

**Report of: Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee**

| <b>Meeting of</b> | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Ward(s)</b> |
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| Executive         | 21 April 2022 | All            |

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**Subject: Communal Heating – Findings of the Housing Scrutiny Committee**

**1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 This report requests that the Executive receive the recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Committee following the completion of its review of Communal Heating. A response to the recommendations set out in the report will be considered at a future meeting of the Executive.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the report of the Housing Scrutiny Committee be received.
- 2.2 That the Executive Member's response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Housing Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

**3. Background**

The Housing Scrutiny Committee commenced a review of Communal Heating on 12 January 2021. The overall aim of the review was to evaluate the communal heating service provided to approximately 4,000 properties throughout the borough, to identify opportunities for further development and improvement in service delivery, and to consider potential low-carbon alternatives and their implications.

#### **4.1 Financial Implications**

The proposals in the report need to be costed before a response is made by the Executive.

#### **4.2 Legal Implications**

Relevant legal implications will be considered as part of the response to the review.

#### **4.3 Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications at this stage. Any environmental implications will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

#### **4.4 Equalities Impact Assessment**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Committee has had regard to any equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses during the course of the review. Details of any such implications are set out in the appended report. An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed as the Executive is only asked to receive the report at this stage. The impact on residents will need to be fully considered as part of the Executive Member response to the review, at which point an Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed if required.

### **5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

- 5.1 The Committee recognises that although occasional outages of communal heating boilers is unavoidable all efforts should be made to ensure that the systems are properly maintained so as to minimise its impact on residents especially during cold spells of weather. The recommendations in the report will ensure that issues around breakdown of communal heating is addressed.

#### **Appendices:**

- Report of the Housing Scrutiny Committee

#### **Background papers:**

- None.

Report author: Ola Adeoye, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 020 7527 3044

E-mail: [Olayiwola.adeoye@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Olayiwola.adeoye@islington.gov.uk)