



ISLINGTON

# HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## 26 January 2016

### SECOND DESPATCH

**Please find enclosed the following items:**

<b>Item B1</b>	Capital Programming: Witness Evidence and Draft Recommendations	1 – 22
	- <i>Mears Witness Evidence</i>	1 – 20
	- <i>Draft Recommendations</i>	21 – 22

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## CAPITAL PROGRAMMING REVIEW

### ❖ Working with the client in planning capital works.

*Mears have developed a very close working relationship with IC capital works team and we have collectively agreed on a procedural flowchart to provide best practice for planning our projects.*

*See Appendix 1*

### ❖ Quality control & Guarantees

*All works are re-evaluated & re-measurable when mobilised at actual construction phase. A main reason for this is that time lapsed from reports and surveys pre-construction could mean that some works have been completed or no longer required. Mears compile elevation drawings for all blocks, properties & communal areas and all repairs and measures are identified, marked up and agreed by IC project Manager or CoW before works are carried out. These drawings are then signed off when works have been stage checked for quality and satisfactory standard. Additional to this there are numerous other electronic and hard copy documents that must be completed. Guarantees are issued for complete component renewals such as roofs, windows etc. All other works are covered by 12 month defect period from time of practical completion of contract. See Example 1*

### ❖ Local Labour and supply chain

*With our current directly employed staff numbering 42 at Islington, our locally employed labour is currently at 43%. Whenever we have any vacancies our default employment process is prioritised towards employing locally. In our first term of this contract we have also taken on 6 apprentices all of which have been Islington residents. On top of this we have secured employment for a further 6 Islington residents with our contractors. We are also very proud of retaining all Islington TUPE staff at our Branch with 5 of the members collectively amassing 204 years of experience working in Islington.*

*Finding suitable local firms and contractors is a more difficult task for a number of reasons; however 80% of our materials and sundries procurement is from local based merchants and companies.*

❖ Resident satisfaction and engagement

*Mears dedicate a Customer Care Officer to each contract whose primary role, is to engage with residents, as a first point of contact in appointing convenient access, notifying and keeping residents updated of works & programme, dealing with complaints and carrying out satisfaction surveys on completion of works. Mears have a 10 question survey that we submit to our head office monthly for board report. We are proud of consistently achieving a satisfaction level above 93%. Satisfaction surveys are also conducted by IC during and on completion of contracts. Mears Islington Branch is also focused on resident and local community engagement, some of which is evidenced in our Social Value Report in appendix 2 & 2A*

❖ Benchmarking & Comparisons

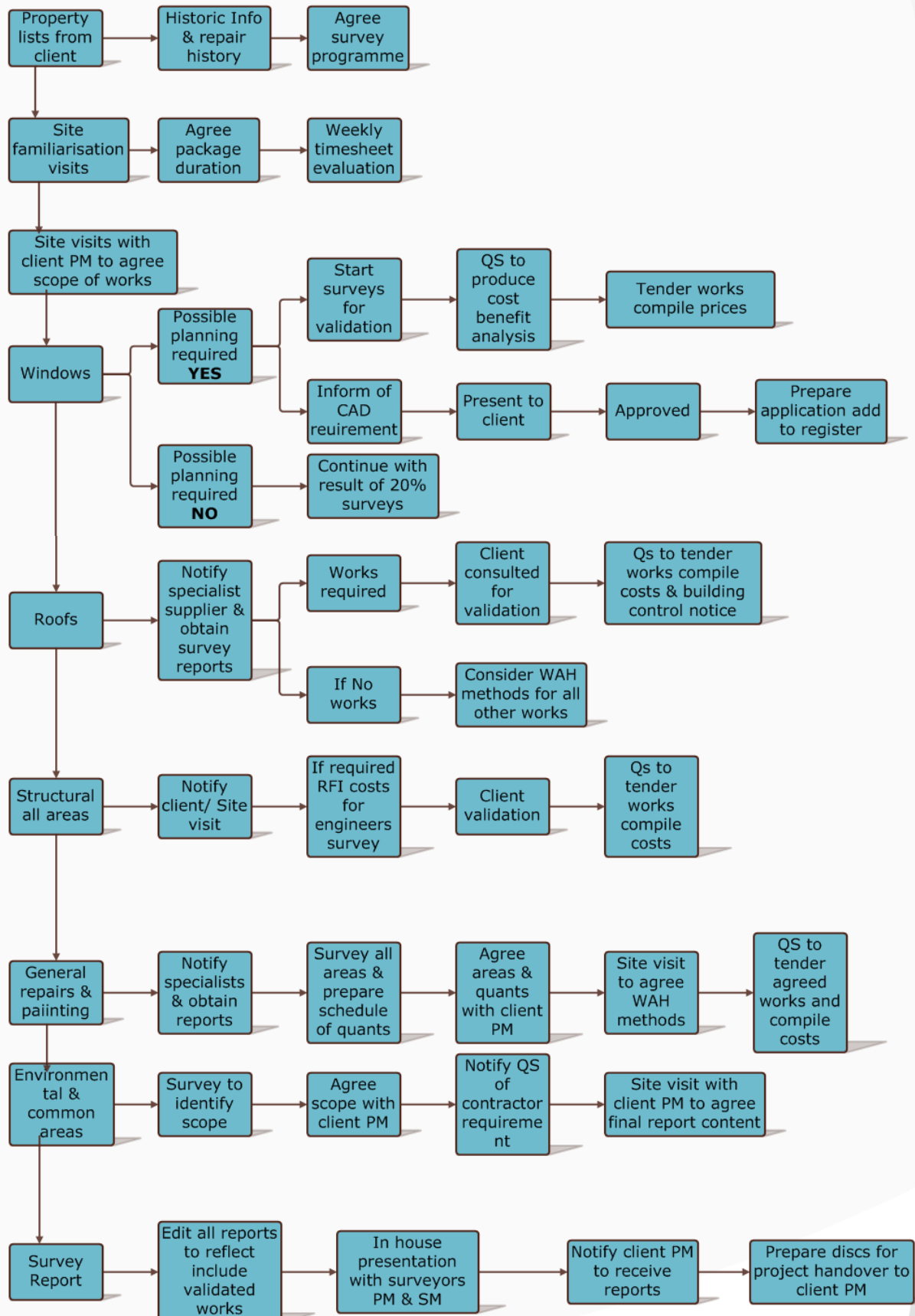
*Mears deliver an extensive range of services for social housing landlords nationwide. Comparisons can only really be made based on performance to, specific requirements of contract criteria and obligations set out in the term brief, tender documents as well as type of contract and or any additional signed agreements. Service levels will always be tailored to suit clients needs.*

❖ Summary

*The current Islington Major Works contract has some unique benefits in comparison to previous contracts and historical projects. Not least from lessons learned, case studies, consideration and inclusion of some procedures, introduced following customer feedback. Our contract is now Design & Build, SORs are bespoke set and prelim inclusive, securement of all tupe'd staff allows an ability to capitalise on a wealth of experience and local knowledge. With this comes dedication, pride and protection of a hard earned good reputation*

## SURVEY PROCESS CHART

January 13, 2016



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# Islington Social Value





# Mears Social Value Priorities



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# Social Value Summary

## Top Performing Social Advocates - YTD by volume of activities and 'in kind' value

Branch	Sum of Value	Activities
Manchester Working	£1,843,916.00	18
Coatbridge	£4,742,707.00	14
Islington	£1,725,734.00	11
Canterbury	£2,210,632.00	11
Brighton	£12,685,649.00	10
Leeds	£806,462.00	8

Branch	Activities	Sum of Value
Epping	1	£28,643,051.00
Brighton	11	£12,685,649.00
Coatbridge	14	£4,742,707.00
Cambridge	3	£3,243,234.00
Lambeth CHMG	7	£2,826,607.00
Canterbury	11	£2,210,632.00

# Apprentices

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Mears currently has **three apprentices, with a further two employed** by one of our sub contractors, B Walsh with encouragement and support from Mears. All live in Islington.

- Daisy Mullis is an Apprentice Administrator and is doing an NVQ2 in Business Administration.
- Bobby Stokes started with the branch as an Apprentice Resident Liaison Officer and successfully completed an NVQ2 in Customer Service. He is now a Site Supervisor with succession plan to become a Site Manager and is doing a Site Supervision in Construction Level 3 qualification to support his on-going transition.
- Elias Derege is an Apprentice Quantity Surveyor doing an HNC qualification.



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# Support to Local Employment

Mears employs many people who live or have worked in Islington for many years. One member of staff was unemployed and spotted at a Work Club run by Islington Council, supported by Mears. He was mentored by our Projects Administrator, Islington resident Kelly Parker, who helped him create a C.V. and with internet job searching, online applications and interview techniques. A position became available at the branch during the programme for a Driver/Labourer. He was offered the position following a successful interview. When told the good news, he said he felt like he had won the lottery! He has gone from strength to strength and is now very much part of our successful presence in the Borough. Commenting on Mears support to the Work Clubs, an Islington Council officer said: “I just wanted to thank you.....for all the support you have given local Islington residents.....This would not have been possible if it was not the on-going support and enthusiasm you have shown.....I am really confident that with this momentum we will secure more jobs for local residents. A big thank you.”

The logo for Mears, featuring the word "MEARS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a red rectangular border that has a slight 3D effect with a darker red shadow on the right side.

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# Support to Local Employment Needs

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Mears was approached by Islington Council to provide an employment opportunity for a candidates with Learning Disabilities. The branch does a newsletter mail out to residents and it was agreed that support on this would be helpful to the Admin Team who dedicated around 6-8 hours on this each month. Around 10 candidates came to the branch with their Carers where General Manager Theo Petrou explained what the role would involve.

One resident now been working with the branch for around 2 years and has fitted in well to both the team and office environment . Colleagues have supported her both in and out of the branch with team members recently attending an art exhibition at the Fold Gallery in London where she was exhibiting a piece.

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# Employability Skills

- Staff have worked in a number of Islington schools over last couple of years providing support on *CVs, interview & presentation skills and expectations of the working environment*. Recent events include:
  - \* Apprentice Fair Highbury Fields School  
2<sup>nd</sup> Dec
  - \* Presenting Yourself Days:
    - 11<sup>th</sup> Dec – St Aloysius
    - 8<sup>th</sup> Jan – Elizabeth Garrett Anderson
  - \* Employability Skills Tutorial Sessions at St Aloysius:
    - 20<sup>th</sup> Jan
    - 27<sup>th</sup> Jan
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb
- Two Year 11 student from Highbury Fields School in Islington spent a week working with us both on site and in the office. One commented: "I've loved being at Mears, you are all a bunch of genuinely lovely people and its a shame it has ended so quickly."



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# Networking Events

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A series of mock interviews was carried out with a group of 10 unemployed Islington residents as part of Adult Learners week. Mears was one of ten employers who did speed interviews lasting five minutes with them. Employers had to confirm if they felt candidate was suitable for employment in their company at end of each interview. Mears was able to present various employment pathways and opportunities to a number of the candidates.

Following the success of the **Aspire Week** earlier this year, Mears has been asked to take part in a similar event on November 11<sup>th</sup> organised by The Islington Youth Employment Network (Islington Council and a number of partners from a broad youth network) which is seeking to create innovative pathways to support younger residents upon their journey into employment.



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# Decorating Workshop

Mears has successfully run a monthly DIY Workshop for Islington residents. The training they receive enables them to carry out some simple DIY tasks to enhance & improve their homes.

*"Dear Theo,*

*I just wanted to thank you, Billy and Richard for a really enjoyable and informative introduction to basic DIY and maintenance workshop session which was held yesterday evening. All the residents and I really enjoyed the session; it was informative, fun and very hands on and I think everyone got a lot out of it.*

*Please also thank Karen, Kisha and the other ladies for their welcome and refreshments. I think it was a flying start to the programme and I think all those who attended will be telling their neighbours all about it, so we should be able to continue running this programme into the next financial year. Thank you once again."*

Regards

Resident Engagement Officer



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# Refurbishment of Community Facility

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Staff from Mears turned out in force to lend their support to a painting project at a local community hall. The Jean Stokes Community Centre, a big feature of local community life on the Bemerton Estate, received an internal face lift from the Islington branch working alongside staff from Islington Council who spent three days painting a computer room and the hallway. Mears Project Coordinator Alan Arthy led the teams to great success. Islington's Service Development Officer said: "The feedback that I've had from our staff that participated has been great.....they clearly had a positive experience. I think that's due in no small part to Alan's approach with staff in terms of providing a positive environment to work in, teaching new skills and providing encouragement for all of the participants. This coupled with positive feedback from the community centre management committee means that I think we can consider it a real success!"



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# Young at Heart

Mears donated £500 and support from staff for Islington's Older Persons Day celebrations which formed part of the Young at Heart week. Members of the branch helped to host the event, meeting and greeting, sitting with, and providing refreshments for senior citizens attending. Entertainment was provided by the Pearly King of Finsbury .



# Award Evening at Robert Blair Primary School

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Robert Blair Primary School holds a yearly ceremony to celebrate the success of its pupils in a variety of ways including attendance, improvers, excelling in particular subjects etc. Head of Business Support Sandra Butler, accompanied by CCO Bobby Stokes was invited to do opening ceremony speech and give out prizes to children. The Mayor of Islington had been guest speaker the previous year. The speech made reference to Growth Mindset targets the school had focused on that year as follows:

- We remember that intelligence is something that we can grow.
- We don't say, 'I can't do this', we say 'I can't do this yet'.
- We recognise that effort is more important than results.
- We learn new things as often as we can.
- We are not scared of mistakes or failure because we can learn from them.
- We take risks in order to improve our learning.



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## APPENDIX 2A

Survey No



### Homes for Islington Customer Satisfaction Survey Form (Telephone & Visits)

Tenant's Name		
Tenant's Address		
Job No.		
Date Survey Conducted / Comp w/e		
Contractor		
Survey Taker's Name		

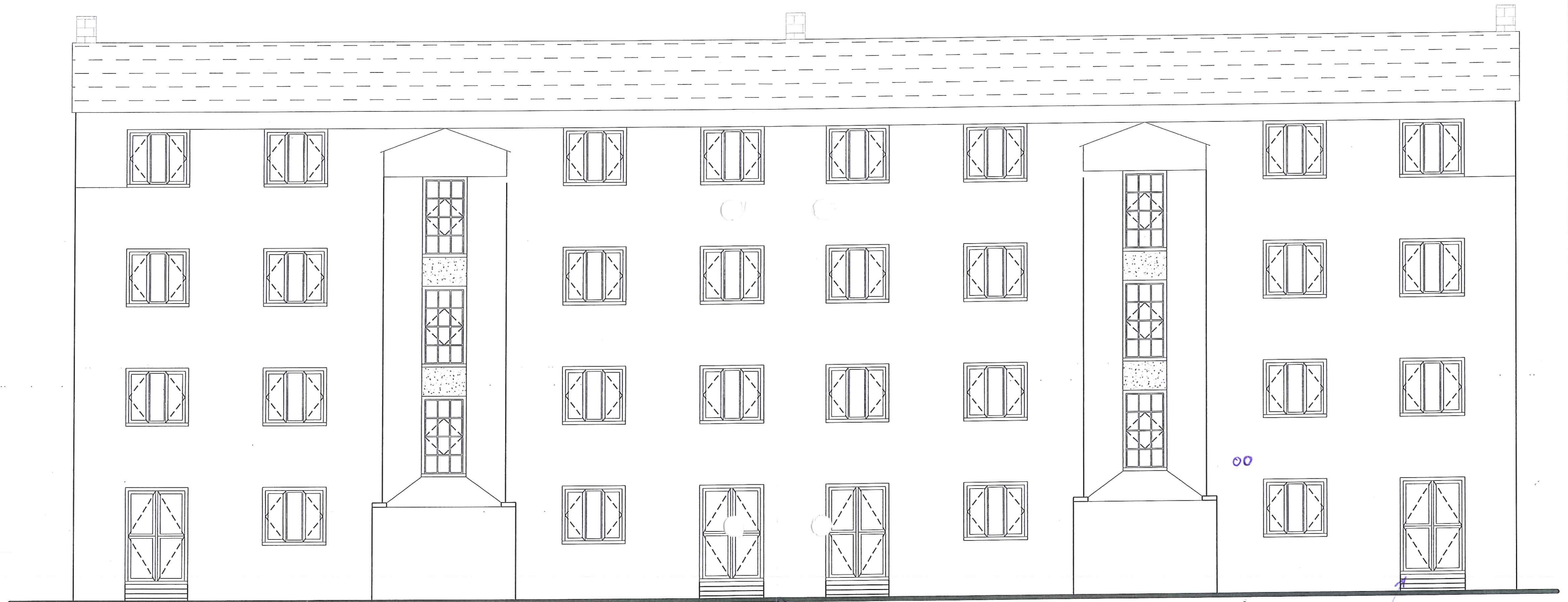
KEY	
VS	Very Satisfied
S	Satisfied
FS	Fairly Satisfied
D	Dissatisfied
VD	Very Dissatisfied

		VS	S	FS	D	VD	COMMENTS
Q1	Was the work completed in the time expected?						
Q2	Were you given adequate notice of appointments for the works?						
Q3	How satisfied were you with the information provided about the works?						
Q4	Did you find the operative polite, friendly & helpful?						
Q5	Did we respect you and your property / building?						
Q6	Was the work area left clean & tidy?						
Q7	Did we ensure your property/ building was safe & secure while our tradesperson was present?						
Q8	How would you rate the work that was carried out?						
Q9	How would you rate the overall service from contractor?						
Q10	How satisfied were you with the finished product?						

Tenant's Signature _____	Date: _____	Survey Taker's Signature: _____	Date: _____
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Concrete  
Repairs



21-33 Treaty Street

Rear elevation

GROUND FLOOR

Barry Cunningham  
c/w  
14/4/15  
T. W. [signature]  
14/04/15

O - HOLE  
F - REPOINTING



Concrete  
Repairs



21-33 Treaty Street

Front elevation

GROUND FLOOR

- REPOINTING
- BRICK REFACE
- ▨ CONCRETE REPAIR



## **Housing Scrutiny Committee**

**26 January 2016**

### **Capital Programming Scrutiny: Draft Recommendations**

*The following recommendations have been drafted in consultation with the Chair. The Committee is invited to consider these and make any additions or amendments required. The Committee is due to receive further witness evidence at the meeting and the draft recommendations may require revision in light of that evidence.*

*The wording of the below recommendations is in draft form. The final wording of all recommendations will be considered by the Chair and set out in the full scrutiny report, to be agreed at the next committee meeting.*

#### **Draft Recommendations for discussion**

1. In future capital works contracts, the council should consider increasing its role in the selection of sub-contractors, to ensure that those contractors which carry out high-quality work, establish positive relationships with residents and use local labour are preferred over those with recorded performance issues.
2. That penalty clauses be reinstated into future capital works contracts to ensure appropriate recourse in instances of poor performance.
3. Given the financial challenges facing the council, all procurement options be explored to ensure that best value is achieved when the capital works contracts are due to be re-tendered. The council should consider if the greatest value can be obtained through term partnering agreements, procuring works in smaller lots, or carrying out certain works in-house.
4. To assist in the future procurement of capital works, consideration be given to establishing a benchmarking club with other London local authorities, to ensure best practice on contractual, financial, and performance matters.
5. In order to continue gauging satisfaction and identifying performance issues, the council should continue and expand the pilot survey of residents before, during and after capital works.
6. The seven-year basis of the cyclical improvement programme be reviewed to ensure that the greatest value for money is achieved. It is suggested that the basis of any capital works programme should be flexible and based on the life-cycles of components.

7. Following previous resident involvement in the selection of capital works contractors, tenants and leaseholders should continue to be involved in decisions about procurement and the future of the service.
8. To improve the response to capital works consultations, the council seek to engage further with tenants and leaseholders, particularly those in areas without TRAs which tend to have a lower response rate to consultations.
9. **Recommendation on the use of local labour, subject to the evidence submitted by the council's capital works contractors?**
10. **Recommendation on future confidentiality clauses and schedules of rates, subject to the evidence submitted by Islington Leaseholders Association to be considered at the meeting?**
11. **Recommendation on carrying out certain works in-house?**