

Housing Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 8 July 2019 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Gavin Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor Nick Johnson
Councillor Bill Williams

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Kieron Williams

OFFICER SUPPORT: Tony Hunter - Head of Engineering
Dave Hodgson - Director of Asset Management
Christine Bramman - Head of Repairs and Maintenance
Mick Lucas - Director of Environment
Dave Hodgson, Director of Asset Management
John Wade - Head of Traded Services
Shelley Burke – Head of Overview & Scrutiny

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Jack Buck

1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none

4. SCRUTINY RE DISTRICT HEATING

The cabinet member for housing management and modernisation, Councillor Kieron Williams, attended the meeting to discuss the emerging strategy on the council's district heating network. He presented a paper which was about to go to cabinet for decision. He was accompanied by Tony Hunter, Head of Engineering, and Dave Hodgson, Director of Asset Management.

The chair proposed that district heating was one of the main topics for the commission this year. He suggested that this session be used both as pre-scrutiny for the upcoming cabinet discussion, and for an in depth exploration of the issues around the council's district heating systems, particularly in the light of the council's declaration of climate emergency.

The commission discussed the paper and drew out the following themes:

- how will the council measure value for money in new heating systems
- the options for governance of any emerging model of delivery
- the impact of individual metering if that should be required
- fuel poverty
- whether changes to heating systems would be classed as improvement or replacement, with the consequent implication for leaseholders
- management of risk and contingency plans if the council becomes more dependant on South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP)
- practical issues around expansion of SELCHP
- the protocol for dealing with heating outages and paying compensation
- how a new delivery model for heating can be integrated into the planning system, particularly around Old Kent Road, given the plans for SELCHP expansion
- how the council could incentivise resident involvement
- funding issues and the likelihood of government investment

The commission agreed to invite Tom Vosper to its next meeting for a further discussion on how the district system might be developed.

5. SCRUTINY OF HOUSING REPAIRS

The chair introduced this agenda item and asked officers to set out how the repairs service is working and how its performance is monitored and managed since it became an in house service in October 2018. Christine Bramman, Head of Repairs and Maintenance, presented the paper and explained the mechanisms in place for measuring performance. She was accompanied by Mick Lucas, Director of Environment, Dave Hodgson, Director of Asset Management and John Wade, Head of Traded Services.

Commission members discussed:

- Whether the monthly satisfaction survey captures the right people – both in terms of demographics and the stage of the repair
- How completed and missed appointments are managed, how missed appointments are compensated for and whether that could be automated

- Whether opportunities exist to cross-check data on completed repairs to further measure the effectiveness of the service, particularly in respect of the quality of repairs
- How feedback is relayed to Southwark Building Services
- The system for communication with residents who may have to take time off work to wait for repair operatives
- Inspection of completed repairs
- Management of complex repairs where more than one operative may need to visit
- The role of the contact centre in capturing the repair request accurately
- Culture change for the service, given that the operatives transferred in from contractors

The chair thanked officers and commission members for an extremely useful discussion.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The commission discussed the draft work programme. Suggestions for future meetings: pre-decision scrutiny on housing allocations, a follow up session on housing repairs to go into more depth, temporary accommodation, voids and empty properties

Meeting ended at 9.45 p.m.

CHAIR:

DATED: