



AGENDA FOR THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Housing Scrutiny Committee are summoned to Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on, **15 July 2019 at 7.30 pm.**

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Despatched : 5 July 2019

Membership

Councillor Michael O'Sullivan (Chair)
Councillor Sue Lukes (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Theresa Debono
Councillor Troy Gallagher
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE
Councillor Gary Heather
Councillor Ben Mackmurdie
Councillor Marian Spall
Rose Marie McDonald (Resident Observer) (Co-Optee)
Dean Donaghey (Resident Observer) (Co-Optee)

Substitute Members

Councillor Vivien Cutler
Councillor Osh Gantly
Councillor Satnam Gill OBE
Councillor Sara Hyde
Councillor Jenny Kay
Councillor Roulin Khondoker
Councillor Nurullah Turan

Quorum is 4 Councillors



A. Formal Matters

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declaration of Substitute Members
3. Declarations of Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

- *(a) **Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to **all** members present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting
5. Chair's Report
6. Order of Business

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7. Public Questions

For members of the public to ask questions relating to any subject on the meeting agenda under Procedure Rule 70.5. Alternatively, the Chair may opt to accept questions from the public during the discussion on each agenda item.

B.	Items for Decision/Discussion	Page
1.	Main Review- Draft Scrutiny Initiation Document (Major Works)	5 - 6
2.	Mini Review - Draft Scrutiny Initiation Document(Private Rented Sector)	7 - 8
3.	Work Programme 2019/2020	9 - 10

C. Urgent non-exempt items (if any)

Any non- exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgent by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, any of them are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E. Confidential/exempt items **Page**

F. Urgent exempt items (if any)

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee will be on 12 September 2019

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London Borough of Islington

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 10 June 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on 10 June 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** O'Sullivan (Chair), Lukes (Vice-Chair), Debono, Hamitouche, Heather, McDonald (Co-Optee) and Donaghey (Co-Optee)

Also present: Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development

Councillor Michael O'Sullivan in the Chair

92 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Spall, Gallagher and Mackmurdie.

93 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)

None.

94 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Item A3)

None.

95 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

96 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item A5)

The Chair advised that a Silent Walk and Solidary March for Grenwell would be held to commemorate the two year anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire.

It was noted that the Corporate Director of Housing would be providing an update on fire safety matters to the Committee in the autumn.

The Chair advised that he had informally discussed potential scrutiny topics with members of the Committee and it had been suggested that the Committee carry out two reviews; one on planned maintenance and the other on private sector housing.

97 **ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item A6)**

The order of business would be as per the agenda.

98 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item A7)**

None.

99 **MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DATES OF MEETINGS (Item B1)**

RESOLVED:

That the membership, terms of reference and dates of meetings of the Housing Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year be noted.

100 **SCRUTINY TOPICS AND WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020 (Item B2)**

The Committee agreed two main scrutiny topics for 2019/20. The Committee's primary focus would be on planned maintenance, with a particular focus on the insourcing of services. At the end of 2019 the Committee's focus would shift to private sector housing, which would consider recent and upcoming legislative changes, including 'Right to Rent' checks on tenants' immigration status. It was requested that Scrutiny Initiation Documents for both reviews be presented to the next meeting.

The Committee queried if the review of Planned Maintenance was timely, given that the council was currently re-procuring its major works contracts. In response, the Corporate Director of Housing advised that the review could help to inform the major works procurement and future procurement activity related to planned maintenance works.

It was advised that the Committee's review of Homelessness was still to conclude. It was noted that the Chair would meet with Cllrs Lukes and Khondoker to discuss the evidence received and develop recommendations for the agreement of the Committee. An update would be provided to a future meeting.

It was advised that the report of the Committee's review of Responsive Repairs would come to a future meeting for formal sign-off.

It was requested that Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association be invited to present to the 31 October meeting.

It was advised that the Committee would receive the 12-month update on its review of Housing Services for Vulnerable People. This was expected to be received in autumn 2019.

It was agreed that, instead of receiving a presentation from a Housing Association in January 2020, the Committee would receive an update on Tenant Led Organisations in the borough.

It was advised that the Committee would receive the 12-month update on its review of New Build Housing. It was suggested that this item would be presented in spring 2020.

The Committee requested a short briefing or presentation on the status of the Council's PFI contracts with Partners for Improvement in Islington in April 2020.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That 'Planned Maintenance Insourcing' and 'Private Sector Housing' be selected as the main scrutiny review topics for 2019/20
- (ii) That the work programme be agreed, subject to the amendments set out above.

101 QUARTERLY REVIEW OF HOUSING PERFORMANCE (Q4 2018/19) (Item B3)

Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development, introduced the report which set out the performance of Housing services in Quarter 4 2018/19.

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

- The number of genuinely affordable new homes completed by the council was slightly off target, however Cllr Ward was assured that the council would meet, or exceed, its overall target of delivering 550 genuinely affordable new homes by 2022.
- The number of genuinely affordable new homes completed by developers was below target. This was being monitored and the council was challenging where appropriate, however it was acknowledged that the council had limited influence over construction delays.
- The number of severely overcrowded households was above target, however the number of households downsizing had increased. It was thought that an increase in downsizing and the development of new genuinely affordable housing would help to reduce the number of severely overcrowded households in future.
- A discussion was had on the tenancy conditions of registered providers, including providers that made use of fixed-term tenancies. It was noted that housing associations were using a range of tenancy conditions and this may be an area for future review.
- The Committee considered the sale of housing association properties in the borough and expressed concern that social housing in Islington may be sold to fund development elsewhere, especially as some Islington Council

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 10 June 2019

properties were previously transferred to housing associations under previous administrations.

- The Committee noted that the first time fix rate was below target and expressed concern that improvements to housing repairs systems had not yet been fully implemented. It was advised that an update from officers would be requested.
- The Committee reiterated its concerns about the performance of Partners and the credibility of its performance measures. It was suggested that qualitative performance reporting would help to reassure the Committee that improvements were being made.
- It was suggested that the council should review the feasibility of increasing the number of precautionary works to prevent component failures and repairs.
- The Committee expressed concern that rent arrears had increased following the implementation of universal credit. Advice and support was being provided to residents receiving universal credit.
- The Committee noted concerns about vulnerable roughsleepers and emphasised the importance of support services for street homeless people, including mental health and addiction services.
- Following a query, it was advised that the council carried out tenancy checks on an annual basis.

The Committee thanked Councillor Ward for his attendance.

RESOLVED:

That progress to the end of Quarter 4 against key performance indicators falling within the remit of the Housing Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

CHAIR

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)	
Review: Major Works	
Scrutiny Review Committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee	
Director leading the review: Simon Kwong, Director of Property Services	
Lead Officer(s): Christine Short, Head of Capital Programme Delivery.	
Overall aim: To determine the best methods of delivering major works projects	
Objectives of the review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine who determines what major works are required, where and when. • To examine the robustness of the construction contracts and schedules of rates to ensure they provide adequate protection for the Council. • To review the options available to deliver major works projects, (consider whether delivery in-house would be financially viable and provide a superior service, whether small contractors would be more manageable) 	
How is the review to be carried out: <u>Scope of the review</u> The review will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at the pros and cons of different major works delivery models • How the construction industry operates (the role of the Managing Contractors, sub contractors, site management and supervision) Types of evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and written evidence from Islington’s Head of Capital Programme Delivery • Oral evidence from Senior Management reps. from two other London Boroughs (probably Camden and Southwark) • Oral evidence from an external Construction Expert (possibly Steve Downing of NHF) 	
Additional Information: In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.	

Programme	
Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	12 September 2019

2. Draft Recommendations	Xxxx 2020
3. Final Report	xxxxxxx 2020

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)	
Review:	PRIVATE SECTOR RENTED HOUSING
Scrutiny Review Committee:	Housing Scrutiny Committee
Director leading the Review:	Jan Hart & Karen Lucas
Lead Officer:	Irna van der Palen & Janice Gibbons
Overall aim: To determine whether the council has adequate mechanisms in place to regulate the private rented sector and support private sector tenants, in particular those who are vulnerable.	
Objectives of the review:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine latest information on costs, quality and regulation of the PRS in Islington, trends over time and comparison with other boroughs. 2. Examine how we regulate the sector and whether there is room for improvement 3. Examine the role of the private sector in meeting housing needs. 4. Review the way that the council supports tenants living in the private rented sector, including how we better inform people about their rights to make them more resilient, and how we hear their voice. 5. Examine the impact of the right to rent on access to the PRS for those subject to immigration control, and the council's role and ability to combat discrimination. 	
How is the review to be carried out:	
<p>Scope of the Review</p> <p>Look at quality, cost and regulation of the private sector rented housing in Islington and how this could be improved. Cover recent changes to legislation and extension of HMO licensing. Influence from Islington lettings/residential. Regulation of landlords and lettings agencies will be included. Examine the role of the private sector in Islington and how it has changed, use of deposits and incentives – RSS and how it supports our aims.</p> <p>The review will not cover owner-occupation or empty properties and the effects of welfare reforms on rent levels and affordability.</p> <p>Types of evidence will be assessed by the review:</p> <p>1. Documentary submissions:</p> <p>Presentations will cover the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current quality and quantity of private rented housing in the borough and trends over the last few years. • Details of the population of renters – who is renting - affordability. • Role of the private sector in meeting housing needs. • Details of current rent levels and trends over the past few years. • Evidence on enforcement and future direction 	

- Role of GLA and MHCLG in disseminating information on action taken against poor landlords / letting agencies
- Details on Islington Residential/Lettings.
- Evidence on how tenants are supported.

2. It is proposed that witness evidence be taken from:

- Generation Rent
- Shelter
- National Landlords Association / local landlords on how we help them to comply
- Representative from lettings agencies/estate agents.
- Any innovative approaches by other boroughs supporting tenants where enforcement action is being taken
- GLA – data base on rogue landlords
- CAB
- Renters Rights London
- Safer Renting

3. Visits

Visits with staff to properties, and to sit in on interviews with staff at 222.

Additional Information:

Members of Committee to be invited to attend meeting of the Islington Landlord Forum to get opinions from landlords.

Islington Law Centre and the CAB will be asked to contribute information on their experiences of the private rented sector.

Programme	
Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	
2. Timetable	
3. Interim Report	
4. Final Report	

HOUSING ON SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY TOPICS AND WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

15 JULY 2019

- 1) Scrutiny Review: SID (Planned Maintenance/Major Works)
- 2) Scrutiny Review: SID (Private Rented Sector)
- 3) Work Programme 2019/2020

12 SEPTEMBER 2019

- 1) Fire Safety – An officer update
- 2) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q1 2019/20)
- 3) Scrutiny Review: Presentation by Head of Capital Programme Delivery
- 4) Work Programme 2019/2020

31 OCTOBER 2019

- 1) Effectiveness of Communications –12 month report back
- 2) Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence (neighbouring authorities)
- 3) Work Programme 2019/2020

25 NOVEMBER 2019

- 1) Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association
- 2) Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
- 3) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q2 2019/20)
- 4) Work Programme 2019/2020

20 JANUARY 2020

- 1) Housing Association Scrutiny (Housing Association TBC)
- 2) Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
- 3) Work Programme 2019/20/20

3 MARCH 2020

- 1) Annual Executive Member Presentation and Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q3 2019/20)
- 2) Scrutiny Review: Draft Recommendations

28 APRIL 2020

- 1) Scrutiny Review: Draft Report
- 2) Work Programme 2019/20

23 JUNE 2020

- 1) Scrutiny Review: Final Report

2) Work Programme
