

HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 July 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

MP702, 7th Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent,
London E14 2BG.

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

Members:

Chair: Councillor Dipa Das

Vice-Chair: (to be decided at this meeting)

Councillor Shah Ameen, Councillor Shad Chowdhury, Councillor Muhammad Harun,
Councillor Dan Tomlinson, Councillor Andrew Wood

Substitutes:

Councillor Sabina Akhtar, Councillor Mohammed Ahbab Hossain, Councillor Helal Uddin
and Councillor Peter Golds

Co-opted Members:

(To be appointed)

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

Contact for further enquiries:

Rushena Miah – Committee Services Officer

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

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1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS	5 - 8
To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. See attached note from the Monitoring Officer.	
2. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE:	
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For noting.	
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING	17 - 22
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4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR	
5. INTRODUCTION TO HOUSING IN TOWER HAMLETS	27 - 46
Presented by Ann Sutcliffe, Director of Place and Mark Baigent, Interim Director Regeneration and Sustainability.	
6. INTRODUCTION TO TOWER HAMLETS HOMES	47 - 54
Presented by Susmita Sen, Chief Executive, Tower Hamlets Homes.	
7. PARTNERSHIP WORKING - TOWER HAMLETS HOUSING FORUM	55 - 62
Presented by Tracey St. Hill – RP Partnerships & Development Officer and Godfrey Heyman – RP Preferred Partnerships Officer	
8. WORK PROGRAMMING SESSION	
To set the forward plan for the Committee’s work for the year.	
9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

Next Meeting of the Sub- Committee

The next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will be held on Tuesday, 11 September 2018 at 6.30 p.m. in MP702, 7th Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London E14 2BG.

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Agenda Item 1

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Members' Code of Conduct at Part 5.1 of the Council's Constitution.

Please note that the question of whether a Member has an interest in any matter, and whether or not that interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, is for that Member to decide. Advice is available from officers as listed below but they cannot make the decision for the Member. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending a meeting.

Interests and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

You have an interest in any business of the authority where that business relates to or is likely to affect any of the persons, bodies or matters listed in section 4.1 (a) of the Code of Conduct; and might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself, a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward affected.

You must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any such interest, for inclusion in the Register of Members' Interests which is available for public inspection and on the Council's Website.

Once you have recorded an interest in the Register, you are not then required to declare that interest at each meeting where the business is discussed, unless the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).

A DPI is defined in Regulations as a pecuniary interest of any of the descriptions listed at **Appendix A** overleaf. Please note that a Member's DPIs include his/her own relevant interests and also those of his/her spouse or civil partner; or a person with whom the Member is living as husband and wife; or a person with whom the Member is living as if they were civil partners; if the Member is aware that that other person has the interest.

Effect of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on participation at meetings

Where you have a DPI in any business of the Council you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from the authority's Monitoring Officer following consideration by the Dispensations Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee:-

- not seek to improperly influence a decision about that business; and
- not exercise executive functions in relation to that business.

If you are present at a meeting where that business is discussed, you must:-

- Disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, if later; and
- Leave the room (including any public viewing area) for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision

When declaring a DPI, Members should specify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which the interest relates. This procedure is designed to assist the public's understanding of the meeting and to enable a full record to be made in the minutes of the meeting.

Where you have a DPI in any business of the authority which is not included in the Member's register of interests and you attend a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, in addition to disclosing the interest to that meeting, you must also within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the Register.

Further advice

For further advice please contact:


Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director Governance & Monitoring Officer Tel 020 7364 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	<p>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.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>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—</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
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	<p>Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(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>

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Non-Executive Report of the: Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee 3 July 2018	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Asmat Hussain – Corporate Director of Governance	Classification: Unrestricted
Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings 2018/19	

Originating Officer(s)	Rushena Miah – Committee Services Officer
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19 for the information of Members of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Recommendations:

The Housing Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note its Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership, and Dates of future meetings as set out in the appendices of this report.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report is for the information of the Committee and no specific decisions are required.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable to this report.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 At the Annual General Meeting of Council held on 23 May 2018, the Authority approved the review of proportionality, establishment of the Committees, Panels of the Council and the appointment of Members.
- 3.2 It is within tradition that following the Annual General Meeting of the Council at the start of the Municipal Year, at which various committees are established, that those committees note their Terms of Reference, Quorum and

Membership for the forthcoming Municipal Year. These are set out in the appendices of the report.

- 3.3 The Committee's meetings for the remainder of the year, as agreed at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on 23 May 2018 are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 3.4 Meetings are scheduled to take place at 6.30pm except where the meeting falls within the month of Ramadan where they will aim to take place at 5.30pm. The Committee may wish to discuss an appropriate start time that suits its Members at the first meeting of the Committee.
- 3.5 It may be necessary to convene additional meetings of the Sub-Committee should urgent business arise. Officers will consult with the Chair and Members as appropriate.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Not applicable to this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Not applicable to this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

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

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The terms of reference of the Housing Scrutiny sub-committee will assist Members to discharge the Council's statutory functions as they relate to housing matters. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.
- Appendix 2 – Proportionality and Membership of Housing Committee

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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Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee Terms of Reference 2018/19

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 Place for 2018/19. The membership of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will be selected at the Annual General Meeting.

2. Frequency of meetings

2.1 The Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will meet 4 times a year. The following dates are available in the Corporate Diary for 2018/19:

- 3 July 2018
- 11 September 2018
- 20 November 2018
- 29 January 2019
- 9 April 2019

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.

Responsibilities

3.1 The Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will discharge the Council's statutory functions to undertake overview and scrutiny, insofar as these pertain to housing matters. This will include:

- (i) Reviewing and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's housing functions;
- (ii) Advising the Mayor or Cabinet of key issues/questions arising in relation to housing reports due to be considered by the Mayor or Cabinet;
- (iii) Making reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Mayor or Cabinet in connection with the discharge of housing functions;
- (iv) 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;

- (v) 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;
- (vi) 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; and
- (vii) The Sub-Committee will report annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its work.

4. Support to the Sub-Committee

- 4.1 The Divisional Directors for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships and Equality (Governance) and Growth and Economic Development (Place) will be the senior officer leads 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) Meeting room bookings, refreshments
 - (b) Agenda preparation and dispatch
 - (c) Taking minutes and recording of actions/decisions
 - (d) Dissemination of minutes and decisions
 - (e) The Corporate Strategy & Equality Service will provide policy support to the
 - (f) Sub-Committee which will include:
 - (g) Research and analysis
 - (h) Work programme development
 - (i) Support with undertaking reviews and challenge sessions
 - (j) Drafting review reports and challenge sessions

5. Proceedings

- 5.1 The Housing Scrutiny 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.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS 2018-2019

NOMINATIONS SUBMITTED TO THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING ON 23 MAY 2018

HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE (Nominations for information - Panel to be appointed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee) (Six members of the Council)			
<i>Labour Group (5)</i>	<i>Conservative Group (1)</i>	<i>Ungrouped (0)</i>	<i>Co-opted Members (2)</i>
Councillor Dipa Das (Chair) Councillor Dan Tomlinson Councillor Muhammad HM Harun Councillor Shad Chowdhury Councillor Shah Ameen Substitutes:- Councillor Ahbab Hossain Councillor Sabina Akhtar Councillor Helal Uddin	Councillor Andrew Wood Substitutes:- Councillor Peter Golds	N/A	<i>To be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required</i>

Quorum: The quorum for the committee is 3.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.40 P.M. ON MONDAY, 19 MARCH 2018

**MP702, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON E14 2BG.**

Members	
Councillor Helal Uddin	Chair
Councillor John Pierce	Vice-Chair
Councillor Andrew Wood	Member
Co-opted Members	
Anne Ambrose	
Moshin Hamim	
Sandra Fawcett	Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and Executive Director Operations, Swan Housing
Officers	
Elizabeth Bailey	Senior Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer
Afazul Hoque	Interim Service Manager, Strategy, Policy & Performance
Martin Ling	Housing Strategy Manager
Rushena Miah	Committee Services Officer
Susmita Sen	Chief Executive Tower Hamlets Homes
Nick Spenceley	Head of Environmental Services Tower Hamlets Homes

The Chair decided to take items in the following order:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Self-Build
- Void Properties

The minutes will follow the order published on the agenda for improved readability.

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Moshin Hamid declared a personal interest in that he is a member of the self-build forum.

The Chair declared that he is a board member of Tower Hamlets Homes his employer has a working relationship with Poplar HARCA.

John Pierce declared that he sits on the Tower Hamlets Homes board.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION:

3.1 Self-Build

The Committee received a presentation from Martin Ling, Housing Strategy Manager, on the Council's work in relation to self-build.

Key points summarised from the presentation:

- Direction is taken from the Council's housing strategy.
- The Self-Build and Custom Housing Act 2015 provides the policy context.
- There is a three year deadline to grant planning permission for self-build.
- With regard to demand, as of January 2018 there were 169 applications for self-build. The majority of applicants lived in the borough and were of the young professional demographic.
- There are several options for self-build projects permitted. These range from one off self-managed, one off build with contractor to manage construction, kit home, community collaboration and community self-build agency.
- Some of the issues associated with self-build include high land values, expensive to purchase, high density applications tend to be favoured, the GLA has set a high housing target, suitable site availability and competition.
- A self-build forum has been established and holds three meetings a year. The next meeting is in May 2018.
- A land disposal model is being worked on.
- The GLA has launched 3 small pilot sites for development, two are based in E1 and one is based in E2.

Comments from Members:

- The cost saving value of self-build is not apparent. The cost of land and building work amounts to roughly £475,000 which is the same as outright purchase of a one or two bedroom home. Significant savings could be made for those willing to carry out construction work themselves.
- The National Planning Policy Framework consultation should consider diversifying the market and allowing for change of use for dwellings from office or commercial to home.
- It would be the Council's responsibility to ensure that fire safety is incorporated into self-build planning applications.

3.2 Anti-Social Behaviour

The Committee received a presentation from Susmita Sen, Chief Executive of Tower Hamlets Homes and Nick Spenceley, Head of Environmental Services Tower Hamlets Homes on their work to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour within their housing estate.

Key points from the presentation:

- The ASB Team falls within the environmental services division which is managed by Nick Spenceley. Caretakers are often the first point of contact for ASB reporting.
- THH has secured additional resources for policing.
- The newly formed ASB team work staggered hours for a greater presence.
- Early successes have meant an increase in legal casework, therefore additional caseworkers are due to be appointed.
- So far there have been 75 arrests, 600 incidents logged and 385 stop and searches.
- The additional police presence has been funded by MOPAC on a match funded basis, THH have employed 14 police officers for the price of 7.
- Use of closure orders have enabled police officers to make arrests and insist offenders leave premises.
- It was noted as significant that THH have seen successes as early as 5 months into the strategy.

Questions from Members:

- Why is there such a high prevalence of ASB in this borough compared to the rest of London? Officers provided the following reasons;
 - the 101 non-emergency service captures all elements of crime reporting adding to the statistic,
 - that it was not fully understood why Tower Hamlets was a soft target for ASB but there was consensus at the strategic level that research should be conducted on this topic.
- What is your approach to cross county drug dealing?
- What happens when the money runs out?
- What are you measuring success on?
- Are you doing prevention work?
- What happened to the aim of sharing best practice with other resident providers?

Response from officers:

- Officers explained that their work on ASB was the starting point of a three year strategy. They prioritised social housing because crime was prevalent on estates. The first five months of the strategy had seen positive results. After three years, work would begin on a new strategy in consultation with the Mayor, Police and residents. Officers could not predict the level of resource that would be required in the future but

they were hopeful that current intervention work would significantly reduce levels of ASB in the long term.

- A key indicator for success would be when residents start to report they feel safer. Officers agreed that metrics on the effectiveness of crime intervention measures should be introduced as a next step.
- The Committee noted that the THH funded officers would pursue perpetrators if they had moved to another estate even if this was not a THH estate.
- There is a space for engagement with other providers. Nick Spenceley attends an ASB sub-group for registered social landlords that shares best practice. The next meeting will look at a consistency in police intervention.
- Councillor John Pierce updated the Committee on the Neighbourhood Management Pilot. He said that the Pilot Manager had started in the role and their immediate priorities would include setting up a ward governance structure and engagement with residents.
- Councillor Sirajul Islam, Cabinet Member for Housing, commented:
 - Approximately £2 million had been spent on tackling ASB across the borough and this was the first investment made to tackle ASB in the last five years.
 - The Streets of Growth charity has supported the Council in engaging the 18-25 age groups on ASB issues. It was recognised that ASB is often displaced from one estate to the next and he said he hoped the Council would explore the reasons behind this in the next municipal year.
- Sandra Fawcett stated the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and ASB Sub Group provide a useful avenue for joint working and sharing of best practice. Across housing providers ASB was a key priority and they would continue working together.
- It was suggested given the concerns amongst local people about ASB that the next Committee look at work taking places across the borough by the Council and RSLs to address ASB.

RESOLVED

To note the presentation.

3.3 Void Properties - What is the Council doing to bring them into use?

The Committee received a presentation from Martin Ling, Housing Strategy Manager, on empty properties in the borough with regard to the private sector.

Summary of presentation:

- Data on voids comes from Council tax records. A void is defined as a home left empty for six months or more.
- There are 1565 homes left empty for more than 6 months and 1264 second homes in the borough.

- Tools to bring empty homes into use include enforcement action (3%), threat of enforcement (11%), grant aid (6%), advice and guidance (58%) and market forces.
- There is a team in the Council that works on private void cases. They can enforce empty dwelling management orders and compulsory purchase orders. They can also provide grants to landlords to bring homes back into lettable condition. These homes are often rented by the Council to place homeless families but are permitted to have other uses, such as community space.

Comments from Members:

- There is an urban myth that there was huge number of empty dwellings as a result of purchase from oversea millionaires. What work will the Council do to dispel this myth?
- It was noted the data the Council has does not support this view and the Council will look into how this could be communicated. Some of the empty flats could be due to short term lets market which would mean it is not being used every day.
- Members requested a presentation on Council voids be presented at a future meeting.

The Chair thanked the Housing Strategy manager for the presentation.

RESOLVED

To note the presentation.

ACTION:

For Council voids to be add to the Forward Plan for discussion at a future meeting.

4. FIRE SAFETY SCRUTINY REVIEW

Elizabeth Bailey, Senior Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer, offered the Committee a final opportunity to feed into the Fire Safety Review.

Comments included:

- There are high density tall buildings in the borough. There should be a recommendation to draft a fire safety policy specific to tall buildings. Advice could be sought from firms in Singapore and New York on how they manage their tall buildings. The UK lacks expertise in this area as tall developments are a relatively recent phenomenon.
- Other Members said that officers would need to see if a Council has the power to action the above recommendation.
- The communications and engagement recommendations should be merged.
- Recommendation 16, emergency plans, to be amended – it appears to be a landlord and resident matter.
- Dame Judith Hackett is conducting the Grenfell inquiry – perhaps a statement of recommendations could be sent to her.

- Regarding recommendation 15, engaging tenant and resident organisations, there are only five established TRA's. The Council will need to have a wider reach.
- There was a suggestion to include timings to the recommendations however the majority of members decided against this, as it was the responsibility of the Council and Executive to implement strategies and timescales.
- As there are several recommendations the report should highlight the five priority areas. .
- Officers to keep up to date with government advice and guidance on fire safety and emergency protocols should be included as a recommendation.
- The report should mention the importance of educating residents on fire safety. Residents often install grills when doors are secure by design, grills are a fire hazard.
- The recommendation for emergency access from inside the building should also include a point about external access as well.

Members were advised to email Elizabeth Bailey if they had further comments on the report and to advise on what the top five priority areas for recommendation should be. The deadline for comments was noted as 25 March 2018.

RESOLVED

- To agree the recommendations, subject to the amendments discussed.
- To authorise the Divisions Director of Strategy Policy and Partnership to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet, in consultation with the Chair.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked the Committee and Officers for their work on the review and their contributions towards housing scrutiny over the course of the year.

He also asked THH leaseholders to be added as a future agenda item

The meeting ended at 8.37 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Helal Uddin
Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HSSC) Action Log

Open Actions

No.	Reference	Action	Assigned to:	Due Date	Response
1.	HSSC 11/09/2017 Item 3	Add a spotlight session on 'Service Charges to Leaseholders' to HSSC Work Programme 2018/19	Zakia Variava	3 July 2018	To be suggested for the 2018/19 work programme

Closed Actions

No	Reference	Action	Assigned to:	Due Date	Update/Deadline
1.	HSSC March 2018	Provide the OSC with a list of the number of empty properties by ward	Martin Ling	18 June 2018	See separate attachment

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2017 Empty Homes by Ward

Ward	
Weavers	20
Bethnal Green	24
St Peter's	31
Bow East	32
Bow West	36
Whitechapel	40
Spitalfields and Banglatown	40
St Dunstan's	7
Shadwell	26
Stepney Green	11
Poplar	9
Lansbury	43
Mile End	36
Bromley North	48
Bromley South	20
Limehouse	9
St Katharine's and Wapping	29
Blackwall and Cubitt Town	68
Canary Wharf	18
Island Gardens	12

Cross-referencing this with postcodes identifies particularly high clusters of empty homes in:

- E3 3** (Bromley-by-Bow) - 54
- E3 5** (Grove Road/ Roman Road) – 35
- E3 2** (Bow East/ Hackney Wick) - 30
- E14 0** (Poplar/ East India) - 50
- E14 9** (Canary Wharf) - 45
- E1 1** (Whitechapel) - 28
- E1 6** (Brick Lane/ Commercial Street) - 27
- E1W 2** (Wapping) – 22

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Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee

Housing

3 July 2018

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Agenda Item 5



Key functions

- Housing management (THH & RPs)
- Improving conditions in the private rented sector (PRS) – charter, landlord accreditations, licensing
- Increasing housing supply, particularly affordable housing (new build, self build, acquisitions, change of use etc.)
- Addressing housing needs and maximising housing opportunities, tackling overcrowding & under occupation
- Managing lettings of social housing
- Managing Common Housing Register (CHR) partnership with RPs

Key functions

- Delivery of estate regeneration programmes
- Targeting empty properties
- Facilitating delivery of disabled facilities grant
- Early homeless intervention and prevention service - information, advice, support and assessments
- Accommodate households accepted as homeless
- Procurement and management of temporary accommodation (TA)
- Prevent rough sleeping

Key Achievements 17/18

- Granted planning consent for 2,573 housing units, 1,765 private and 808 affordable
- 926 affordable homes completed, 316 family rented and 146 wheelchair
- 1,680 households rehoused, 897 previously overcrowded
- 148 new council homes built at Watts Grove and let at social rents and Tower Hamlets Living Rents (THLR)
- Planning consent for 77 new homes (Jubilee Street, Baroness Road, and Locksley Estate A), completion expected in 2020
- Pipeline of 450 homes has been established, consultations completed, first planning submissions due by 29th June

Key Achievements 17/18 (continued)

- Council has spent £19.76m (since 2014) in right to buy receipts to provide new social housing
- Purchased 60 ex-Council homes, previously acquired under RTB
- Purchased over 100 Poplar HARCA properties
- 4,038 applications registered for housing licensing scheme
- 53 mandatory Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO) licenses issued
- 349 households prevented from becoming homeless
- No families in B&B for more than 6 weeks (sustained legal compliance)
- 329 (31%) of 1057 2 bed+ lets were to homeless households

Key Achievements 17/18 (continued)

- 1,680 households rehoused, 518 into THH and 1,160 into RP properties (18,000+ on housing waiting list)
- Rehoused 897 overcrowded households (53% of total lets)
- Rehoused 67 under occupying CHR tenants, 40 of which gave up 3 beds+
- 42 lets to project 120 households, 200+ families rehoused since project inception in 2012

Priorities 18/19

- Increasing the supply and delivery of affordable homes incl. new homes for TA / delivery vehicles
- New build by the Council through the HRA (infills and estate regeneration)
- Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap flexibility
- Policy to support delivery of self build homes
- Improving quality of new build stock
- Targeting long term empty properties to increase greater occupation
- Improving the quality and management of housing stock
- Delivering priorities on short term lets (area exemptions, partnerships, enforcements, illegal sublets)

Priorities 18/19 (continued)

- Fire safety interventions and responses
- Support for private landlords
- Deliver housing renewal grant programme
- Selective licensing inspection programme
- New selective licensing scheme for HMOs
- Progressing article 4 - protection of residential units converting into HMOs
- Legislative changes - regulation of letting agents
- New homelessness strategy
- Implementation and review of the Homelessness Reduction Act
- Targeted interventions to reduce rough sleeping
- Legal compliance in the use of B&B accommodation

Social Housing Green Paper

- Planning/building of homes in right places and safety
- Quality and management
- Benefits to the economy – industrial strategy
- Tackling homelessness
- Illegal sublets
- Support for leaseholders with a social landlord
- Social landlords role in creating places people want to live
- Social housing policy – promoting safe and integrated communities
- To be published “Spring 2018”, expected July

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

- New TH Homelessness Strategy
- East London Housing Partnership - collaborative approach to tackling homelessness
- Implementation of recommendations from scrutiny review - Effectiveness of health and social care provision for homeless residents
- HRA came into force April 2018, comprising of:
 - Information, advice, prevention & relief, accommodation, client rights incl. right to review
 - New prevention duty - support to everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness, subject to eligibility
 - Threat of homelessness – increased to 56 days incl. issue of Section 21 notices
 - More time for casework / homeless preventions (6 months sustainability)
 - Personalised housing plans
 - Duty to refer

Eliminating Rough Sleeping

- Halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate by 2027
- Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Taskforce supported by an expert Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel
- £30M fund 18/19 for local authorities with high levels of rough sleeping
- £100k funding for frontline Rough Sleeping workers - enhance skills / knowledge
- Exploring additional, coordinated move-on accommodation
- Support from Government departments:
 - Health & Social Care – mental health and drug treatment services
 - Ministry of Justice – prison and probation work with LA's, identify those at risk
 - Home Office – Policing sector work with LA's, enforcement and sharing of best practice
 - Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – opportunities for Social Impact Bonds
- Mayor of London to publish new Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018

London Housing Strategy

- Building new homes – increase supply of land, supporting infrastructure, diversified industry (capacity & speed), address construction skills gaps
- Genuinely affordable homes – 50% of homes built affordable, protect existing affordable homes
- High quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods – well designed, good quality and environmentally sustainable, meet diverse housing needs, involve communities

London Housing Strategy (continued)

- A fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders – decent standards and management practices, more affordable and secure, reform of leasehold
- Tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers – Prevent homelessness, house homeless households into sustainable accommodation, route off streets
- TH target of 3,931 net additional homes per annum
- Priorities captured in TH 2016 – 2021 housing strategy

Regeneration

- Isle of Dogs & South Poplar Opportunity Area Planning framework (c. 31,000 homes)
- Poplar Riverside Housing Zone (c.15,000 homes)
- Infill Schemes & Council estate regeneration (2,000 new Council homes)
- Blackwall Reach (phased delivery, 1,575 homes)
- Poplar Harca - Place making & reshaping Poplar programme - Aberfeldy / Crisp Street proposals
- Ocean Estate site H (c.225 homes)

Challenges

Tackling Homelessness

- Rising housing costs, welfare reforms and its impacts on homelessness
- Shortage of social housing
- 44% of households in income poverty
- Over 16,000 people unemployed

Implementation of the HRA 2017

- Service re-design, staff training and recruitment & new IT system
- Written decisions and increasing requests for review / challenge
- Increasing demands on temporary accommodation

Challenges (continued)

Housing Supply & Regeneration

- Rapidly increasing population growth
- Resident ballots – possible stalling of schemes
- Reduced CIL & S106 income for infrastructure and sustainability of residential developments
- Availability of land and supporting funds
- Financial restrictions – HRA borrowing cap, RTB receipts (30% cap and 3 year deadline)
- Brexit – increased construction costs, skills shortage and stalled schemes

Fire safety

- Increased costs for fire safety improvements (across housing providers)
- Cladding – non compliant freeholders, enforcement and prosecutions
- Limited financial support available for private property owners to remove Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding from tower blocks, costs to leaseholders

Opportunities

- Partnership working - Self-builders, Community Land Trusts, Housing Associations
- Poplar Riverside Masterplan, delivering up to 15,000 homes, new infrastructure provisions, place making, clear framework for the area and cross borough working
- Opportunity Area Planning Framework for Isle of Dogs and refreshed for Lower Lea Valley – attracting development & investment
- HRA - Improved communications, partnership working and enhanced measures to maximise preventions

Work Programme – 18/19

Recommended challenge areas for scrutiny review:

- Review of the **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** around 6 months after implementation began (i.e. start review in October / November).
- Review the **Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions Programme** – this would look at the impact, benefits and VFM across the range of property purchases from ex-RTB buybacks, Poplar HARCA and Out Of Borough acquisitions.

Q&A

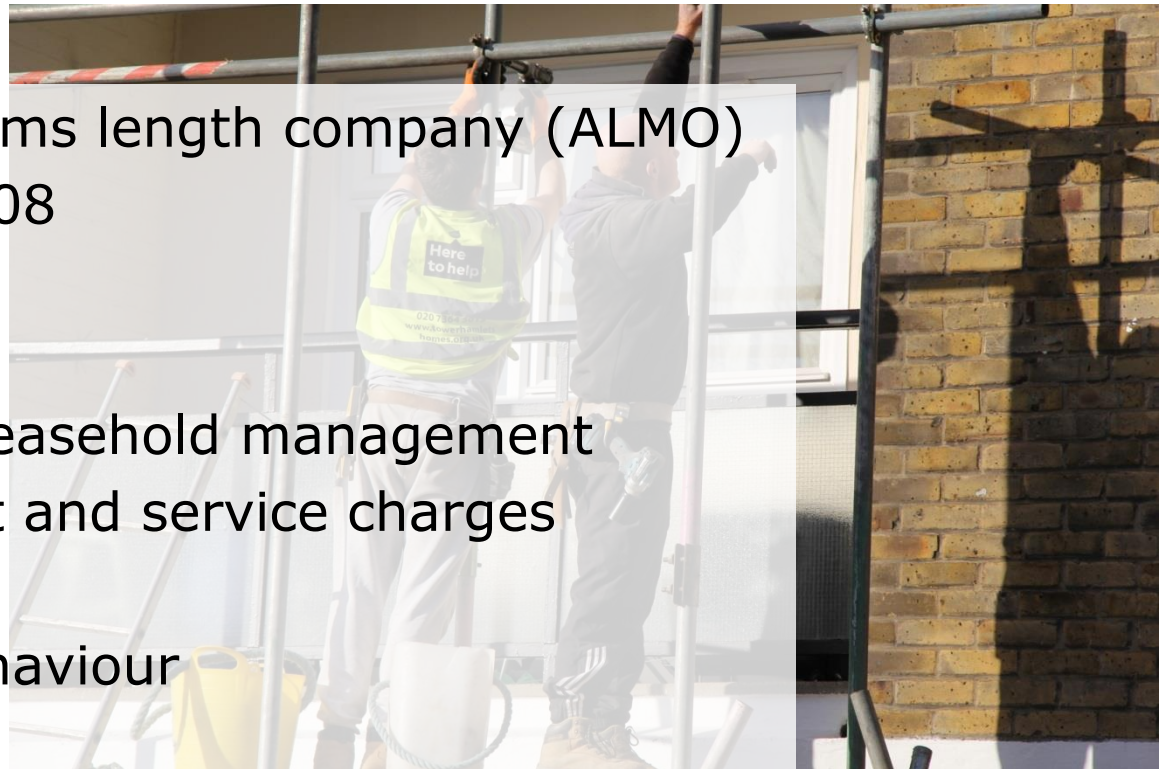
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Introducing Tower Hamlets Homes

Susmita Sen – Chief Executive

Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee 3 July 2018

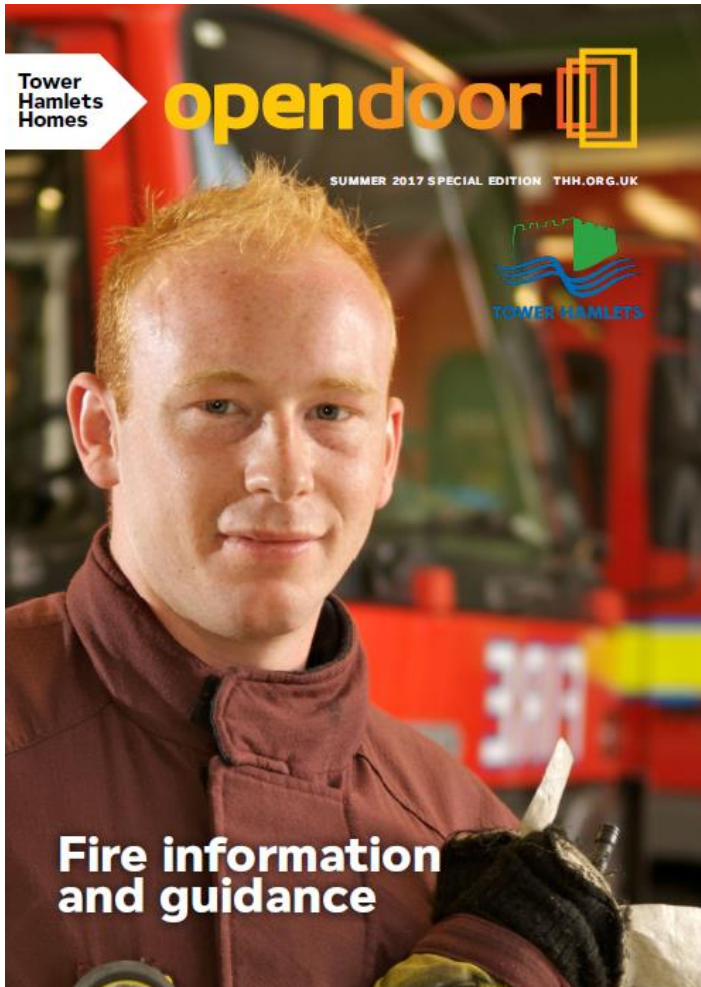
About THH



- Council-owned arms length company (ALMO)
- Established in 2008
- Responsible for:
 - Repairs
 - Tenancy and leasehold management
 - Collecting rent and service charges
 - Caretaking
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Major works

Thriving, safe and sustainable neighbourhoods where residents can be proud of their homes, respect one another and realise their potential

- More than just a housing management company
- Manage approximately 21,500 homes – 46% leaseholders
- Board of directors – 4 residents, 4 independents, 4 councillors
- Executive management team plus approximately 500 staff



- Achievements in last two years include:
 - 87% overall satisfaction with services, our highest ever
 - 92% satisfaction with repairs
 - 86% satisfaction with caretaking
 - All fire risk assessments up to date and started fire safety works programme
 - Introduced online services

- Achievements in last two years include:
 - Improved responsiveness to Councillors Enquiries - in April 2018, 93% responded to within 10 days
 - Holistic ASB service reduced in ASB by 48% in targeted areas
 - Over 5000 residents taken part in community investment initiatives last year including:
 - 800 taking part in training
 - Over 100 apprenticeships
 - 2,000 supported with welfare reform changes – over £1m additional benefit claims supported



Priorities :

- Continued action against ASB
- Sustained focus on fire safety
- More right first time services
- Increased access to services online
- Improved offer for leaseholders
- Leaseholder subletting
- Support for those impacted by welfare reform
- Stretching improvement targets across core all core services

Rising to the challenge

Context

- Savings target
- Modern customer services expectation
- Growing leaseholder portfolio
- Fire safety concerns
- Roll out of universal credit
- Review of management agreement

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Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF)

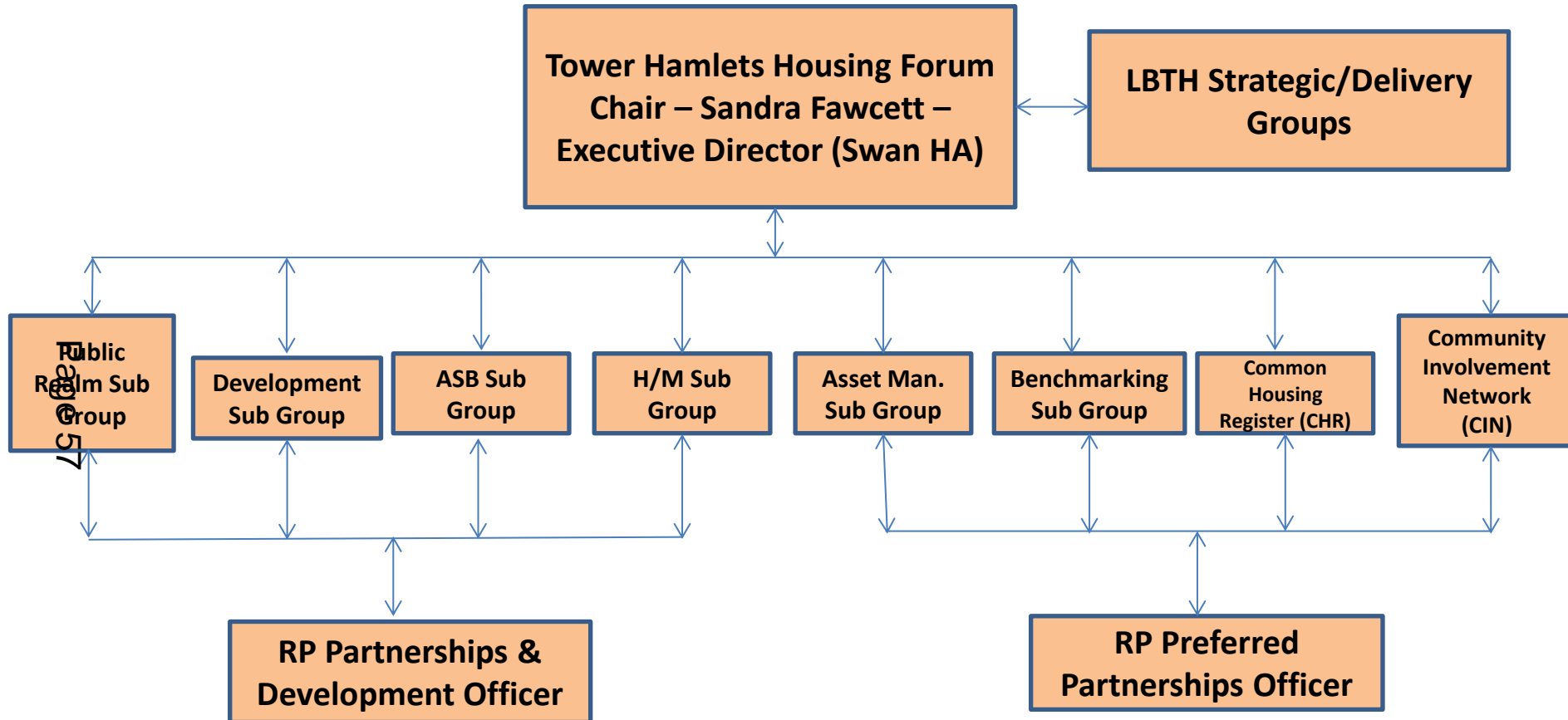
**Tracey St. Hill – RP Partnerships &
Development Officer**

**Godfrey Heyman – RP Preferred
Partnerships Officer**

Introduction

- Successful partnership structure in place more than 15 years
- Formed to facilitate joint working between the Council and Registered Providers with stock in Tower Hamlets
- Supports the delivery of the Housing Strategy and Community Plan objectives
- Provides a mechanism through which best practice can be shared amongst members

TOWER HAMLETS HOUSING FORUM (THHF) STRUCTURE CHART



Action Planning

- Sub Group Action Plans compiled annually
- THHF Executive Action Plan developed
- Informed by the key objectives of the sub groups and other LBTH strategic objectives
- Delivery monitored by the THHF Executive
- Key achievements compiled in an Annual Report

THHF Officer Roles

- Two staff employed by the Council and THHF to develop partnership working between the Council and the RPs
- Ensure that key THHF action plans are implemented
- Help develop joint partnership initiatives or projects e.g. Joint Hoarding Framework
- Disseminate best practice among THHF sub-groups and the Council
- Act as key liaison between the Council and RPs to ensure all key Council priorities are consulted on/delivered

Benefits of THHF Partnership



Working

- Structured strategic partnership is positive practice which is not always seen elsewhere
- Strong commitment from RPs to both actively participate and contribute financially
- Development protocol ensures positive dialogue
- Partnership has delivered a range of shared projects
- THHF is represented on a range of Council partnership meetings e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board

Conclusions

- Chair of THHF will do a presentation in September to talk about the work of RPs and the role THHF plays
- Regular information will be provided to THHF on social landlord performance at a strategic level
- A THHF representative attends all meetings to support the work of the HSSC

ANY QUESTIONS?