

# Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

## Agenda

**Monday, 11 September 2023 6.30 p.m.**  
**Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel**

### Members:

**Chair:** Councillor Abdul Mannan

### Vice Chair:

Councillor Musthak Ahmed, Councillor Shafi Ahmed, Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled, Councillor Marc Francis, Councillor Asma Islam and Councillor James King

### Co-opted Members:

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

**Deputies:** Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury, Councillor Ayas Miah, Councillor Amina Ali, Councillor Bellal Uddin, Councillor Kamrul Hussain and Councillor Bodrul Choudhury

[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.

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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

Monday, 11 September 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. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

#### **3. HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, QUORUM, MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING DATES FOR 2023/24**

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S) (PAGES 19 - 26)**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

#### **5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

#### **6. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

##### **6.1 Cabinet Members Overview of Housing and Regeneration Priorities for 2023/24**

TO FOLLOW



**6 .2 Renters Reform Bill (Pages 29 - 40)**

**6 .3 Housing Options (Pages 41 - 42)**

TO FOLLO

**7. HRSSC DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023/24**

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

Thursday, 19 October 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

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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.



<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b></p> <p>11 September 2023</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Open (Unrestricted)</p>
<p><b>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings 2023/24</b></p>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Justina Bridgeman, Committee Services Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## Executive Summary

This report sets out the Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2023-24 for the information of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee members.

## Recommendations:

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

1. Note its Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of future meetings as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to this report.
2. Determine the preferred time at which the scheduled meetings will start.

### 1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The report is brought annually to assist new and returning Members by informing them of the framework of the Committee set out in the Council's Constitution.

### 2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable to this report

### 3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 At the Annual General Meeting of the full Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the Authority approved proportionality, establishment of the Committees and Panels of the Council and appointment of Members.

3.2 As per tradition, following the Annual General Meeting of the Council at the start of the Municipal Year, various committees are established and those committees note their Terms of Reference, Dates of meetings, Quorum and Membership for the forthcoming Municipal Year. These are set out in **Appendix 1 and 2** of the report.

3.3 Meetings are scheduled to take place at 6.30pm **See Appendix 3.**

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 When drawing up the schedule of dates, consideration was given to avoiding school holiday dates and known dates of religious holidays and other important dates where at all possible.

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

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment

5.2 No statutory implications have been identified.

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

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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

7.1 This is a noting report for the committee members. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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

#### **Linked Report**

- None

#### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 –Terms of Reference of Scrutiny Sub Committee.
- Appendix 2 –Membership for the Scrutiny Sub Committee.
- Appendix 3 – Dates of Scrutiny Sub Committee Meetings 2023/24

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)**

**List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None.

**Officer contact details for documents:**

N/A

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**Terms of Reference of Scrutiny Sub Committee**

**Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

**Summary Description:** The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee will undertake overview and scrutiny pertaining to housing management and planning matters, as well as regeneration strategy and sustainability, including economic development, regeneration and inequality; and employment strategy and initiatives and skills development.

**Membership:** 7 non-executive councillors – the chair and six councillors, plus two non-voting co-optees as follows:

- One social housing leaseholder to be appointed following open recruitment and selection.
- One social housing tenant to be appointed following open recruitment and selection.

<b>Functions</b>	<b>Delegation of Functions</b>
1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council’s housing functions.	None
2. Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to housing reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet.	None
3. Making reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of housing functions.	None
4. Delivering (3) 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.	None
5. 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.	None
6. 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.	None
7. The sub-committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work.	None

**Quorum:** Three voting Members

**Additional Information:** Is contained in:

- Constitution Part A Section 9 (Overview and Scrutiny)

- Constitution Part B Section 30 (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules)
- Constitution Part D Section 53 (Housing and Regeneration Sub-Committee Procedure Rules)

## SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE 2023-2024

### Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee

**(Seven non-executive members of the Council plus two co-opted members)**

Can be drawn from all non-executive members. Lead Scrutiny Member for Health and Adults will chair)

<i><b>Aspire Group (4)</b></i>	<i><b>Labour Group (3)</b></i>	<i><b>Ungrouped (0)</b></i>	<i><b>Co-Opted Members (for information – to be appointed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee)</b></i>
Councillor Abdul Mannan Councillor Musthak Ahmed Councillor Shafi Ahmed Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled  <b>Substitutes</b> Councillor Kamrul Hussain Councillor Belal Uddin Councillor Bodrul Chowdhury	Councillor Marc Francis Councillor Asma Islam Councillor James King  <b>Substitutes</b> Councillor Ayas Miah, Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury Councillor Amina Ali		Susanna Kow (Leaseholder)  Mahbub Anam (Tenant)

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**HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY**  
**SUB-COMMITTEE**

**MEETING PROCEDURE AND SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES**  
**2023-2024**

**1. Chair and Membership**

- 1.1 Sub-Committees will be chaired by a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. For this Sub-Committee it will be the Lead Scrutiny Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding for 2023-24. The membership of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee has been determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**2. Frequency of meetings**

- 2.1 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet 5 times this year. The following dates are available in the Corporate Diary for 2023/24:

- 11 September 2023
- 19 October 2023
- 14 December 2023
- 29 February 2024
- 01 May 2024

Meetings are scheduled to take place at 6.30pm. The Sub-Committee may arrange other meetings as and when necessary to consider any urgent issues as well as arranging meetings for detailed scrutiny reviews and challenge sessions.

**Support to the Sub-Committee**

- 4.1 The Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy and Performance, will be the senior officer lead and champion the work of the Sub-Committee.
- 4.2 The servicing of meetings will be undertaken by the Council's Democratic Services Team which will include:
- (a) Agenda preparation and dispatch
  - (b) Taking minutes and recording of actions/decisions

(c) Dissemination of minutes and decisions

The Corporate Strategy and Communities Policy Team will provide policy support to the Sub-Committee which will include:

(d) Research and analysis

(e) Work programme development

(f) Support with undertaking reviews and challenge sessions

(g) Drafting review reports and challenge sessions

## **5. Proceedings**

5.1 The Health and Adults Sub-Committee will generally meet in public and conduct its proceedings in accordance with the rules and procedure contained in the Council's Constitution such as the:

(a) Council Procedure Rules;

(b) Access to Information Procedure Rules, and

(c) The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

## LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

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

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 27 APRIL 2023

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, TOWER HAMLETS TOWN HALL,  
160 WHITECHAPEL ROAD, E1 1BJ

#### Members Present in Person:

Councillor Abdul Mannan (Chair)

Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

Councillor Musthak Ahmed

Councillor Marc Francis

Councillor Asma Islam

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

#### Members Present Remotely:

Councillor Ahmodul Kabir

#### Co-Optees Present in Person

Mahbub Anam -(Tenant Representative)

Susanna Kow -(Leaseholder Representative)

#### Officers Present in Person

Karen Swift -(Director, Housing and Regeneration)

Mark Slowikowski -(Senior Strategy and Policy Officer)

Justina Bridgeman -(Democratic Services Officer, Committees)

#### Officers Present Remotely:

Shalim Uddin -(Partnerships Officer, Strategy and Policy)

Una Bedford -(Strategy and Policy Officer)

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

**Guest:**

Nick Spenceley	-(Head of Environmental Services Tower Hamlets Homes (THH))
Andrea Baker	-(Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF))
Savannah Lloyd	-(Area Community Safety Lead (Peabody Housing Trust))
Lee Canter	-(Community Safety Team Officer (One Housing))
Lee Andrews	-(Community Safety Team Manager (One Housing))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	-(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)

**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 16 February 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

**3. OPEN ACTIONS**

An update on compensation for residents who incurred additional heating and water costs to be brought to the sub committee for 27 April meeting (12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 meeting). Councillors raised concerns regarding Clarion's response; particularly for vulnerable residents who are required to wait a week before any compensation claims be made. This was deemed inappropriate.

3. Details on the definitive set of RP's TSM's to be brought to the sub-committee once published (12 January 2023 meeting). Details of the new TSMs were included in the briefing paper circulated outside of this meeting in April 2023 to the committee entitled 'Update on the Social Housing Regulation Bill'.

4.1. Swan Housing Presentation 360 Feedback Report, resident's response and KPI's to be brought back to the sub committee once completed in April

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

2023 (16 February 2023 meeting). Details will be circulated to the sub-committee prior to the first meeting of the municipal year 2023/24.

4.2. A comprehensive report on the THH major works programme to be brought back to the sub committee for 27 April 2023 meeting (16 February 2023 meeting). The report will be included in the 2023/24 HRSSC work programme, as part of an ongoing progress report to bring THH back in-house.

4.3. A written update on the councils discharge of homelessness duty to PRS be brought to the sub committee for review at the next meeting in April 2023. (16 February 2023 meeting). Sub-Committee members were informed that a briefing note is awaiting sign-off and will be circulated once approved.

4.4. Developing a new local plan regular update request (16 February 2023 meeting). Updates will be included in the 2023/24 HRSSC work programme.

#### **4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

##### **4.1 Social Landlords Performance Report**

Shalim Uddin, Partnerships Officer, Strategy and Policy, introduced the consultation reports for quarter 3 for Registered Providers (RPs). This included a summary of the key strengths, challenges and general updates reflected in the report.

Further to questions by the sub-committee, Shalim Uddin:

- Explained that information sharing on mould and condensation includes; the mould and condensation working group, council and RP's updating websites with guidance to mitigate environmental effects within the home. Asset Management subgroups are also sharing information, specifically with older architectural properties.
- Clarified that the Southern Housing Group have recently merged with Optivo and KPI data on repair appointments made and kept will be submitted retrospectively over the next few months.
- Explained that specific details of Member Enquiries (ME's) involving mould are not included in KPI's, although information will be brought back to the sub-committee for scrutiny.
- Conceded that further work with the eight RP's unable to provide data to establish their performance levels is required. Some RP's do hold stock outside the borough, which means data may be manipulated to produce details for Tower Hamlets. The forthcoming Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) should create more accurate details.

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

- Explained that RP's have been requested to complete a survey and specify what information will be provided to the council for the next 12 months and at what frequency as well as location.
- Confirmed that Clarion will provide data for the next quarters report, as they are still dealing with issues related to the cyber-attack.
- Clarified that all RP's use the technical guidance issued by the Regulator of Social Housing to determine how data is collated.

[Clerk's Note - the guidance referenced is available here: [Annex 4: Tenant Satisfaction Measures - Technical requirements \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) ]

Following comments from Officers and invitees, the sub-committee;

- Noted concern that mobilisation of new repairs contracts are still accounting for increases in complaints and ME's and requested a brief from THH to outline contractor response times and general performance.
- Expressed concern that Clarion are still experiencing issues related to a cyber-attack that took place in May 2022 and cannot provide KPI details for April 2023.
- Requested that an extra column is created within the KPI's to denote repeat ME's for the same enquiry, to understand the responses given and also specific categories that the most common ME's fall under to establish if these queries relate to emergencies.

#### **RESOLVED that**

1. THH to submit a brief outlining contractor response times and general performance to the sub-committee for the first meeting of the municipal year 2023/24.
2. The report be noted.

#### **4.2 Changes to Social Housing Regulation**

Karen Swift, Director of Housing and Regeneration and Una Bedford, Strategy and Policy Officer, introduced a report reviewing the changes within the new regulatory regime for social housing to the sub-committee. This included the three key aims of the bill, the benefits to residents, the timescales and possible impacts for Tower Hamlets Council.

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

Further to questions by the sub committee, Karen Swift and Una Bedford:

- Clarified that since 1 October 2022, residents having difficulty reporting an issue or who are dissatisfied with the service they have received in response by the council or a registered provider can approach the Housing Ombudsman Service directly (rather than wait 8 weeks at the end of social landlords complaints process to approach the Housing Ombudsman or during those 8 weeks approach a designated person (MP, councillor) to take on their complaint. The Housing Ombudsman Service can help the resident and their social landlord resolve the issue. If a resident thinks their complaint is not being dealt with correctly, for example if a resident receives a delayed or no response, the Ombudsman can help to ensure the complaint is responded to by the social landlord.
- Confirmed that the Housing Ombudsman is currently recruiting and hosting nationwide roadshows to update residents on their rights. They have updated the website to share information on how to complain.
- Explained that the Government has also recently launched a [Social Housing Complaints – If you're unhappy with the service from your social housing provider, make it right](#) programme and the website [Guidance for social housing residents - Four Million Homes](#) which provides guidance on social housing rights, including free webinars and training events. The Council is currently updating the website to empower residents with information and speed up the complaints process.

Following comments from Officers and invitees, the sub-committee;

- Suggested that proposed Health and Safety leads and 'Responsible Persons' appointed, report to the sub-committee to ensure the requirements for landlords and the six new consumer standards are enforced.
- Requested that consideration be made on resourcing costs to treat damp and mould for older properties within the borough.
- Suggested that consideration be made to existing tenants and leaseholders throughout the borough, to support them holding their RP's to account in anticipation of the Social Housing Regulation Bill.

**RESOLVED that**

1. The presentation be noted.

**4.3 ASB on Housing Estates**

Nick Spenceley, Head of Environmental Services Tower Hamlets Homes (THH), Savannah Lloyd, Area Community Safety Lead at Peabody Housing

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

Trust, Lee Canter and Lee Andrews, Community Safety Team Officer and Community Safety Team Manager at One Housing respectively; introduced the presentation which reviewed the housing estates and learning from best practice in tackling anti-social behaviour.

Details on the types of complaints made and investigation methods used were provided to the sub-committee, including details on Operation Elkhart; a joint taskforce with police, council Enforcement Teams and THH to crack down on high level drug dealing within the estate.

Further to questions by the sub committee, Nick Spenceley:

- Confirmed that data from park guards who patrol the Boundary Estate is submitted by ASB Officers at the Weavers Ward Safer Neighbourhoods Board meetings.
- Clarified that Police, the council and THH's have various separate reporting lines but a partnership approach to information sharing occurs. A targeted strategy is taken due to the resources available.
- Explained that THH has a small number of CCTVs used for evidence gathering for investigations. Installation is dependent on proportionality assessments based on resident feedback and patrol staff data. This allows staff to engage not just with the residents but those congregating in areas where a perceived threat is taking place. Discussions of this nature can often defuse tensions.
- Confirmed that block specific patrolling takes place alongside communicating with residents and partnership work with other agencies, using a holistic approach in tackling suspicious activity to combat criminality.
- Explained that the highest sanction RP's can take for serious ASB offenses is eviction; although this may include a criminal investigation to establish if there has been breaches of tenancy or lease agreements, followed by a court order seeking possession. A less severe sanction is a 'Premises Closure Order' to exclude someone from a property or particular block. A revised THH tenancy agreement will be implemented in June 2023 which sets out stringent conditions.
- Conceded that current laws allow residents who have received 'Possession Orders' the right of appeal, which slows down the eviction process in some serious cases.
- Noted that The TSM measures include 'ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord'. Although some residents no longer report complaints, as they are dissatisfied with the RP's previous response. For this reason details received may not be true representations of lower or higher performance rates in specific wards.



COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

Following comments from Officers and invitees, the sub-committee;

- Requested an ASB Summer Action Plan be submitted to the sub-committee for an overview of patrols around the estates.
- Suggested that a more integrated approach is needed to combat anti-social behaviour, as Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs) and park guards have different remits which currently prevents THEOS from entering estates managed by RPs.
- Noted that a wider workstream is required to identify crime and the lack of youth provision. Updates on approaches should be brought back to the sub-committee for further scrutiny at the first sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24..
- Suggested further details on ASB complaints from RP's in each ward, to establish where the majority of issues stem from at the first sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24.

**RESOLVED that**

1. An ASB Summer Action Plan be submitted to the sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24.
2. The presentation be noted

**5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Councillor Nathalie Bienfait requested the Maddox House investigation be added to the sub-committee agenda once concluded for municipal year 2023/24.
- Councillor Nathalie Bienfait also requested an update on the Homelessness backlog to be brought to the sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24.
- Lastly, Councillor Nathalie Bienfait requested The Chair take a vote on increasing sub-committee meetings from five to nine for municipal year 2023/24. This was seconded by Councillor Marc Francis. On a vote of 5 for, 0 against and 1 abstention, the sub-committee agreed a formal note be submitted to the Chief Executive to increase the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings from five to nine.

As this was the last meeting of municipal year 2022/23, the Chair thanked all sub-committee members, officers and invitees for their assistance, and gave a special

HOUSING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB SECTION ONE (UNRESTRICTED)

COMMITTEE, 27/04/2023

thanks to Mark Slowikowski who will be leaving the sub-committee as Senior Strategy and Policy Officer.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm  
Chair, Councillor Abdul Mannan  
Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee

## Scrutiny Action Log


Name of Committee: Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Municipal Year: 2022-23

Reference	Action	Assigned to	Scrutiny Lead	Due Date	Response
Insert date	Insert agenda item title and the action requested by the committee	Insert name of director	Insert scrutiny lead	Insert Date	Response provided by the service/ witness
16.02.23	An update on the Local Plan from the Planning and Building Control department to be included in the HRSSC work programme for 223/24				Will be picked up at OSC as part of budget and policy framework
27.04.23  Page 27	Swan Housing to submit their 360 Feedback Report, resident's response and KPI's before the 27 July meeting. <i>(Meeting moved to 11.09.23)</i>	Swan Housing		11.09.23	
	A comprehensive report on THH Major Works Programme <i>(with details on response times and general performance)</i> to be included in the HRSSC work programme for 223/24.	THH		TBC	
	An Estates ASB Summer Action Plan be submitted to the sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24.	THH		TBC	
	Homelessness backlog to be brought to the sub-committee for municipal year 2023/24.				Will be picked up with the HRSSC work programme

Insert attachments as appendices where applicable

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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> September 2023</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Karen Swift, Director for Housing</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Renters Reform Bill</b></p>	

<p><b>Originating Officer(s)</b></p>	<p>Paul Burgess, Corporate Strategy and Communities</p>
<p><b>Wards affected</b></p>	<p>All wards</p>

## Summary

This cover report accompanies the slide deck on Renters Reform Bill and the implication for the council.

## Recommendations:

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

1. Review the presentation topic to help inform the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee discussion.

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# Private Renters Reform Bill

Page 31

Una Bedford, Senior Strategy & Policy Officer



# Background



- Introduced to Parliament on 17 May 2023.
- The Bill sets out to:

*“...make provision to change the law about rented homes, including provision abolishing fixed term assured tenancies and assured shorthold tenancies; imposing obligations on landlords and others in relation to rented homes and temporary and supported accommodation; and for connected purposes.”*

Page 32

- The Bill intends to provide tenants with enhanced protection against indiscriminate rent increases, protection against sub-standard rental properties and ‘no fault’ evictions. For landlords, it will give them greater powers to evict tenants who are anti-social or who have rent arrears.
- This follows in the wake of the June 2022 White Paper: [A Fairer Private Rented Sector publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-fairer-private-rented-sector) which set out the government’s intentions to reform the PRS sector and to ‘level up housing quality’ providing the biggest overhaul of the PRS for over 30 years.
- **The Bill presents no changes to council tenants.**





# Headline measures in the Bill (1)



- **The abolition of section 21 'no-fault' evictions** (purpose-built student accommodation will usually be exempt from these charges).
- **The end of assured and assured shorthold tenancies** – replaced with **periodic assured tenancies** (*rolling tenancies with no fixed end date*). If passed, this will apply to all new tenancies entered into after the Bill comes into force. All existing tenancies will transition to the new regime later.
- The Housing Act (1988) will be amended to make it clear **that fixed-term tenancies of seven years or more (i.e., long leases) cannot be assured tenancies**. This will change the position for how existing shared ownership leases can be ended, although there will be some transitional protection where possession proceedings have already commenced based on a notice of seeking possession.
- Private sector landlords and registered provider landlords of accommodation that is not social housing (i.e., market rent lettings) must give tenants **a written statement:**
  - **of tenancy terms** that are to be specified in regulations to be made under the Housing Act 1988
  - **that the landlord proposes to have the ability to recover possession on certain grounds for possession** as set out in schedule two to the Housing Act 1988 (which are to be significantly amended)
  - **of other information about the tenancy, the property, the parties and the rights of the parties** - this will be specified in future regulations to be made under the Housing Act 1988.



# Headline measures in the Bill (2)



- **Changes to grounds for possession:** there will be a total of 41 Grounds for possession, retaining some of the current grounds and adding new grounds which include:
  - **A new Ground (1A) for landlords who wish to sell their property which incorporates and amends the existing right for a landlord to obtain possession where the property is to be used by them or their spouse or civil partner. This will be expanded to include close family members. These grounds will not be available to be used in the first 6 months of a new tenancy. After the tenant has moved out, the landlord must wait three months before letting or advertising to let the property.** ~~If not, they could face a £5,000 penalty, issued by the local authority.~~
  - **A new mandatory ground for repeated serious rent arrears and expands the discretionary eviction ground to clarify that any behaviour 'capable' of causing 'nuisance or annoyance' – the present wording of Ground 14 is "likely to cause" – can lead to eviction.**
- **Rent increases:** Landlords will be able to raise rents once every year to market prices and must provide two months' notice of any change (section 13 presently allows for one month notice). Tenants will be able to challenge above-market rent increases via the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber).
- The introduction of a **Private Rented Sector Ombudsman.**
- The creation of a **Privately Rented Property Portal** to provide landlords and tenants with better information to inform their decision-making.
- **New enforcement duties on local housing authorities to enforce the landlord legislation in its area**
- **Pets:** Clause 7 of the Bill also provides for a substantial amendment to the Housing Act 1988 to allow tenants to request consent to keep a pet.



# What's missing from the Bill?



- The introduction of a **Decent Homes Standard for the Private Rented Sector**, which will stipulate how **properties must be free from serious health and safety hazards (such as fall risks, fire risks, or carbon monoxide poisoning)**, and that they do not fall into disrepair.
- The government also intends to **make it illegal for landlords and agents to have blanket bans on renting to tenants in receipt of benefits or families with children**, this is likely come at a later date with legislation to follow.
- Clarification and information for local authorities on how the Decent Homes standard will be applied to the Private Rent Sector, the new Private Renters Ombudsman and the digitized landlord portal.
- No dedicated housing court but the government has said that it is “ working in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and HM Courts and Tribunal Service to ensure that, in the small proportion of tenancies where court action is required, **court users can use a modern, digital service...we will align the abolition of section 21 and new possession grounds with court improvements.**



# Implications and Risks (1)



- **The government has yet to address the lack of affordable and social housing in England.** Neither has it considered imposing rent controls on the private rented sector. **While the abolition of section 21 of the Housing Act (1988) is welcome, the ban on no-fault evictions could lead to an increase in Section 8 evictions, which go through the court system.**
  - The abolition of fixed term tenancies in the private rented sector means that all tenancies will be periodic offering greater security of tenure. Homelessness legislation will change to reflect this and because of the removal of s21, the **reapplication duty will no longer be relevant.** This change will streamline the management of re-approaches and make sure there is no differential treatment between those who have had their homelessness duties discharged through accommodation in either the private rented or social housing sector, all applicants will be treated according to their current circumstances at the point of approaching.
- The end of Section 21 **may lead to landlords leaving the Private Rental Market, potentially decreasing further the supply of Private Rented Accommodation.** Landlords have already left the sector after a series of tax changes in recent years have made it has more financially punitive against them, and the pain has been felt by tenants. The Bill will broaden the list of disruptive activities that can lead to eviction and notice periods will be reduced where tenants have breached their tenancy agreement. **This does however raise questions about what will now constitute anti-social behaviour and how a landlord must evidence this.**
- **Less scrupulous landlords could potentially manipulate the grounds in Section 8 which allows evictions on the grounds of rent arrears or ASB that the Bill intends to reduce the notice period for.** An increase in landlords serving this type of notice could mean that renters may struggle to get accepted by a new landlord and could be asked for something like 12 months' rent up front to “mitigate risk”.
  - Reduction in notice period on the grounds of anti-social behaviour. **The government will need to introduce guidance to both landlords and the courts to define what triggers these type of evictions and the evidence bar.**



# Implications and Risks (2)



- The use of the new ground for possession when a landlord or their family wants to move into the property or to sell raises the question **of how will councils know if the landlord has circumvented the new safeguards** – the Bill sets out that the landlord must wait three months before letting or advertising to let the property – **will this be up to the tenant to inform the council, or will this be registered on the new portal?**
  - Increased enforcement powers for councils are welcome, as is the implementation of a Decent Homes Standard in the PRS **but the diminished workforce in Environmental Health Services across the country and a lack of qualified officers available in this sector will place further pressures on resources within the council's Environmental Health team.** Environmental Health Officers will have increased work arising from the implementation of the Decent Homes standard in the PRS, notwithstanding the additional pressures of investigating complaints concerning damp and mould and fire safety.
- Page 37
- The Government has not assessed **what the financial implications are for the local authorities**, and it is not known if there will be 'new burdens' funding from the government to contribute to these additional cost pressures arising from new enforcement powers.
- Detail on improvements to the court system remain vague. In supporting guidance, the government says that it is also seeking to align the abolition of section 21 and new possession grounds with "court improvement" including **"end-to-end digitisation of the process"** .**There is concern as to whether courts will be able to cope with the rise in cases this Bill will create, even with increased digitisation.**
  - With a General Election on the horizon there is limited time for the Bill to progress through parliament. **How quickly it progresses will depend on the number of amendments at the various stages and how the government chooses to prioritise parliamentary time.**



# Timing of Legislation



- While no official date has been confirmed by the government, it is estimated that the Renters Reform Bill will come into law on 1 October 2024.
- The rationale for this estimate is on the premise that the Bill will be put forward to the Houses of Commons (to be debated and voted on) in May 2023. It could take around a year to become a parliamentary act, which takes us to May 2024.
- The act is unlikely to become law until the 1 October 2024 because in the UK, new legislation normally becomes law on either the 1 April or the 1 October each year. This means that the likely date on which the Renters (Reform) Bill will become law is 1 October 2024.
- The government has however made it clear that where it intends to move Assured Tenancies and Assured Short-hold tenants on to periodic assured tenancies there will be a 'grace' period of six months from the implementation of the Act for private landlords to ensure that all new tenants receive periodic tenancies. All existing tenants should be placed on periodic tenancies within 12 months from the implementation date.





# Further reading and information




- Progress of the Renters (Reform) Bill [Renters \(Reform\) Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)
- Renters (Reform) Bill, as published 17 May 2023: [Renters \(Reform\) Bill \(parliament.uk\)](#)
- Renters (Reform) Bill (Explanatory Notes): [220308en.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)
- House of Commons Library: Research Briefing – Renters (Reform) Bill 2022-23 : [CBP-8756.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)



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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> September 2023</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Karen Swift, Director for Housing</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Review of Housing Options Performance</b></p>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Paul Burgess, Corporate Strategy and Communities
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

**Summary**

This cover report accompanies the presentation on housing option performance.

**Recommendations:**

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

1. Review the presentation topic to help inform the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee discussion.

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# Agenda Item 7

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> September 2023</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Robin Beattie, Acting Director of Strategy, Improvement and Transformation</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Draft HRSSC Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24</b></p>	

<p><b>Originating Officer(s)</b></p>	<p>Paul Burgess, Corporate Strategy and Communities</p>
<p><b>Wards affected</b></p>	<p>All Wards</p>

## Executive Summary

This cover report accompanies the Draft HRSSC Work Programme 2023/24

## Recommendations:

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

1. Note and provide any further comments on the draft HRSSC scrutiny work programme 2023/24

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## HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24

### Appendix 3: Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HRSSC) - Work Programme 2023-24 Chair: Cllr Abdul Mannan

Meeting Date	Scrutiny Activity	Title	Description	Speakers
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Appointments and TOR	Vice Chair appointment and TOR	Appoint Committee vice chair and agree terms of reference.	<b>Cllr Abdul Mannan</b> HRSSC Chair
	HRSSC Work Programme	Draft HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24	Review the HRSSC Work Programme for 2023-24.	<b>Cllr Abdul Mannan</b> HRSSC Chair
	Spotlight	Housing & Regeneration priorities	Discuss housing and regeneration priorities for 2023/24.	<b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding  <b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing
	Spotlight	Renters Reform Bill	Review the Renters Reform Bill and consider impacts for LBTH.	<b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding  <b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing

## HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24

	Spotlight	Housing Options	Review performance of Housing Options Service	<p><b>CLlr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p>
<p>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 46</p>	Tracking Recommendations	Fire Safety Action Plan	Track the progress of the Fire Safety Action Plan from scrutiny challenge session.	<p><b>CLlr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p>
	Spotlight	Bringing Housing Management Services (THH) back in House	Understand the progress of insourcing housing management with a specific focus on resident engagement and governance arrangements.	<p><b>CLlr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p> <p>Nicola Klinger</p>

## HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24

	Spotlight	Update of Building Safety	Understanding the governance and accountability arrangements in preparation for New Build Compliance and Regulator	<p><b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p> <p><b>David Leslie</b> Building Safety Lead</p>
<p>Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 47</p>	Strategic Performance	Social Landlords Performance Report	Review social landlords' performance for Quarters 1 and 2.	<p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p> <p>Andrea Baker Chair THHF</p>
	Spotlight	Homelessness Strategy	Review development of the Homelessness Strategy.	<p><b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p>
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	Spotlight	Housing & Climate Emergency	Consider how the council can retrofit housing to meet climate net zero targets.	<p><b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive</p>

## HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24

Page 48

Page 48				Development and Housebuilding  <b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing
	Spotlight	Housing Target	Review how the council is progressing against its ambition to build 1000 new homes per year.	<b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding  <b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing  Jennifer Peters Director of Planning and Building Control
	Spotlight	Social Housing Regulation Act 2023	Consider the impact of Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 on the council and its response  (Briefing paper to be provided offline)	<b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding  <b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024	Strategic Performance	Social Landlords Performance Report	Review social landlords' performance for Quarters 3 and 4	<b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing  Andrea Baker



## HRSSC Work Programme 2023-24

				Chair THHF
	Spotlight	The customer Journey for housing needs	Undertake a critical friend look at the customer journey for housing needs	<p><b>Cllr Kabir Ahmed</b> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding</p> <p><b>Karen Swift</b> Director of Housing</p>

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