

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

Agenda

Thursday, 20 October 2022 6.30 p.m.
**Committee Room One - Town Hall, Mulberry
Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG**

Members:

Chair: Councillor Abdul Mannan

Vice Chair:

Councillor Musthak Ahmed, Councillor Ahmodul Kabir, Councillor Faroque Ahmed,
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait, Councillor Marc Francis and Councillor Sabina Khan

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
Rachel Blake

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

Contact for further enquiries:

Joel West, Democratic Services Team Leader (Committees),
joel.west@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG
<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.

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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, 20 October 2022

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. WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

4.1 Housing & Regeneration Sub-Committee Work Programme (Pages 17 - 18)

5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Challenge Session Recommendations (Pages 19 - 24)

5.2 Council Representation on the Boards of Social Landlords - THHF (Pages 25 - 32)

5.3 Council Representation on the Board of Social Landlords (Pages 33 - 36)

5.4 Approach and Support to Homeless Applications (Pages 37 - 42)



6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting of the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

Thursday, 15 December 2022 at 6.30 p.m. to be held in Committee Room One - Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG



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Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

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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, 14/07/2022

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HOUSING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 14 JULY 2022

**COMMITTEE ROOM ONE – 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 Sabina Khan

Officers Present in Person

Mark Slowikowski -(Senior Strategy and Policy Officer)

Justina Bridgeman -(Democratic Services Officer, Committees)

Jennifer Peters -(Director of Planning and Building Control)

Officers Present Remotely:

Karen Swift -(Director, Housing and Regeneration)

Stephen Shapiro -(Acting Director Property & Major Programmes)

Sripriya Sudhakar -(Head of Regeneration)

Una Bedford -(Strategy and Policy Officer (Place))

Apologies:

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Ann Sutcliffe -(Corporate Director (Place))

Joel West -(Democratic Services Team Leader, Committees)

COMMITTEE, 14/07/2022

1 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair requested nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee for the municipal year 2022/23. Councillor Mannan proposed Councillor Nathalie Bienfait for the position. This was seconded by Councillor Musthak Ahmed.

There were no further nominations.

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee;

RESOLVED that:

Councillor Nathalie Bienfait is elected Vice-chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the Sub Committee meeting held on 15 March 2022 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

Matters Arising

Councillor Marc Francis, who chaired the meeting held on 15 March 2022, reminded the subcommittee that a recommendation was made for Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) to attend the first meeting of the municipal year to discuss performance and include all data. This was not added to the agenda for 14 July 2022 meeting, as a review of performance monitoring for all social landlords was discussed in item 3.1.

The Chair indicated to the sub committee that a meeting with Andrea Baker, chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF) will take place in two weeks' time, and updates will be provided at the next meeting scheduled for October.

3.1 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

3.1.1 - Social Landlords Performance Report – Councillor Marc Francis asked that this become a standing agenda item and that he would like to see their performance data over the course of the last 12 months in advance of the committee's next meeting in October.

COMMITTEE, 14/07/2022

3.1.2 – Homelessness Action Plan - Councillor Marc Francis raised concerns over the quality and location of temporary accommodation used and the wider use of PRS to discharge the council's rehousing duty. He requested that the Sub Committee be provided with a written update on when an improvement in the Housing Options Service could be seen.

3.1.4 – A.O.B Letters to the Mayor (requesting Spitalfields Housing Association be referred to the Social Housing Regulator) and Clarion Housing Association (concerns over performance).

Councillor Francis stated that the previous chair of the Sub Committee had written to the former Mayor (while still in office) requesting him to refer Spitalfields Housing Association to the Social Housing Regulator. Councillor Francis then requested the Sub Committee agree the next steps with the new Mayor. This was seconded by Councillor Ahmed who also wanted more intervention by the Mayor and Lead Member for Housing to address the poor performance of social landlords operating in the borough, particularly on health and safety issues.

Councillor Francis also requested a discussion amongst members of the Sub Committee on the next steps to be taken to hold Clarion to account for specific actions, prior to the October meeting. A written update on both issues was requested ahead of the October meeting by Councillor Francis.

RESOLVED that

The outstanding actions be noted, and written updates be provided prior to the next meeting scheduled for the 20 October 2022.

4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings 2022/23.

Justina Bridgeman, Democratic Services Officer, requested the sub committee note the membership, terms of reference, meeting dates and confirm meeting start times as 6.30pm at the first meeting of the municipal year 2022/23.

RESOLVED that the sub committee

1. Note its Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership, Dates of future meetings, as set out in the appendices and report.
2. The start times of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee were confirmed as 6.30pm.

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5. OVERVIEW FROM SERVICE DIRECTORS

5.1 Overview of Place Directorate

Jennifer Peters, Director of Planning & Building Control, provided a brief presentation on the Place Directorate, which detailed the organisational structure, key strategies, Place pledge status by Manifesto and challenges and priorities for 2022/23.

RESOLVED that

1. The presentation be noted.

5.2 Overview of Planning and Building Control

Jennifer Peters, Director of Planning & Building Control, followed with a brief presentation on the service, which detailed the key functions of the service; strategic planning, infrastructure planning and building control. Jennifer also detailed the divisional support, spatial data and the digital and commercial innovation unit.

Further to questions from members of the sub committee, Jennifer;

- Explained that the service is actively looking at how the new local plan can deal with issues of women's safety and explore how places can be made to be and feel safer via urban design.
- Noted that the Public Realm team are considering how the borough can increase recycling options for residents, in line with the Reuse, Recycle and Waste, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RESOLVED that

1. The presentation be noted.

5.3 Overview of Housing and THHF

Karen Swift, Director of Housing and Regeneration, gave a brief presentation on the work the council undertakes in relation to statutory housing duties and other housing activity. Karen outlined the role of the housing division, the challenges and the priorities for 2022/23.

Further to questions from members of the sub committee, Karen;

- Explained that Tower Hamlet Homes (THH) does not have aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding on any sites. The remaining ACM in the borough exists on a small number of private sector buildings over 18m and following government funds now available, removal underway or planned

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imminent. London Fire Brigade undertake regular inspections of buildings and advise on interim measures. LFB and council work with developers (including taking enforcement action) to facilitate the remediation of dangerous materials.

- Estimated that the projected time to fulfil Mayor Rahman's pledge of building 1,000 social housing properties a year, with assistance from section 106 pipeline schemes for housing association homes is achievable.
- Explained that property inspections for temporary accommodation are undertaken regularly as part of the procurement exercise. A briefing note on the standards required for temporary accommodation can be submitted if the committee require it..
- Suggested the Chair raise concerns on contractors response times to THHF Chair Andrea Baker, at his scheduled meeting with her.
- Indicated that discussions will take place with Andy Simpson, Head of Strategy, Policy and Performance, regarding the council's resources to manage residents' concerns with their registered providers.

RESOLVED that

1. The presentation be noted.
2. A briefing note on standards required for temporary accommodation be submitted.

5.4 Overview of Integrated Growth and Development

Stephen Shapiro, Acting Director Property & Major Programmes, provided a brief presentation on the service, which detailed the property and major programmes, asset and facilities management and capital delivery. Stephen followed with an overview of the growth services key workstreams; employment, skills and support, careers and social mobility and key workstreams to tackle poverty.

RESOLVED that

1. The presentation be noted.

5.5 Overview of Regeneration

Sripriya Sudhakar, Head of Regeneration, gave a brief presentation of the services, the approach to regeneration, the team, the work programme and challenges and opportunities.

RESOLVED that

1. The presentation be noted.

COMMITTEE, 14/07/2022

6 WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

Mark Slowikowski, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer, proposed topics to discuss at the remaining meetings for the 2022/23 municipal year. After deliberation consideration should be made to review the Refreshed Housing Strategy the following were added to the agenda for 20 October meeting:

- Social Landlord's Performance Report
- Council representation on the board for social landlord's
- Parking on Estates

Further to discussions from members of the sub committee, it was agreed that:

- Recycling Rates on Estates can be discussed alongside social landlord's performance.
- Air Quality concerns will be referred to the Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub Committee, as they are not in this sub committees remit.
- Registered Providers Repair Performance will be added to the agenda for 15 December meeting.

The sub committee were also informed that Mayor Rahman is currently exploring reforms to the Housing Options Service.

RESOLVED that

1. Social Landlord's Performance and Parking on Estates be considered as topics for scrutiny for the 20 October 2022 meeting.
2. Council representation on the boards of social landlord's meeting scheduled for the 20 October 2022.
3. The report be noted.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

The meeting ended at 8.27pm

Chair, Councillor Abdul Mannan

Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

Open Actions

No.	Reference	Action	Assigned to:	Due Date	Response
2022/2023 – Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee					
Meeting - 14th July 2022					
3.	Minutes of the sub-committee meeting held on the 15 March 2022 –	(15 March 2022 - THH to be asked to attend the next sub-committee meeting). The Chair indicated to the subcommittee that a meeting with Andrea Baker, chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF) will take place in two weeks' time, and updates will be provided at the next meeting scheduled for October.	Chair, Cllr Abdul Mannan	October 2022	Following the meeting with Andrea Baker, chair of THHF, it was decided not to invite THH to attend this meeting as this might risk compromising the consultation exercise with tenants and leaseholders on the future of the housing management service, including the option to bring the service back in house.
1.1	Social Landlords Performance Report (15th March 2022)	Councillor Marc Francis asked that this become a standing agenda item and that he would like to see their performance data over the course of the last 12 months in advance of the committee's next meeting in October.	Chair, Cllr Abdul Mannan	October 2022	The Social Landlord's Performance Report is scheduled for the next meeting of the sub-committee. N.B. The next meeting of the sub-committee has been rescheduled from 15 December 2022 to 12 January 2023.

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee **Action Log**


3.1.4	– Letters to the Mayor and to Clarion HA	Councillor Francis stated that the previous chair of the Sub Committee had written to the former Mayor (while still in office) requesting him to refer Spitalfields Housing Association to the Social Housing Regulator.	Chair, Cllr Abdul Mannan	October 2022	The letter to the former Mayor, requesting that Spitalfields HA be referred to the Social Housing regulator, has been sent to the Mayor, as requested by the chair of the sub-committee. Meetings have been held with Clarion HA.
B/F	Fire Safety Action Plan	(15 March 2022 – Sub-committee members suggested that the Fire Safety Group submit the draft action plan for review to the subcommittee before Cabinet in July 2022.	Karen Swift, Housing and Regeneration Director	(TBC)	The draft action plan has not been scheduled for a Cabinet meeting at this stage. The Mayor is reviewing the plan.

Agenda Item 4.1

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-committee work programme 2022/23: Chair: Cllr Abdul Mannan

Meeting	Scrutiny Activity	Title	Description	Speakers
12 January 2023	Strategic Performance	Social Landlords Performance Report	Review social landlords' performance for Quarters 1 and 2	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration Andrea Baker Chair THHF
	Spotlight	Parking on Housing Estates	Reviewing parking on housing estates and learning from best practice.	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration Andrea Baker Chair THHF
	Spotlight	Approach to regeneration	Examine the approach to regeneration and how this can be linked to assisting local business recovery and making the best use of available local labour, particularly from excluded communities	Ellie Kershaw Interim Director of Integrated Growth and Development
16 February 2023	Pre-Cabinet	THH Resident Consultation Feedback on Bringing THH Back in house	Feedback on the findings of the consultation process with THH residents ahead of the Cabinet report on the proposal	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration
	Spotlight	Developing a new Local Plan	Reviewing planning and building control issue and how this can be used to influence priorities for developing a new Local Plan	Jen Peters Director of Planning and Building Control
	Spotlight	Change in Private Sector Tenant rights	Reviewing the implications on the government's Renters Reform Bill If published	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration

27 April 2023	Strategic Performance	Social Landlords Performance Report	Review social landlords' performance for Quarter 3	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration Andrea Baker Chair THHF
	Spotlight	Housing Strategy Refresh	Review the housing strategy refresh in light of the new administration's housing priorities	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration
	Spotlight	ASB on Housing Estates	Reviewing ASB on housing estates and learning from best practice in tackling the problem.	Karen Swift Director of Housing and Regeneration Andrea Baker Chair THHF

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</p> <p>20th October 2022</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report Cllr Abdul Mannan Chair Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Challenge Session Recommendations – proposed consultation on the future of housing management services including the option to bring housing management services back in house.</p>	

Proposed Decision Path (indicate) – Delete Section Before Publication:

	Step [Delete as applicable]	Date
DLT Level (Tier One)	DLT / CD	N/A
CLT Level (Tier Two)	CLT / CE	N/A
Member Level (Tier Three)	MAB / 121	N/A
Decision (Tier Four)	Formal Committees	N/A

Proposed Decision Path (indicate) – Delete Section Before Publication:

Originating Officer(s)	Mark Slowikowski, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Subcommittee (H&RSSC) held a challenge session on the 15th September 2022 open to all Members to review the proposed consultation on the future of housing management services, including the option to bring housing management service, currently provided by Tower Hamlets Homes, (THH) back in house.

This report sets out the recommendations from the challenge session and contains a number of wider recommendations that Members considered were pertinent to the overall proposal to bring housing management services back in house.

Recommendations:

The H&RSSC is recommended to:

Agree the recommendations from the H&RSSC challenge session held on the 15th September to review the proposed consultation to bring housing management services back in house.

THIS SECTION TO BE DELETED BEFORE PUBLICATION

Directorate Leadership Team
Corporate Leadership Team
Mayor's Advisory Board
Communications

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee Scrutiny Sub held a challenge to review the proposed consultation to bring housing management services back in house. This report presents the findings and recommendations from the challenge session which the Sub-Committee needs to agree.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The alternative option is not to agree the recommendations from the challenge session. This is not recommended as the recommendations from the challenge sessions provide insight in how we can improve the consultation process.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Background and Context

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) was set up in 2008 to deliver the Council's Decent Homes Programme, which was successfully achieved in 2017. In 2016, the then Mayor decided to extend the Management Agreement (MA) by two years to July 2020.

On 31 July 2019, the then Mayor resolved to proceed with the extension of the council's MA with Tower Hamlets Homes for four years (to 2024), with a possible extension of a further four years (to 2028).

- 3.2 In November 2020, the Government published "The charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper" which set out proposals to change the role of the Regulator of Social Housing so that it would include inspection of local authority landlords.
- 3.3 The Social Housing Regulation Bill is currently progressing through Parliament. Additionally, the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022 has come into force. All impact on the provision of housing management services to residents.
- 3.4 The council's strategic plan sets out a pledge to "consult residents immediately on bringing THH back in-house". Insourcing the housing management functions is one option for the future of housing management services, alongside extending the MA.

Key Considerations for the Consultation

- 3.5 The council is committed to listening to residents and stakeholders, and to ensuring that decisions are properly informed by public opinion and our key stakeholders.
- 3.6 This includes clearly communicating to residents what we are consulting on and what the potential proposals might be, ensuring that the consultation is accessible to a wide range of groups, explaining how people will be affected by the proposal, and communicating the results of the consultation and the decision to participants and stakeholders.
- 3.7 It is proposed that a range of methods are used, namely:
- Survey of all tenants and leaseholders with a questionnaire available online (via Let's Talk Tower Hamlets) and posted out to all tenants and leaseholders for those who may find it difficult to access digital surveys.
 - Drop-in sessions in community centres.
 - Dedicated email address for residents to send comments to.

Proposed Consultation Recommendations

- 3.8 Five Members attended the challenge session and considered the 3 proposed questions to be asked of residents and made the following recommendations:

(the actual questions are not included in this report)

Question 1

No specific recommendations were made as the finalised draft pack was not available to members at the challenge session.

Question 2

Members recommended that the term “tenancy” be added before “conditions” to make it clear to residents that there will be no change to their tenancy conditions.

Question 3

In relation to this question specifically, but also applied to all the questions to be asked of residents, Members recommended that the addition of a third possible response, either: “Don’t Know”, “Not Sure” or “Undecided” be considered.

- 3.9 Members also recommended that the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) should emphasise the accountability for continuous improvement of service delivery in the new proposals, that consultation with the staff of THH will need to be part of this process and to get the most out of the consultation, the council should consider using telephone surveys to garner residents views.

- 3.10 In response to these further recommendations, officers have emphasised, in the consultation pack, how important accountability is. However, performance is not a reason for the review of the future of housing management services or the proposal to bring services back in-house.
- 3.11 Furthermore, THH staff will be able to share their views during the wider consultation via talk.housingmanagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk. If a decision is taken to in-source, a full staff consultation will take place.
- 3.12 Officers considered the use of telephone surveys, however due to the resource required, and difficulties in this operationally, telephone surveys will not be conducted initially. This will be revaluated at the half-way point if there is a low response rate or lack of views from residents if it would be beneficial (bearing in mind the costs) to conduct telephone surveys.
- 3.13 Additionally, to ensure people can share their comments anonymously, officers will provide a comments box during drop-in sessions.
- 3.14 Subsequent to the challenge session, all Members were offered a further opportunity to challenge the consultation questions and methodology by submitting written questions or comments to the project manager. No further comments were received.
- 3.15 Members were unable to consider the draft consultation pack at the challenge session as it had not been finalised. Instead Members were presented with a summary document and a finalised draft pack was sent out to those Members who attended the challenge session and Members of the sub-committee on Friday 23rd September. No comments on the information contained in the pack were received.

Wider Recommendations

- 3.16 The recommendations made by Members, contained in section 3.9 above, focussed on the specific reason for the challenge session: for Members to scrutinise the proposed questions and the information contained in the information pack.
- 3.17 However, the discussion at the session also touched on other issues that Members considered were pertinent to the overall proposal and these wider recommendations are given below:
1. Need to bear in mind residents may have a memory of poor-quality service when the housing management was under the council's direct control. This might have been the case with repairs and achieving the decent home standard.
 2. It was acknowledged that the service had improved under THH and that the decent homes standard was achieved but that some concerns with the housing management service persist especially around repairs and the engagement with residents.

3. There is a need to define who in the council will be managing the service. And that there is a proper plan as to how management will be improved.
 4. We need to ensure that risks being properly explained to residents.
 5. We should be clear about where any new in-house organisation will sit within the council, particularly the management level.
- 3.18 In response to these wider recommendations, officers will summarise all feedback from residents provided during the consultation, including any comments about performance. An Engagement Plan will be developed to run alongside the consultation and beyond (regardless of the decision taken) to listen to what residents' feel is important in their housing services, including via a Tenants & Leaseholders Housing Forum (TLHF).
- 3.19 Furthermore, the consultation pack now includes details on what will change under each option and what the associated risks might be.
- 3.20 A full review of how housing management services could be managed organisationally will be undertaken, including consideration of the management of an in-house service and how this will sit within the council.
- 3.21 Finally, the sub-committee is scheduled to consider a pre-Cabinet report on the results of the consultation exercise at its meeting on the 16th February 2023. Members are keen to remain actively engaged in this process beyond this year and throughout the duration of the project.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The scrutiny challenge sessions considered how we ensure the consultation reaches a diverse range of residents and those seldom heard. The recommendations from the session should support our equality duty.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 5.1 The report is seeking approval to consult tenants and leaseholders on whether to continue operating an ALMO model for housing management and maintenance services or to insource the service, with it being provided directly by LBTH.
- 5.2 There is a cost associated with undertaking this consultation. This cost must be borne in full by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). There is no budgetary provision within the HRA revenue budget to meet this cost and as a result a growth bid totalling £463k will be proposed in year to complete the consultation, strategic review and cost benefit analysis of the options.
- 5.3 At present the growth bid has not been considered by Members and funding has therefore not been secured. If successful, the growth will be met from HRA reserves.

6. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 6.1 Under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, the council has a legal obligation to consult its secure tenants on matters of housing management such as changes to the management, maintenance, improvement or demolition of houses let by them or changes in the provision of amenities.
- 6.2 If the ALMO is brought in-house there will also be rights for the staff employed by THH to transfer to the Council's employment under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Any changes which are proposed to terms and conditions must be considered in line with the requirements and restrictions of these regulations.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Reports

- None.

Appendices

None.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended) List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

Mark Slowikowski, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer - 020 7364 3158

REGISTERED PROVIDER GOVERNANCE

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LBTH H&RSSC
OCTOBER 2022

TOWER HAMLETS HOUSING FORUM

- Registered Housing Associations
- stock in Tower Hamlets
- aims
 - challenge discrimination and stigma
 - develop and share best practice
 - improve resident experience
 - promote the sector's reputation
 - support the Council to deliver strategic plans

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clarionhg.com



eastendhomes.net



gatewayhousing.org.uk



lqgroup.org.uk



nhg.org.uk



onehousing.co.uk



peabody.org.uk



poplarharca.co.uk



prha.net



shgroup.org.uk



spitalfieldsha.co.uk



swan.org.uk



thch.org.uk



towerhamlets.gov.uk



towerhamletshomes.org.uk

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARDS

‘Essentially the non-executive director's role is to provide a creative contribution to the board by providing independent oversight and constructive challenge’ IoD

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- set the strategy
- develop and hold vision, mission and values
- own financial responsibilities
- be accountable
- executive directors also manage the day-to-day



REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING

'Registered providers shall

*...ensure effective governance arrangements that deliver their
aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and
potential tenants in an effective, transparent and
accountable manner.*

...adopt and comply with an appropriate code of governance.

*...ensure that they manage their affairs with an appropriate
degree of skill, independence, diligence, effectiveness,
prudence and foresight.'*



Regulator of
Social Housing



GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL VIABILITY STANDARD

April 2015

NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION CODE OF GOVERNANCE

‘...fulfil duties and obligations responsibly, acting at all times in good faith and in the best interests of the housing association and for the delivery of its strategic objectives’

‘...take all reasonable steps to make sure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between duties to the association and personal interests, other duties and relationships.

‘...not disclose, without authority, any confidential or sensitive business information.’

Code of Governance 2020

NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION

1.

Acting in the best interests of the housing association and its residents:

you have a responsibility to carry out your role in line with the social purposes of the association.

2.

Behaving with integrity:

the reputation and good name of the association depends in part on compliance with this Code, and with the laws, policies and procedures that it refers to. The integrity of those involved needs to be beyond doubt, and seen so to be.

3.

Conducting yourself professionally and treating others well:

professionalism, consideration and respect for others, and a commitment to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, are fundamental to the delivery of social purpose.

4.

Protecting yourself, others and the environment:

you have a responsibility while on the housing association's business to protect your own health, safety, security and wellbeing and that of others, and, where reasonable, to make the most positive possible environmental impact.

THE REGULATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING (INFLUENCE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

- local authority cannot exceed 24% of the total number of board members
- the presence of local authority is no longer required to achieve quorum at board meetings
- no more local authority voting rights as members
- votes of the board other than by way of a majority will only require a 75% majority vote in favour
- any requirement for local authority consent to constitutional changes will cease to have effect

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The screenshot displays the official UK legislation website, legislation.gov.uk. The page title is "The Regulation of Social Housing (Influence of Local Authorities) (England) Regulations 2017". It is identified as UK Statutory Instruments 2017 No. 1102. The page includes a table of contents with sections: Introductory Text, PART 1 Introductory, PART 2 Officers, and PART 3 Voting rights of local authorities as members. The page also features a "What Version" section with options for "Latest available (Revised)" and "Original (As made)". The footer contains the Open Government Licence (OGL) information and the Crown and database right notice.

BOARD RECRUITMENT

- vacancies advertised
 - sector and mainstream media, websites, specialist agents/consultants
- open to anyone
- application/interview process
- skills-based
- (normally) 6-year maximum term

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	1 Level of Importance	2 Current Board Representation	3 Recruitment Priority
Skills & Experience			
Belief in/Support of Mission			
Board of Director Experience			
CEO Succession Planning			
Community Affiliation/Access			
Compensation			
Financial			
Fundraising			
Grant Writing			
Human Resources			
Industry Knowledge			
Leadership			
Legal			
Lobbying			
Marketing/PR			
Organizational Management			
Risk Management			
Strategic Planning			
Technology/IT			

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Cllr Representation on RP Boards

Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

20th October 2022



The need for improved partnership working



- The ever changing housing environment and the need for greater collaboration between the Council, Registered Providers and Residents means it's important to explore how we can improve the way we work together.
- Cllrs and Residents currently sit on RP Boards in the following instances:



Registered Providers with Cllrs/Resident representation on the Board



Registered Provider	No of Cllrs on the Board	Resident Reps on the Board	Comments or trends
*Clarion	0	YES	Their Resident rep lives in TH
*East End Homes	2	YES	Cllrs nominated by the Mayor
*Gateway HA	0	YES	
L&Q	0	NO	Resident reps sit on Sub Committees, Advisory Boards or Scrutiny Panels
Notting Hill Genesis	0	NO	Resident reps sit on the Sub Committees, Advisory Boards or Scrutiny Panels
*One Housing Group	0	YES	At the point of transfer with Island Homes the Council had different arrangements for Members and residents in the governance structure.
Peabody Group	0	YES	They are happy to engage on how Cllrs can be involved in their regional governance structure
Poplar HARCA	0	YES	Their Community Model prioritises people living or working in the area for Board/Committees
Providence Row	0	YES	The 2 tenant rep positions on the Board are currently vacant
Southern Housing Group	0	YES	
*Spitalfields	0	YES	



Registered Providers with Cllrs/Resident representation on the Board



Registered Provider	No of Cllrs on the Board	Resident Reps on the Board	Comments or trends
*Swan Housing Group	0	YES	No Cllrs on the Board for the past 9 years
*THCH	2	YES	
THH	4	YES	As an ALMO they have LBTH nominated directors



Approach & support to homeless applications

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Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
October 2022

Agenda Item 5.4



Background context (1)



- The Homelessness Service is responsible for **discharging the borough's statutory duties** to the homeless. This is a high demand service, receiving up to 2000 applications per year, each of them requiring a holistic assessment of circumstances and needs, and a fully worked up Personal Housing Plan setting out the reasonable steps the council will take to **prevent or relieve** the person's homelessness. Additionally, assessments are required to determine what statutory accommodation duties are owed in the form of temporary accommodation.
- Temporary accommodation use in the borough has been increasing since Q1 2022, including a growth in the numbers accommodated in bed and breakfast. The sudden decrease in the volumes of affordable private rented sector is the main factor.
- Around 70 new households (families) per week are seen by appointment. These are a combination of in-person and virtual appointments. To give some context the team alone is currently dealing with an open caseload of about 850 cases. Most cases are dealt with without requiring the household needing an office visit.



Background context (2)



- The main homelessness telephone line receives on average 1000 calls each month.
- On-the-day casework for emergencies presenting at Mulberry Place is focussed on helping the applicant to return home that day or find an alternative place to stay. This is a legal requirement on the council. If this fails, and temporary accommodation is required for a family or vulnerable adult, then accommodation is found.
- 1st stage emergency temporary accommodation has become increasingly difficult to source for all London boroughs, as temporary accommodation volumes have increased and B&B becomes silted-up. The time to source accommodation adds to the length of waiting time for households. If households have needs, e.g. a requirement for ground floor accommodation or to be in-borough, this can add to waiting times.



Approaches at Mulberry Place

- A return to pre-Covid levels of homelessness demand has highlighted a number of issues when homeless clients arrive at Mulberry Place:
 - Long wait times
 - Residents presenting in emergencies and others without appointments
 - Incidents with applicants with complex needs
 - Customers presenting with much wider issues
- A Task and Finish Group, requested by Karen Swift (Divisional Director of Housing and Regeneration) and Raj Chand (Divisional Directors Customer Services) was convened to review the customer journey.



Task and Finish Group Workstreams



- The scope of the Housing Options Task & Finish Group is as follows:

- **Workstream 1: Housing Options Pathway**
- **Outcome:** *Clear, efficient customer journey for residents presenting at the council site responding as one council/joined up.*
- **Output 1:** Map current as is of the face-to-face customer journey of residents presenting for Housing Options at Mulberry Place
- **Output 2:** Review the current pathways, develop 'to be' for Mulberry Place and new Town Hall; agree roles and responsibilities of professionals
- **Output 3:** Communicating the entire pathway across services and teams involved in the Housing Options customer journeys

Workstream 2: Homelessness Self-Referral Form

- **Outcome:** Manage demand coming through the service as a result of the launch of the Homelessness Self-Referral Form
- **Output: Review and redesign of the current Homelessness Self-Referral Form, with pre-screening questions**
 - Collaborative review of the current homelessness self-referral form to identify opportunities to reduce avoidable demand and provide pre-booked appointments for residents



Further work

- Further work is underway including:
 - Cultivate a culture of 'one council' This means breaking down silos and working together for the benefit of the client who is seeking help from **the council**.
 - Trial embedding Housing Options staff in the Business Support Team (first point of contact for homeless customers) to ensure more detailed advice offered sooner.
 - Early triage/screening process for residents presenting at Mulberry whose immigration or family composition mean that the Council can only provide limited advice and assistance. Identify earlier on who is best placed to support the client avoiding delays in person being seen.
 - Provide toys for children, regular welfare checks for residents re: water, food etc.
 - Encourage customers to use the residents hub rather than the main foyer, particularly if they have luggage.
 - Review the out of hours emergency service that starts at 17:00 and is undertaken by ASC on behalf of Housing Options. This cut off time was in place to coincide with Albert Jacob House closing at 17:00. Mulberry and the new Town Hall have longer opening times and expert staff may still be on site, although there will need to be a cut off time.

