

## **PRESENT**

### **Members of the Committee**

Councillor Monica Press (Chair)  
Councillor Matthew Palmer (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Judith Blakeman  
Councillor Janet Evans  
Councillor Ian Henderson  
Councillor Charles O'Connor  
Councillor Josh Rendall  
Councillor Dori Schmetterling

### **Others in Attendance**

Councillor Kim Taylor-Smith (Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Grenfell and Housing)  
Councillor Mary Weale (Lead Member for Finance and Modernisation)  
Doug Goldring (Director of Housing Management)  
Mark Grant (Head of Investment and Development, Corporate Property)  
Nick Walker (Senior Procurement Lead)  
Guy Parks (Capital Programme Manager)  
Rachel Sharpe (Director of Housing Needs and Supply)  
Asha Bagayat (Governance Services)  
Francesca Boylan (Governance Services)

The meeting was attended by some three members of the public and press.

### **A1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Adrian Berrill-Cox.

### **A2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr. Monica Press declared an interest as a leaseholder in a Council-owned property.

### **A3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2019**

It was noted that Councillor Adrian Berrill-Cox had sent his apologies.

The Chair noted that when new information was given to the Committee during the meeting, the details of the information needed to be recorded in the minutes:

in this case, details of why the transfer of freehold ownership of the Grenfell Tower site and surrounding land was preferable to a long-term lease.

The Committee made a number of amendments and asked for the revised minutes to be put to the next meeting for approval.

*Action by: Director of Governance and Co-ordination*

#### **A4. UPDATE BY THE LEAD MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND GRENFELL**

Cllr. Taylor-Smith and Doug Goldring introduced the report.

Fire Door Replacement Contract - The specification was for solid timber doors. Tender evaluation would shortly commence. The programme of works were due to commence in May and expected to last two years. Doug Goldring gave a detailed explanation of the of the tendering process and its independence.

In response to a question on what works were currently taking place regarding fire doors and extra safety, Doug Goldring said the doors at World's End Estate were being upgraded.

The Committee received a verbal update on Grenfell Relhousing, noting that 21 households have not yet moved into permanent homes, of which 15 have chosen their homes, whilst six have complex needs and have still not made a decision. Two households remain in commercial accommodation.

Cllr. Taylor Smith introduced and tabled a briefing note on the Lancaster West Estate Local Lettings Policy, a copy of which has been placed in the Minute Book and uploaded on to Council website. He sought the Committee's view on whether Bomore Road should be included in the Policy or be made available wider to everyone on the Housing Register, which would include those affected by the Grenfell tragedy.

A lengthy discussion ensued and the following main points were noted:

- The Committee criticised the late tabling of the report and did not feel it could give a view, without knowing the background and having sufficient time to consider the options and ask questions.
- Cllr. Blakeman said that the residents should be consulted on whether Bomore Road should be included in the Policy and pointed out that the residents at Lancaster West Estate said they were promised 21<sup>st</sup> Century housing by Cllr Campbell, following the Grenfell tragedy, which Bomore Road was.

The Chair then agreed to take urgent item A11 - Procurement Strategy for Delivering the Housing Revenue Account Capital Works Programme 2019 - 2020, under A4.

In response to questions about the lateness of the report, Doug Goldring explained there had been an administrative error with regards to its submission to Scrutiny. He apologised and said processes would be tightened.

The Committee questioned why no costs had been presented and said that for effective scrutiny, the transparency of finances was necessary for all Capital Works Programmes. In response, Doug Goldring said he had previously been advised the budget figures could be commercially sensitivity and therefore

exempt, but he would seek advice for the future presentation of finances in reports.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

1. Noted the report and asked, in future, for a more comprehensive update from the Lead Member covering his whole portfolio.
2. Requested further details on how many individuals there were in the households from Grenfell Tower and the walkways that were still not in permanent homes, an update on the rehousing of residents from Treadgold and Bramley Houses, and how many Category B residents have special needs.
3. Supported policies that encourage existing residents to relinquish their larger or disabled access properties for a smaller home, to meet the needs of those on the Housing Register and Grenfell related households.
4. Noted the report on Procurement Strategy for Delivering the Housing Revenue Account Capital Works Programme 2019-20 and agreed to refer the following comments to the Leadership Team meeting on 27 March 2019:
  - (i) Requested that top line figures and costings, such as the cost of communal heating systems, which do not compromise commercial sensitivity, be grouped together and included in the report, so that information was in available in the public domain.
  - (ii) Asked that (i) above be done for all decisions relating to the Capital Works Programme.
5. Asked that the precise address and ward of 155 Notting Hill be circulated.

*Action by: Lead Member for Grenfell and Housing and Director of Housing Management*

## **A5. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE**

Doug Goldring introduced the report and provided an explanation of figures, including repairs, rent arrears and resident satisfaction.

The Committee was then invited to ask questions or seek clarification. The following main points were noted:

- Concern around void management was voiced. Doug Goldring explained that the capacity to deal with the backlog was not there previously, but has now been addressed.
- Cllr. Press queried what the Council was doing to push housing associations to comply with the requirement of having a Gas Compliance Certificate. Doug Goldring said this was a legal requirement for landlords and all leaseholders who have been identified as subletting had been written to.
- There was a discussion about communal heating and security of door entry systems to estates.
- Cllr. Blakeman expressed concern at the use of KPI's of 48 hours regarding lift breakdowns.

- Cllr. Press congratulated the team for increasing the number of repayment arrangements set up for those in arrears, which was far more preferable to eviction. Mr Goldring agreed that eviction was a last resort.
- There was a discussion on tackling antisocial behaviour and the nature of training for Neighbourhood Officers. Doug Goldring said he was moving to a problem and solution method of case handling.

RESOLVED: -

The Committee:

1. Noted the report and welcomed the direct language and openness with regards to challenges and contractors.
2. Requested details of how the Council asks to see tenant's Gas Compliance Certificates.
3. Requested information on the amount of times and duration of people becoming trapped in lift breakdowns.
4. Welcomed the suggestion from Doug Goldring of including the figures on evictions, to show it was a last resort.
5. Requested details of the Housing Management complaints process and staff structure chart.

*Action by: Director of Housing Management*

#### **A6. ACCEPTING GLA GRANT FOR BUILDING COUNCIL HOMES FOR LONDON (KD05377)**

Mark Grant introduced the report and explained the Council had bid for £34 million and awarded £33.6 million from the GLA for providing new social housing units.

The Committee was then invited to ask questions or seek clarification. The following main points were noted:

- The Committee questioned whether the GLA grant stated the number of socially rented homes expected to be delivered. Mark Grant said that for every unit delivered, we would receive £100,000, so in order to get £33.6 million, the bid was for 336 socially rented homes.
- Hidden Homes previously identified have not been included in the delivery of the programme, but will be looked at to provide additional homes.
- Cllr. Press felt the report lacked details of timeframes and the conditions of the grant. Mark Grant highlighted paragraph 5.1 outlining the conditions of the grant and said that officers were currently in consultation with residents on the initial sites and that timeframes would evolve thereafter.
- There was a discussion on the cost of providing infrastructure for the New Homes Programme, such as lighting, CCTV and streetscape and using Section 106 money for this. Mark Grant said that the individual sites being looked at did not at this stage appear to have major infrastructure issues and where there were i.e. lighting the bridge at Acklam Road,

these could be absorbed as part of the development costs. Cllr. Taylor-Smith agreed to take the point on board and also look at ways in which local residents could see some benefits from the developments.

- There was a discussion on the need for affordable housing e.g. key worker rents and market options.
- There was a question on how the New Homes Provision Board linked in with the delivery of the New Homes Programme and homes being delivered by private developers. Rachel Sharpe said that she chaired the Board and that discussions on the broader view of the Borough's housing target and getting a picture of what we needed to build took place there and would inform the New Homes Programme.
- Cllr. Press noted the £29m currently remaining in Section 106 funds and the needs for infrastructure and lighting (etc) improvements required to support the new builds and urged that the GLA mayor's grant be used only for providing more social-rent homes and not infrastructure. This was agreed by the committee.

RESOLVED: -

1. The Committee noted the report and welcomed the GLA grant money for the Council's New Homes Programme
2. Asked for the details of the allocation of the GLA grant across London to be circulated.
3. Agreed to refer the following comments to the Leadership Team meeting on 27 March 2019:
  - (i) Asked that the wording in the report be tightened to make it clear that the grant was for building 336 social rent homes.
  - (ii) Recommended the use of Section 106 money (£29 million) to pay for the infrastructure of developments, so that the maximum grant money could be used on building the actual homes.

*Action by: Director of Corporate Property and Director of Housing Needs and Supply*

## **A7. UPDATE ON HOMELESSNESS FIGURES**

Rachel Sharpe introduced the report, explaining that it was an interim update, ahead of a complete review to be completed in June, from which a Homelessness Reduction Strategy will be developed.

Cllr. Henderson said the Street Link app did not work and asked for more robust ways of reporting rough sleepers and homeless persons.

There was a discussion on the Council's 'prevention duty'. Rachel Sharpe outlined the steps taken to assist the person threatened with homelessness through ensuring they can stay in their current accommodation.

There was also a discussion on the need for a clear exit strategy of those persons placed in supported accommodation and later finding themselves re-entering the system, when asked to leave and unable to access affordable private sector accommodation.

RESOLVED: -

The Committee:

1. Noted the report.
2. Asked that the final report on the Homelessness Review and subsequent Strategy come to a meeting.
3. Requested that information on reporting individuals who may be street homeless and helpline numbers be circulated and added to the minutes.
4. Requested data on keeping households in current accommodation, successful negotiations with landlords and officers' support in enabling private rental tenants in going to rent tribunals or the housing ombudsman.

**POST MEETING NOTE:**

Street Link: <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

The RBKC team is managed by Amy Withey, Street Population Manager, 020 7361 3386 and 07739314680.

The contact details for the team can be found at: <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice-support/rough-sleeping>

*Action by: Director of Housing Needs and Supply*

**A8. UPDATE REPORT BY THE LEAD MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND MODERNISATION**

The Committee received and noted the report.

Property Occupation within the RBKC Property Estate - Cllr. Weale said for example, that the Dalgarno Community Centre was in disrepair. The Council needed to check on the maintenance of leased properties, especially where occupiers were grant funded and suggested the Council should take responsibility for its own buildings and be transparent in the maintenance costs within the lease. The priority was to move ahead on this with voluntary sector tenants, which the Committee welcomed.

Canalside House - The Tudor Trust would not be in a position to provide a grant for a lift. Due to the complex nature of the infrastructure, the cost of installing one would be substantial and was included in the £2 million major refurbishment cost previously reported.

Cllr. Press congratulated the team for the success of the Kensal Road Public Consultations.

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee noted the report.
2. It recommended the Council look at taking responsibility for the maintenance of non-investment properties across its portfolio and not just those leased to the voluntary sector.

3. Cllr. Blakeman agreed to send Corporate Property the details of any leaseholders who have not yet engaged with the Property Occupation consultation.
4. It asked for details on what percentage of social housing was part of the Planning Policy in the Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area.
5. Requested a detailed cost breakdown of the remedial works to Kensington Leisure Centre, an update on the Holland Part School lease, an update on 12 Latimer Road and the plans for St. Helen's Gardens in the next Lead Member's Report.

*Action by: Lead member for Finance and Modernisation and Director of Corporate Property*

#### **A9. 37 PEMBROKE ROAD OFFICES REFURBISHMENT – ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Guy Parks introduced the report and drew attention to the addendum report and revised Part B exempt appendix, which was tabled. Copies have been placed in the Minute Book. Cllr. Weale outlined the four options and said that although Option 4, was the most expensive, it offered the best long term opportunities.

In response to questions by Cllr. Press on why Option 3 had not been outlined in any detail, Cllr. Weale explained that Option 4 was a more radical refurbishment, it included the windows and offered an improved working environment for staff.

The Chair then asked each Committee Member for their preferred option.

There was a discussion on the impact of the refurbishment on the residents at Warwick Road. Mark Grant explained that the residents will have an improved entrance security and better lighting, making the environment safer. It was noted that although resident parking space will not be lost, it did need to be looked at.

**RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the report and agreed to refer the following comments to the Leadership Team meeting on 27 March 2019:

- (i) The majority supported Option 4.
- (ii) Recommended that given the large budget commitment to the office improvements, a clear communication plan be developed in order that Warwick Road residents living above - and still waiting for full repairs to their Estate - are informed and fully understand the reasons for this decision.

*Action by: Director of Corporate Property*

#### **A10. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Committee agreed to discuss and circulate this information via email due to time constraints.

*Action by: Director of Governance and Co-ordination*

#### **A11. ANY OTHER ORAL OR WRITTEN ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Procurement Strategy for Delivering the Housing Revenue Account Capital Works Programme 2019 -2020 – This item was minuted under A4 above.

**A12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no matters requiring the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9:17pm

Chair

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