



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the meeting of the OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2003 at 4.00 p.m. at Avonmouth House, Avonmouth Street, London SE1 6NX

PRESENT: Councillor Kim HUMPHREYS (Chair)
Councillor Linda MANCHESTER (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Dora DIXON-FYLE (Reserve), Stephen FLANNERY (Reserve), John FRIARY, Eliza MANN, Andy SIMMONS and Anne YATES

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Beverley BASSOM, Executive Member for Housing
Councillor Fiona COLLEY
Nancy Horwood – Chair, SGTO

OFFICER SUPPORT: Keith Broxup – Strategic Director of Housing
David Hancock – Head of Community Housing
Ian Hughes – Head of Corporate Strategy
Peter Roberts – Scrutiny Team

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Neil Watson.

NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMED URGENT

The Chair agreed to accept a deputation request from SGTO.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES

Council Procedure Rule 1.17(5) allows a Member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following Minutes. Should a Member's vote be recorded in respect to an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the Minute File and is available for public inspection.

The Committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the Minute File. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

1. **CALL-IN: FUNDING FOR SOUTHWARK GROUP OF TENANTS ORGANISATION (SGTO)**

Members who had requested the call-in expressed concern that the original decision of the Executive seemed to place the responsibility for progress solely with SGTO. This was unreasonable as it was the responsibility of all sides to make progress. Funding should not be linked to any progress being made. Members also commented that the word, "substantial", in the decision was subjective and again inappropriate.

The Committee agreed to receive a deputation from SGTO. Representatives of SGTO confirmed that the present wording of the Executive resolution was unacceptable to tenants. They stressed that SGTO had striven to move the Best Value Review forward but that this was not their sole responsibility. They also emphasised that the issue of funding should not be directly linked to progress being made and questioned whether this was in accord with the decisions taken on funding applications by the Tenant Fund Management Committee, Tenants Council and the Executive. SGTO informed the Committee that they had arranged three meetings to take place in the borough as a way of ensuring that tenants were fully engaged in working towards the Reviews.

The Executive Member for Housing addressed the Committee. She indicated that the Executive decision had not intended to accuse SGTO of blocking progress. She felt that there had been some misunderstanding as to action to be taken following her attending the Tenants Council but stated that she welcomed the three meetings arranged by SGTO. She would ensure Officers gave full support in order to facilitate those meetings. In closing, she stressed that there had been no intention of placing on SGTO the entire onus of achieving progress. The intention had been to encourage movement towards an agreed vision and the process of reaching it and to relieve uncertainty for tenants.

RESOLVED: That the Executive re-considers its decision of 7 October 2003, that it will not be minded to agree any further funding for Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations until substantial progress can be made on agreeing the draft Vision for the Best Value Review of Tenant and Resident Involvement and the Tenant Fund, and replace it with the following:

- i) That it notes SGTO's commitment to progressing the draft vision of the Best Value Review of Tenant and Resident Involvement and the Tenant Fund;
- ii) That it notes the Executive Member for Housing's commitment that section 2 of the original decision of 7 October 2003 did not imply any criticism of SGTO; and
- iii) That all parties involved with the Best Value Reviews are urged to work on agreeing a draft vision for the Best Value Review of Tenant and Resident Involvement and the Tenant Fund

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.

CHAIR:
DATED: