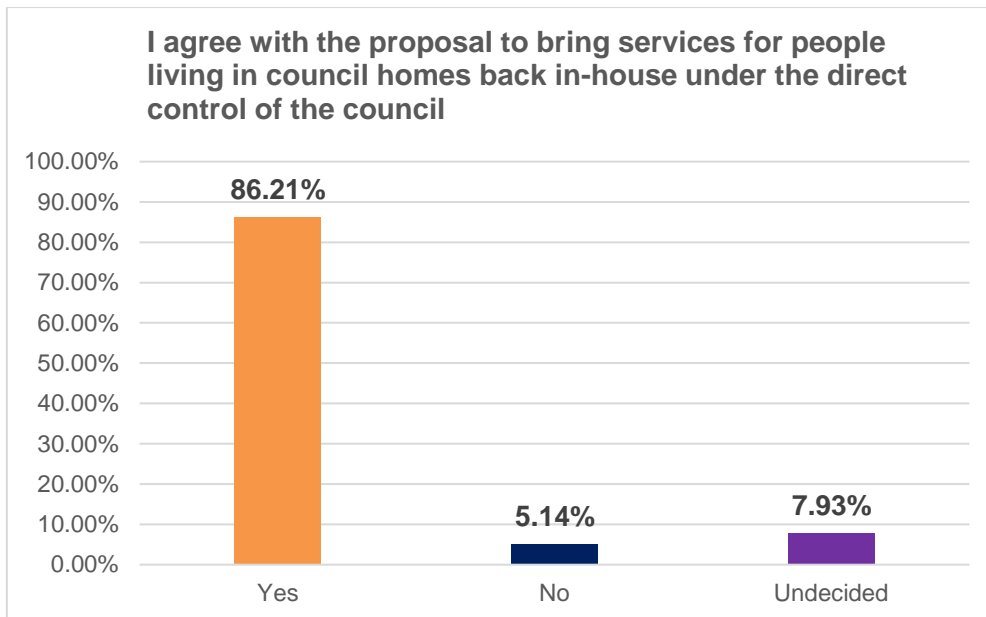
3.2.4.1 3,190 people participated in the survey<sup>1</sup>. This represents 12% of tenants and leaseholders.

3.2.4.2 86.21% of participants (2,750 participants) agreed that housing management services should be brought back in-house under direct control of the council, with 5.91% of participants (161 participants) disagreeing with this option and 7.93% undecided (253 participants).

### **Figure 1 - Responses to “I agree with the proposal to bring services for people living in council homes back in-house under the direct control of the council”**

---

<sup>1</sup> An additional 183 responses were received however these were discounted due to use of an invalid or duplicated unique reference code.



3.2.4.3 Though more tenants participated in the survey than leaseholders (64% of participants were tenants while 31% of participants were leaseholders), tenants and leaseholders' opinions were similar, with 89.42% of tenants and 85.97% of leaseholders agreeing that services should be brought back in-house.

3.2.4.4 92% of residents found the information provided to them useful and easy to understand, while 96% understood that their rent, service charge and tenancy or lease agreement will not be affected due to the proposals.

3.2.4.5 There was representation across all protected characteristics in terms of survey participation and responses from all groups followed the general response trend when asked about the proposal to bring services back in-house. A full analysis of survey responses is set out in Appendix 1.

### 3.2.5 Response rate

3.2.5.1 A 12% response rate is consistent with the average response rate for other local authorities who have recently consulted on bringing their ALMO back in-house (e.g., London Borough of Haringey and Manchester City Council).

3.2.5.2 The response rate meets research and statistical principles required to assure the Council that the survey results are reasonably valid and reliable, and that the sample of 3,190 participants are representative of all tenants and leaseholders.

3.2.5.3 This is calculated by determining the following:

**Table 1 – Population size, confidence interval and confidence level**



Population size	26,796	Total no. of tenants, leaseholders and freeholders able to complete the survey
Confidence interval	3	The margin of error used to establish the range of values that a result would fall within if the population was sampled again. The standard value for this is 3. In this case, a confidence interval of 3 would predict that 83-89% (86% plus or minus 3) of participants would support the proposals to bring services back in house if the survey was repeated.
Confidence level	95%	The probability that the set of values (as established by the confidence interval) is also true for the population. 95% is a standard rate for survey data.

3.2.5.4 The sample size of survey participants required to ensure that confidence can be gained from any response to a question is 1,026 participants.

3.2.5.5 Therefore, it can be concluded the sample size of 3,190 was considerably higher than what is required according to research and statistical principles to be sure that if the survey was repeated the same results would be replicated, with between 83% and 89% of participants supporting proposals to bring services back in-house.

3.2.5.6 Further, the confidence interval for a sample of 3,190 (population size 26,750 and confidence level 95%) is 1, meaning that the Council can be reasonably sure that, should the same survey be conducted with tenants and leaseholders, between 85% and 87% would support the proposal to bring services back in-house under the direct control of the Council.

### 3.2.6 Qualitative responses

3.2.6.1 Over 150 people provided qualitative feedback (via drop-ins, information webinars, emails or written response by completing and returning a postal survey) during the consultation. The majority of respondents agreed with the proposal to bring services back in-house. Residents believe that the Council would provide a better service, clearer communication, and better value for money. Residents suggested improvements to resident engagement, response to complaints (quickly and satisfactorily resolving complaints and issues) and accountability. Improved services (especially relating to repairs and responding to issues) and resident engagement were high priorities for residents.

3.2.6.2 Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) were involved in the consultation, providing feedback at drop-in sessions, information webinars and via written responses.

- 3.2.6.3 A focus group was run with the THH Board. The Board will continue to work closely with the Council to ensure residents receive the best services and are not negatively impacted by any transition period.

### 3.3 Resident engagement

#### 3.3.1 Resident engagement and communications plan

- 3.3.1.1 1,444 people completing the survey expressed an interest in being further involved in the future of housing management services.

- 3.3.1.2 As part of the Council's commitment to engaging with its residents, officers are developing a resident engagement and communications plan. Consideration is being given to a tiered approach which allows engagement at the level best suited to the resident. This includes:

- A periodical newsletter to those participants (1,444) who during the consultation expressed an interest in being involved in the future of housing management services.
- An engagement event attended by residents, senior council officers and members to discuss the Council's future plans for services including structures of housing management services, tenants and leaseholders' engagement strategy, service improvement focus areas and new legislation. Other local authorities would be invited to attend to share learning.
- Tenants & Leaseholders Housing Forum meetings held (virtually and in-person) on a regular basis which can be attended by any resident or owner of a council a home, with each meeting focusing on a themed discussion to make recommendations on what steps can be taken to improve services and engagement for residents.

#### 3.3.2 Resident engagement strategy and governance arrangements

- 3.3.2.1 Should a decision be taken to bring services back in-house under the direct control of the Council, a key area of focus will be developing mechanisms to ensure that there are high levels of engagement between residents and the Council, including ensuring that residents can scrutinise services and hold the Council to account.

- 3.3.2.2 Work will be undertaken to:

- Understand how current arrangements between THH and residents can be retained, strengthened, and transferred to the Council.
- Use residents' suggestions and feedback during the consultation and engagement events to strengthen engagement between residents and the Council.
- Provide different ways for residents to engage with the Council at different levels (from receiving a newsletter to participating in governance structures and creating an umbrella organisation for Tenant and Resident Associations).

- Consider examples and case studies from other local authorities and social landlords.
- Strengthen existing and develop new mechanisms through which residents and other stakeholders (e.g., Members and independents) can scrutinise and hold accountable an in-house housing management service.
- Work directly with tenants and leaseholders through the Tenants and Leaseholders Housing Forum, Residents Panel and TRAs to co-produce a new engagement strategy.

3.3.2.3 Areas of further interest generated from feedback gathered during the consultation and initial research on best practice in other local authorities include (but are not excluded to):

- Strategic Housing Board/Committee function with resident, independent and Member representation and ability to make recommendations to Cabinet.
- Strengthening of scrutiny function of Residents' Panel
- Umbrella organisation for Tenants & Residents' Associations
- Scrutiny bodies for specific service areas e.g., building safety.
- Neighbourhood and special interest panels and forums
- Forum/consultative group (c500-1000 people) signed up to be consulted e.g., via surveys and focus groups.
- Practice weeks (where senior officers spend time with frontline services) and estates walkabout

3.3.2.4 The programme team would welcome the views of the Committee on the resident strategy and governance arrangements.

### 3.4 **Shaping a new service**

3.4.1 If a decision is taken to bring services back in-house, a wide range of work to design, transfer and bed-in services will be required. This includes design of organisational structures and service integration projects, establishing resident engagement and governance arrangements, consultation and transfer of staff, novation (or termination) of contracts, transfer of budgets and assets and wind-up of THH as a company.

3.4.2 Proposals for a new service will be produced with stakeholders. This includes residents, Members, Council and THH officers and THH Board Members.

3.4.3 When designing services, there will be focus on:

- Ensuring the council is accountable to residents and the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Identifying and progressing opportunities to improve the customer journey and experience for residents by joining-up services. This

includes integrating services, co-locating services, cross-training frontline staff and developing joint initiatives.

- Identifying opportunities to make savings and generate income to the Housing Revenue Account so that these can be invested into housing management services, improvement of homes and new homes.

### **3.5 Performance and improvement of services**

3.5.1 When designing services, there will be focus on:

#### **3.5.2 Maintenance of performance**

3.5.2.1 Should a decision to be taken to bring services back in-house, significant focus will be given to the maintenance of the performance of services both pre, during and post any transfer period as this is a key risk of any insourcing programme. Housing management service performance will be monitored closely to ensure continuity of services, and a bedding-in period for transferred, integrated and new services/structures will be factored into any new initiatives/improvement plans.

#### **3.5.3 Improvement of services**

3.5.3.1 During the consultation, residents provided rich feedback on the performance of housing management services and provided suggestions for improvement across a wide range of areas. The feedback provided by residents in the consultation and through ongoing engagement will support the targeting of service improvements that are most important to residents.

3.5.3.2 Additionally, with the progression of the Social Housing Regulation Bill through parliament (expected to receive Royal Assent by July 2023), a new framework for the delivery of housing management functions will be introduced. The Bill will empower the Regulator of Social Housing to proactively ensure social landlords are compliant with consumer standards and the Council's housing management function (as a holder of more than 1,000 units of social housing stock) is expected to be assessed once every 4 years with the potential that it could also be the subject of ad-hoc reactive inspections outside of the four-yearly inspection regime.

3.5.3.3 The focus of the Bill is to ensure that social housing tenants' homes are safe but also that local residents are engaged and involved in decision-making and supporting wider neighbourhood development in their areas. The Bill will introduce a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures which are designed to provide tenants with greater transparency about their landlord's performance. These will go live on 1 April 2023 and will be published in the summer of 2024.

3.5.3.4 Work is being undertaken to understand how the Council's housing management services (currently within Tower Hamlets Homes) are performing against the new TSMs. Baseline performance against the new

TSMs (alongside resident feedback from the consultation and continuing engagement) will inform plans for the improvement of services. In addition, officers are already working through the current set of consumer standards to provide assurance and evidence of compliance. The Regulator of Social Housing recently published: [Reshaping consumer regulation: our implementation plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118422/reshaping_consumer_regulation_our_implementation_plan.pdf) which sets out how the new regime will work and highlights that some parts of the current Consumer Standards will remain relevant, there will be six themed new Consumer Standards (which may be subject to further change). The new Consumer Standards will cover Safety, Quality, Neighbourhood, Transparency, Engagement and Accountability and Tenancy.

#### **4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Checklist was undertaken prior to the consultation commencing and a full Equalities Impact Analysis was completed to ensure that all protected characteristics had an opportunity to respond to the consultation and that the Council mitigated as much as possible any obstacles which may have prevented residents from responding.
- 4.2 Two further Equality Impact Checklists will be completed prior to any decision being taken on the future of housing management services – the first for residents and the second for THH staff who will inevitably have concerns regarding the security of their employment.

#### **5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 The cost of undertaking the consultation exercise totalled less than £50k and will be contained within existing HRA resources.
- 6.2 A growth bid was approved at Cabinet on 25 January 2023 for the housing management review programme. One-off base budget growth totalling £261k has been approved, £72k in 2022/23 and the remaining £189k for 2023/24 in order to facilitate the programme should a decision be taken to in-source, funded by the HRA.

#### **7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 Housing Law and the law relating to Best Value required the Council to consult with the relevant stakeholders whilst the decision-making process was at a formative stage. The Council was to then properly consider the results of the consultation prior to making any decision as to the future delivery of the Housing Management Function. This process has been followed and so the Mayor may make an executive decision in the

appropriate forum to move the delivery of the housing management legal function back in house if he so wishes

---

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE

### **Appendices**

- NONE.

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

NONE

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Nicola Klinger ([Nicola.Klinger@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Klinger@towerhamlets.gov.uk)) – Programme Lead – Housing Management Strategic Review

# Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee

## Developing a new Local Plan

February 2023



# Overview



1. Need for a Local Plan review
2. Developing a Local Plan
3. Programme
4. Housing in the Local Plan
5. Getting involved





# The need for a Local Plan review

## National + Regional drivers:

- Statutory requirements to have an up-to-date plan
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- Planning for the Future – White Paper
- Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill
- COVID-19
- Brexit
- New London Plan and guidance
- NPPF Revision

## Local drivers:

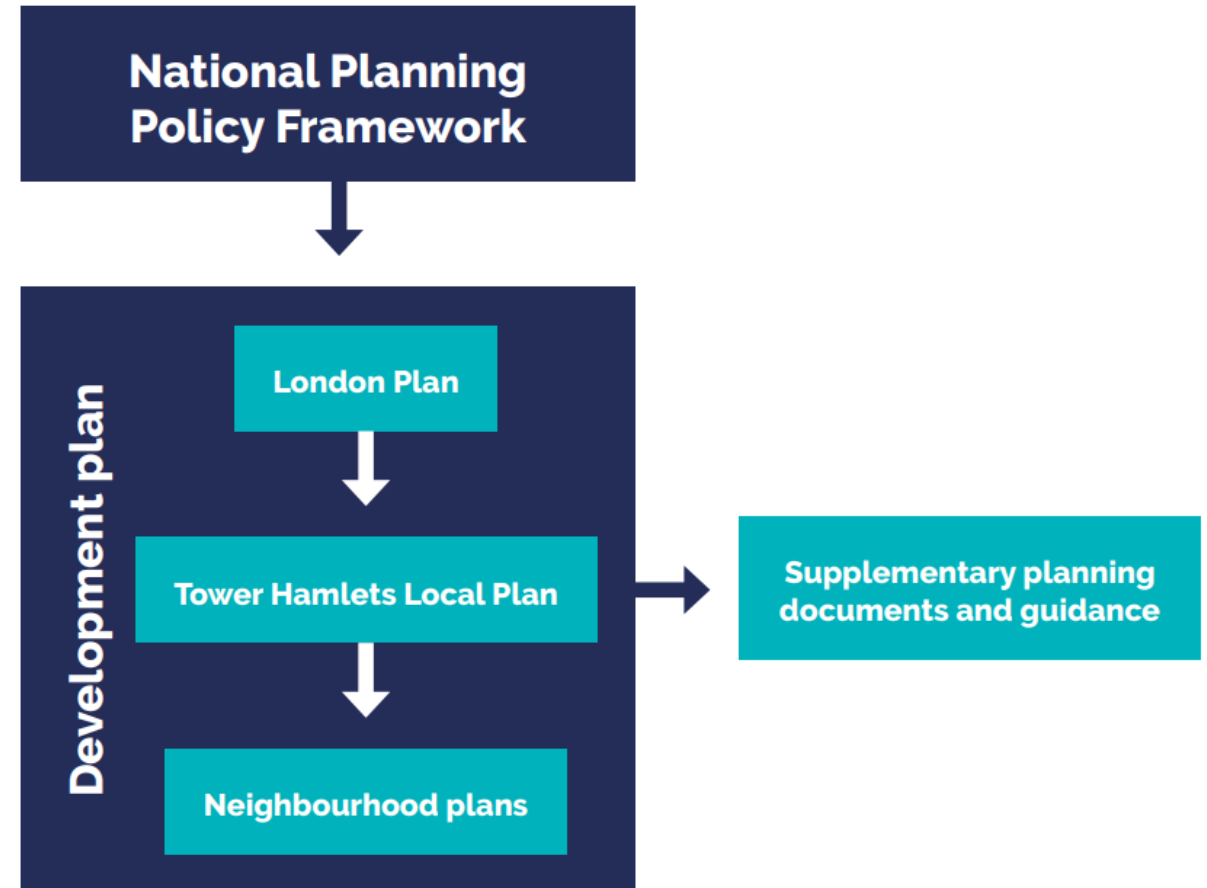
- New administration – Strategic Plan
- Overcrowding
- New non-traditional housing products
- Healthy living
- Sustainability
- Circular economy principles
- Managing tall buildings
- Safety in the public realm
- Fire safety
- Economy and employment
- LLDC



# Developing a Local Plan (1/3)

- Requirements
  - Statutory
  - Up date every 5 years
  - Conformity
  - Evidence based
  - Deliverable

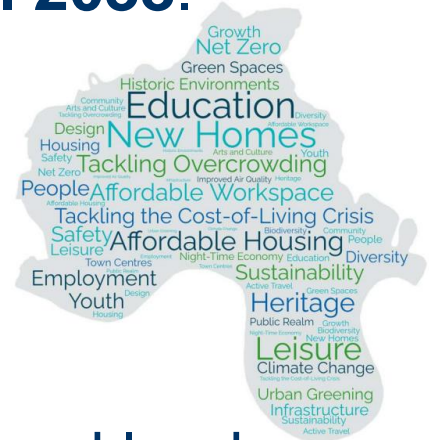
Page 34



# Developing a Local Plan (2/3)



- The new Local Plan covers a fifteen-year period, from **2023 until 2038**.
- The **vision** for the Local Plan is informed by the Strategic Plan, discussions with the Mayor and Cabinet and communities.
- **Policies** are divided into two types.
  - Spatial policies. These set out the overarching requirements and land designations covering different themes.
  - Development management policies. These provide further guidance on the spatial policies where it is considered appropriate and relevant.
- **Site allocations** have been identified detailing the land use and infrastructure requirements as well as the design principles and delivery considerations.



# Developing a new Local Plan (3/3)



## NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance and London Plan:

- LPAs must assess future needs and opportunities
- Explore and identify options for addressing these, and then set out a preferred approach
- Gather robust and justifiable evidence to support policies
- Evidence must inform what is in the plan and shape its development
- Remain in conformity with higher order guidance (incl LPGs)

## Key evidence base:

- Local Housing Need Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Characterisation and Growth Strategy
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Views and landmark buildings study
- Design-led Site Capacity Assessments
- Town Centre Capacity Study
- Carbon Policy Study
- Strategic Transport Assessment
- Integrated Impact Assessment
- Viability Assessment



Stage	Output	Timeframes
Stage 0: Initiation and Programming	Project Initiation Document (PID) Internal engagement Identify evidence base	March – June 2022
Stage 1: Regulation 18 Preparation of Local Plan and Consultation	Commissioning evidence base 'First Proposal' policy & document development Reporting	August 2022 - December 2022
	'First Proposals' engagement	January 2023 – February 2023
	Reg 18 policy & document development Reporting	March 2023 - June 2023
	Statutory public consultation on the draft Local Plan	June 2023 - August 2023
Stage 2: Regulation 19 Publication of Local Plan	Reg 19 policy & document development Commission further evidence Reporting	Autumn 2023 - Winter 2023/24
	Statutory public consultation on the draft Local Plan	Spring / Summer 2024
Stage 3: Regulation 22 Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State	Modifications to the Local Plan Submit to the Secretary of State	Summer 2024 – Autumn 2024
Stage 4: Regulation 24 Examination in Public	Examination in Public (process & hearing) Final Modifications	Winter 2024 – Spring 2025
Stage 5: Regulation 26 Adoption	Adoption process	2025



# Reporting and engagement

## Mayor, Lead Member and senior management

- Regular briefing/meeting dates scheduled
- **Steering groups**

## Internal Working Groups:

- Site allocations
- **Housing**
- Design + Conservation
- Employment + Economic Growth
- Environment + Sustainability
- Biodiversity + Green Infrastructure
- Movement + Connectivity
- Town Centres + Social Infrastructure  
(including education), Waste

## External stakeholders:

- GLA, TfL, Environment Agency, Historic England, statutory consultees
- Landowners, Developers, Housing Associations,
- Consultant firms, industry sounding boards, regional working groups, neighbourhood planning forums
- Neighbouring boroughs



# Housing in the Local Plan (1/2)



- Feedback to date
  - Mayor's office – overcrowding, quality of homes, Brick Lane SPD
  - Housing – site specific schemes incl Council sites, implementation of new(er) housing products, housing targets
  - Developers – viability, heights, provisions incl amenity
- Changes to housing-related policies
  - Unit mix updates
  - Policy strictly prioritising affordable provision
  - Guidance on provision of new housing models
  - Site allocations detail
  - Design and heights
  - Child play space and communal revisions



# Housing in the Local Plan (2/2)



- Emerging policy to address on-going priorities and changes, including,
  - Affordable housing
    - updated targets, genuine social housing and quality
  - Affordable housing products
    - e.g., managing proposals for ‘First Homes’ and DMR
  - Housing type
    - e.g., managing supply of Build-to-Rent, student housing, co-living and houses in multiple occupation
  - Meeting housing need
    - unit size and mix (incl family-sized homes) and specialist housing
  - Short-term lets – managing supply
- Site allocations will include:
  - Design-led assessment of housing capacity, including height definitions





# Engagement & Statutory Consultation



- Engage with the team at any point
  - input any service requirements
  - submit information / evidence to support asks
- Formal consultation for external stakeholders:
  - ‘First Proposals’ engagement – Winter 2022/23  
[Tower Hamlets new Local Plan early engagement | Let’s Talk Tower Hamlets](#)  
- PDF document, interactive document and events
  - Regulation 18 (Consult on draft Local Plan with policy options) – Summer 2023
  - Regulation 19 (Publication of developed Local Plan) – Spring / Summer 2024



This page is intentionally left blank