

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 - Scrutiny Lead Update Councillor Ehtasham Haque- Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Regeneration**

### **1. Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meetings 2021/22:**

There are 5 meetings of the sub-committee scheduled this year and 4 have been held:

1. 22<sup>nd</sup> June.
2. 9<sup>th</sup> September.
3. 19<sup>th</sup> October. (see note below:)
4. 2<sup>nd</sup> December

The final meeting for the year is planned for:

5. 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022

### **2. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 meeting:**

We considered:

- The Social Landlord's Performance Report
- A presentation on the 6-month review of the use of allocations to private rented sector properties.
- A spotlight session on the consultation with the council's tenants on the revised tenancy agreement and changes to the policy on housing succession.

### **3. Actions arising from the Sub-Committee Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021:**

- We discussed the performance of the borough's registered housing providers and heard that a further invitation had been sent to the chief operating officer at Spitalfields HA to attend, but he was unable to do so. There were 20 residents from Spitalfields HA who wanted to attend this meeting to continue their allegations of the poor quality of service they are receiving. We also heard from officers from Peabody HA who spotlighted their performance to the sub-committee.
- We agreed to ask the executive to write to the regulator for social housing, asking for them to undertake an investigation into Spitalfields HA's performance and the appropriateness of its governance arrangements.
- There was also a representative from the chair of the TRA at Clare House who expressed dissatisfaction with the way in which Clarion HA undertook the decanting of the block. We agreed to write to Clarion Housing Association citing our concerns over the experiences reported by residents of their decant from Clare House and over the lack of transparency regarding fire safety inspections.
- We reviewed the implementation and impact of the recent change in allocations policy regarding use of the private rented sector. The Head of Housing Options updated the sub-committee on the results of housing applicants for housing in the private sector and more widely on the progress being made with the Homelessness Transformation Programme.
- We asked a number of questions on how the policy was applied to newly homeless housing applicants and expressed concern with the policy to enable PRS discharge especially as some members of the sub-committee highlighted experiences of constituents whom they felt had been disadvantaged by the policy.
- Finally, we received a presentation on the outcome of the consultation with tenants on the proposed revised tenancy conditions. The Strategy and Policy Manager for Housing presented the results of the recent consultation exercise that had been undertaken on the proposal to update the council's tenancy agreement with its tenants.
- We expressed concern and reservations at the fact that there was a 1% response rate to the consultation exercise. The sub-committee felt this was not a sufficient evidence base to inform a significant policy decision. We felt that the Council also needs to learn/understand why such a low response rate was received to a matter which would have a significant effect on residents' lives.