

Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission

Monday 21 November 2022

7.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Membership

Councillor Ellie Cumbo (Chair)
Councillor Jane Salmon (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sam Foster
Councillor Barrie Hargrove
Councillor Esme Hicks
Councillor Portia Mwangangye
Councillor Emily Tester
Basseyy Basseyy (Co-opted member)
Cris Claridge (Co-opted member)
Ina Negoita (Co-opted member)

Reserves

Councillor Sam Dalton
Councillor Ketzia Harper
Councillor Adam Hood
Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Kimberly McIntosh
Councillor Leo Pollak
Councillor Joseph Vambe

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Access to information

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Contact

Amit Alva on email: amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Althea Loderick

Chief Executive

Date: 11 November 2022



Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission

Monday 21 November 2022

7.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
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PART A OPEN BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

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

In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022.

5. FIRE COMMANDER INTERVIEW- LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

To receive a report and interview Verona Clark, Borough Commander for the Southwark Fire Brigade on key Fire Safety Issues listed below:

- Key fire safety issues across the borough.
- Support efforts to enhance fire safety, as scrutiny commission members, and also as ward councillors.
- Updates since last year on figures of buildings in the borough with known safety issues relating to cladding, and/or measures in place to counter potential serious safety hazards.
- Updates since last year on the impact of Covid on the service and its effect on response times and/or broader service levels.
- Fire safety risks posed by empty homes in the borough and mitigating them.
- Additional areas/information for the commission to note and/or review.
- The comparison of Bonfire night, fireworks incidents attended this year compared to last few years.

(Report to follow)

6. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW - COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL, CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES AND HOMELESSNESS

1 - 2

Interview with Councillor Darren Merrill including a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the Cabinet member portfolio for Council Homes and Homelessness. Including the following topics but not limited to

- Housing repairs service including the contact centre service, multiple failures, repeated calls, contractors and an update on the new strategy in development. *(Report attached)*.

- Leaseholder Charges, Value for Money (VFM) for charges and transparency of accounts supported by asset management team. *(Report to follow)*
- Empty homes

7. HOUSING ALLOCATION STATISTICS AND OVERCROWDING REPORT

To note the report on Housing Allocations Statistics and Overcrowding from Cheryl Russell, Director of Resident Services, Housing and Modernisation and Karen Shaw, Head of Housing Solutions. *(Report to follow)*

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2022-2023

3 - 11

To consider the work programme for the 2022-2023 year.

DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER OPEN ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING.

Date: 11 November 2022



Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 3 October 2022 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Ellie Cumbo (Chair)
 Councillor Jane Salmon
 Councillor Sam Foster
 Councillor Barrie Hargrove
 Councillor Esme Hicks
 Councillor Portia Mwangangye
 Councillor Emily Tester
 Cris Claridge
 Ina Negoita

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Darren Merrill

OFFICER SUPPORT: Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Bassey Bassey (Co-opted member).

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

There were no items of business which the Chair deemed urgent.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

Councillor Esme Hicks disclosed that she was a leaseholder and gave evidence as the Chair of the Brenchley Gardens Tenants Management Organisations.

Councillor Jane Salmon disclosed that she was a council leaseholder.

Ina Negoita (Co-opted member) disclosed that she is the Chair of the Homeowners Northwest Area Forum and also a council leaseholder.

4. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2022 were approved as a correct record.

5. ISSUES WITH LEASEHOLDER CHARGES AND THE IMPACT OF THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS ON LEASEHOLDERS.

The commission heard from David Eyles, Chief Executive of Leaseholders Association of Southwark on the effects of the cost-of-living crisis on leaseholders. The commission learnt about the detrimental financial impact that inflation, mortgage debt and interest rates would have on homeowners. Homeowners can be classified into two groups' resident homeowners and investors that buy to let, resident homeowners are the larger group consisting of ordinary working people such as NHS workers, Doctors, teachers and cleaners and it's this group that are struggling to pay the bills. The commission learned that elderly pensioners who need social care from the council are struggling to pay for their meals.

The commission then heard from David on the following points:

- Invoices to leaseholders based on varying estimates over 4-5 year periods
- Increase in service charges and electricity bills going up from £100 to £400
- Lack of pro-active maintenance leading to increased repair works
- Lack of scheduling repairs and improper works carried out at the first attempt
- Lack of assessment of the competency of building contractors and issues with the tendering process
- Lack of access for Leaseholders Association of Southwark (LAS 2000) to audit major works.
- Key workers looking to sell their property and moving out of borough

The commission then heard from Ina Negoita (co-opted member) leaseholder representative that the works carried out by the council need to be in accordance with the Housing Act and within government regulations and the justification for the works need to be disclosed to leaseholders.

Ina then addressed the commission around the following themes:

- Issues with the quality of works carried out by contractors, lack of penalties for contractors
- Value for Money (VFM) of works carried out
- Unlawful charges for e.g. 35% increase in roofing charges
- Inflationary costs of the work due to hierarchy of contractors and sub-contractors and their respective percentage charges at every level.
- Lack of overall operational and financial control of contractors
- Clarification between the freeholder and leaseholders responsibilities with regards to major works

The commission then discussed the following topics:

- Communication from the council and information disclosed to leaseholders with regards to works
- Processes, if any for leaseholders to challenge estimations and requirement of major works
- Cases of Southwark Council not following regulations with regards to works
- Consultation structure for leaseholders associations

The commission then heard from David that the new consultation structure is not effective and needs to be changed to include all residents from all age groups. The commission learnt that service charge statements do not disclose the actual costs of works to the leaseholders which has made it difficult to challenge the estimates.

The commission then received a presentation from Louise Turff, Head of Homeownership Services on Leaseholder Service Charges around the following main points:

- Construction of a service charge
- Service charges paid by homeowners mainly on district heating and estate costs
- Some leaseholders are billed by their respective Tenancy Management Organisations (TMOs) are self-financed.
- Large proportions 37%-50% of non-resident leaseholders mainly professional landlords or companies

- Case by case adjudication of payment for works and payment options
- Housing Revenue Account Income and Expenditure 2022-2023
- Ground floor leaseholder charges and lift costs
- Clarification between the freeholder and leaseholders responsibilities with regards to major works according to Housing Act 1985
- Leaseholder rights contained within the lease
- Borrowing costs on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- District heating costs

The commission learned that during procurement the contractor tender prices includes the cost of sub-contractors so there aren't any different charges added on for sub-contractors, stopping the use of sub-contractors could result in the increase of overall prices as contractors would have to source their own labour. There are also professional consultancy services and investment deliveries charges which have been averaging about 6%-7%, in addition there is a 10% administration fee which are the costs of managing service charge accounts that are statutory consultations for homeowners as it's a bespoke service offered only to them. Majority of leaseholder complaints have to do with affordability of paying service charges.

Louis also informed the commission that leaseholder associations can be formed according section 30/29 of the 1985 Leaseholders Act indirectly via the council writing to leaseholders on the behalf of the leaseholder wanting form an association. Section 22 allows the leaseholders to inspect the records held by the council on service charges and can be sent electronically or in person, itemised breakdowns are also provided on request. Leaflets are provided for leaseholders with every service charge with regards to challenging a service charge and are directed to independent advisors if needed.

The commission then asked questions on the following topics:

- Fixed rate of heating and fuel costs till April 2023 and increased costs thereafter
- Value for Money and assessment of works to be carried out
- Inaccuracy of gas readings

The commission learned that the current purchase of bulk fuel should last till April 2023 and would go up considerably thereafter but not as much for individuals in terms of costs and would be lower than the costs in the domestic market.

The commission also learned that statutory consultations are carried out by the homeownership services team and based on their own findings and leaseholder responses, if required challenges are then made to colleagues in Asset Management for Investment Delivery for proper justification of the need for works

which can last for years in some contentious cases. Non-resident leaseholders are often unaware of the investigations being carried out before major works are proposed.

The commission also learned that the professional contract management consultancies are responsible for monitoring contractor works and a failure in either or both would mean the council recovering some of the costs incurred without any increase in costs to leaseholders this has acted as a control and delivery mechanism for the works carried out.

The commission heard from Louise that inaccurate gas meter readings have decreased and bills aren't paid unless the issue with boilers being old and out of date are rectified to proper standards with help of heat meters monitoring, measures have already been put in place at homeownership services to identify and fix such issues at an early stage.

The commission then heard from Pam Murphy of the Leaseholders Association of Southwark that on average major works estimates received by leaseholders is £1000-£1100 higher when compared to actual costs and these monies are only paid back to leaseholders over a 3 year period.

The commission then heard from Louise that the monies paid by the leaseholders are paid in full for the contract and does not stay with the council as income and expenditure figures have to match on the HRA and real time recalculations of monthly payments in payment plans for leaseholders would require more staffing resources.

6. PROGRESS ON EMPTY HOMES

The commission received a report from Perry Singh, Strategy and Business Support Manager, Housing and Modernisation and Councillor Darren Merrill, Cabinet member for Council Homes and Homelessness on progress on Empty Homes around the following topics:

- Empty Homes action plan based on data from council records of empty homes that have been identified
- Survey of empty homes and to bring properties back in use by providing homeowners grants and loans
- Lobbying government to strengthen currently weak enforcement powers to bring empty homes back in use
- Privately owned empty homes are down by over a 1000 by publicising owners' responsibilities to inform the council of its status.
- Council empty homes have gone up as a result of regeneration and refurbishment projects such as Aylesbury where homes have to be

demolished and Marie Curie homes have to be decanted.

- Targets of 28 day for minor voids and 100 days for major voids but progress has been slow.
- Plans to reducing minor voids and bring within target by the end of the financial year
- Impact of the Covid pandemic, issues with hiring trade workers and building material deliveries

The commission then asked questions on the following points

- Incentivising or rewarding residents for leaving the property in a good state
- Southwark's financial commitment to empty dwelling management orders of £2m compared to £6m of Haringey council.
- Strategy for dealing with voids in housing associations and social landlords
- Survey data collection methods for tenants and letting

The commission learned that the £2m funding is for Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs). Empty dwelling management orders are being done by very few councils. On strategy with regards to voids in housing associations and social landlords, meetings have been setup and this will be raised as a concern. Survey data collection has been carried out through council tax records. It was agreed that officers would report back to commission on tracking of actual no. of reports since enhancing the reporting service and suggestions for an app to report empty homes.

The commission then discussed the following points

- Empty homes and public anxiety of anti-social behaviour
- Steps taken by the private sector to bring over 1000 privately owned empty homes back in use
- Review of empty homes action plan in October 2022
- Allocation of empty homes to residents on housing needs register

7. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE SOUTHWARK HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION (2021-2022) - SOUTHWARK CONSTRUCTION CONSULTATION STRATEGY RESPONSE

The commission agreed to raise housing consultation lapses due to Covid restrictions at the Cabinet Member interview with Councillor Darren Merrill.

The Cabinet response was noted by the commission.

8. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION: LICENSING IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

The Cabinet response was noted by the commission.

9. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME 2022-2023

The commission agreed to remove Temporary Accommodation as a substantive item to be scheduled and to instead include it as a part of the Cabinet Member Interview with Councillor Darren Merrill.

The Work Programme for the year 2022-2023 was noted by the commission with the above mentioned removal of Temporary Accommodation.

Meeting ended at 9:10 pm

CHAIR:

DATED:

Item No. 6	Classification: Open	Date: November 2022	Meeting Name: Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Scrutiny Report – Southwark Repairs	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Darren Merrill, Council Homes and Homelessness	

1. Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission have asked for a report into the following;
 - Multiple Failures
 - Repeat Calls
 - Contractors (Issues and Co-ordination)

Background

2. Southwark repairs manage a wide range of works across the borough undertaking; internal repairs, communal repairs, roofing, fire safety repairs, surveying, major and minor adaptations, empty homes, home improvements to private homes. With specialist teams undertaking works relating to leaks from above, fire safety and damp and mould.
3. In February 2020 the Southwark Housing Scrutiny Commission published its report into housing repairs that included a number of recommendations which were subsequently agreed by cabinet in December 2020
4. Southwark Building Services moved to repairs with effect from 1 April 2020 shortly after the first lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The service was severely impacted by COVID-19 operationally, the service was unable to offer repairs that weren't emergency or urgent works
5. The service has fully reopened and whilst demand, especially for emergency and urgent orders remains high, the backlog of repairs we had in our systems during lockdown is now cleared.
6. The pandemic also meant that no major works were undertaken in the borough across a two-year period. This has meant that the normal investment, totaling tens of millions into our stock didn't happen
7. The service is currently undertaking a wide ranging and ambitious improvement programme looking at the service generally and the way in which services are delivered to residents

Multiple Failures

8. The service acknowledges that we don't always get things right. This can be due to the nature and scale of the works that Southwark repairs undertake. It is also sometimes due to the service itself; in these instances, we learn from the mistakes and incorporate where things have gone wrong into the repairs improvement programme
9. The service had the following number of repairs within the internal work stream raised per year:

1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	87195
1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	79095
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	62749
1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	68858
1 April 2022 to present day	37289

10. The service have received 1200 stage one complaints since the start of this financial year. Of these 54% were upheld or partially upheld. The three areas most complained about are:
 - Damp and mould
 - Plumbing leaks (internal and external)
 - Windows
11. The service has received 537 member enquiries since the start of this financial year. These enquires are often very different to our stage one complaints. 42% of these member enquiries were a first request for service (where we haven't had notice of a repair request previously). Damp and mould was also the main driver for member enquiries
12. The Housing Ombudsman spotlight report on damp published in Nov 2021 advised that housing providers need to do better in how they manage dampness in buildings, with headlines on taking a zero tolerance approach to interventions with mould; meaning to take all reasonable measures to help resolve damp. To avoid blaming the resident, the Ombudsman felt landlords were too quick to lay the blame of the problem with resident's use of the property. Noting that it's not lifestyle, the Ombudsman case studies highlighted a number of cases had underlying issues which were not identified or addressed
13. The service has been looking at a change to our processes and have adapted our planning and approach to inspect all reports of dampness and look at the issue holistically. This replaces the former process of sending out a damp pack and asking residents to call back in 3 months if the issue persists. The service is providing hygrometers to all and dehumidifiers where necessary, have

redesigned our damp pack so it is helpful, provides meaningful advice and strikes the right tone so it doesn't make the resident feel at fault. Smart home technology has also been trialed which records temperature and humidity levels and helps assess dampness in buildings; Kingswood Estate used the Switchee system and Aylton Estate used Vericon devices

Repeated calls

14. We know as a service that repairs can sometimes take more time to complete than needed. One of the reasons for this is the way our customer journey is currently managed
15. The service has been looking at our end to end process and we have a project work stream underway to start a repairs hub. This will see all of our calls and emails going through this hub, staffed by trained repairs officers. The aim of this hub is to ensure that residents only need to call us once and don't have to chase or receive callbacks about their repairs
16. The repairs hub is currently in the planning phase. Due to the scale of this change the project is planned to have this transition completed in phases by 1 April 2024.
17. The service has also undertaken work to ensure that we have a workforce that is fit for the future and will meet our needs in the years to come. This involves training and hiring operatives who are multi skilled (are trained and capable in more than one trade). This mean when are visiting resident's homes that we can undertake repairs the first time without a need for multiple operatives and visits
18. Southwark repairs has also procured and implemented a new system for managing repairs in our back office. This system allows for much more live and in depth reporting and the management of materials. Knowing what our operatives have and will need to complete repairs in more detail will ensure that we have the materials with us when we visit a repair the first time
19. Corporately there is work underway on the telematics systems on the Southwark fleet. When work is completed on this we will be able to see the location of our operatives in real-time. This will allow us to send the nearest and best placed operatives where they need to go, improving our response and right first time across all areas

Contractors (issues and co-ordination)

20. Inevitably some repairs work will require co-ordination between internal and external contractors. This by its very nature is a risk factor in resolving an issue, for example leaks can occur from internal plumbing, external plumbing, roofing and heating systems.

The service has processes in place for these works where another contractor is required. Larger orders or works where residents or members have raised an issue are case managed by officers within the repairs team

21. Some of the work done within the repairs improvement programme has improved these working relationships and the service continue to raise issues with contractors, both internal and external where processes are followed or haven't worked on individual repairs

Update on Repairs Improvement Programme

22. The repairs improvement programme is a large scale ambitious project to bring the service to the level our residents deserve and to ensure that we continue to meet and improve those levels into the future

23. The improvement plan delivers on five aims approved by the cabinet based on feedback from residents:

- ◆ An easy to use service
- ◆ A repair job that will be completed right first time
- ◆ A repair job that treats me and my home with respect
- ◆ Open and honest feedback on the quality of the repair
- ◆ A fit for the future service that puts your needs at the heart of the service

24. Work resulting from the programme has so far included, but not limited to:

- Procurement and implementation of a new back office management system, managing 60-70k orders a year
- Customer service and management training across the whole of the service
- Repairs action days on estates and within sheltered units, bringing the service direct to residents
- The creation of a new repairs residents group to hold the service to account, starting in December 2022
- The council's first chat bot being trialed in the leaks from above team
- Video inspections being carried out in real-time with residents to improve diagnostics
- The expansion of specialist teams within Southwark repairs. For example, leaks from above, fire task team, damp and mould and a task team; managing larger, more complicated and escalated works
- The decision on the formation of a new repairs hub

25. The programme continues to have wide ranging and ambitious targets with works planned until April 2024

Item No. 8.	Classification: Open	Date: 11 November 2022	Meeting Name: Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Work Programme 2022-23	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		N/a	
From:		Scrutiny Officer	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the housing and community safety scrutiny commission note the work programme as at 11 November 2022 attached as Appendix 1.
2. That the housing and community safety scrutiny commission consider the addition of new items or allocation of previously identified items to specific meeting dates of the commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The general terms of reference of the scrutiny commissions are set out in the council's constitution (overview and scrutiny procedure rules - paragraph 5). The constitution states that:

Within their terms of reference, all scrutiny committees/commissions will:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the cabinet and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time in areas covered by its terms of reference
- c) review and scrutinise the performance of the council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
- d) question members of the cabinet and officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions,

initiatives or projects and about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area

- e) assist council assembly and the cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues
 - f) make reports and recommendations to the cabinet and or council assembly arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process
 - g) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants
 - h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working
 - i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance
 - j) conduct research and consultation on the analysis of policy issues and possible options
 - k) question and gather evidence from any other person (with their consent)
 - l) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the scrutiny process and in the development of policy options
 - m) conclude inquiries promptly and normally within six months
4. The work programme document lists those items which have been or are to be considered in line with the committee's terms of reference.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The Housing service areas that fall within the scope of the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission are:
- Resident Services (which includes area management, strategy and business support, strategic business and support housing services).
 - Customer Experience Division (which includes the Contact Centre; Customer Resolution and Specialist Services, My Southwark Home Owners and the Housing Solutions Services).
 - Asset Management Division (which includes New Homes; Investment, Repairs & Maintenance and Engineering).

6. As of 6 July 2022 the commission also now has within in its remit the area of community safety.
7. The cabinet portfolio elements relating to this commission are listed below:

Housing (Councillor Darren Merrill)

- Southwark's Housing Strategy
- Management of the council's homes, including sheltered and extra care homes
- Council housing repairs and major works services
- Delivery of new council homes, including older people's homes
- Tenant and homeowner involvement, including relationships with Tenants and Resident Associations (TRAs) and Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs)
- Services and advice for council tenants, leaseholder and freeholder
- Maintenance of tenants and residents halls and related facilities on our estates
- Housing allocations and lettings
- Management of council owned temporary accommodation
- Homes for Gypsy, Roma and traveller communities
- Housing fire safety, cladding and remediation
- Relationship with housing associations
- Tackling empty homes and absentee landlords

Community Safety (Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle)

- Reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance
- Violence Against Woman and Girls (VAWG)
- Community Harm and Exploitation Hub
- Modern day slavery
- Community wardens
- The Southwark Young Advisors
- Public spaces protection orders (PSPOs)
- Strengthening community relations with the police and promoting equitable policing
- Private rented housing and short-term lets
- Licensing, Trading Standards, Environmental Health and gambling

Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development – Councillor Helen Dennis (Housing related portfolio area covered by Councillor James McAsh during Councillor Dennis's maternity leave)

Delivering commitments

- Use our planning powers to robustly require new social rent homes

Parks, Streets and Clean Air – Councillor Catherine Rose (Housing related portfolio area)

Delivering commitments

- A new right to community gardens or food growing plots on estates

- Set out in Appendix 1 (Work Programme) are the issues the housing scrutiny commission is due to consider in the 2022-23 municipal year.
- The work programme is a standing item on the housing scrutiny commission agenda and enables the commission to consider, monitor and plan issues for consideration at each meeting.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva 020 7525 0496
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=605&Year=2022		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Work Programme 2022/23

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer	
Report Author	Amit Alva,	
Version	Final	
Dated	11 November 2022	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	11 November 2022	

Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission Work Programme – 2022/23

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
12 July 2022	Housing Repairs Call Centre report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting times • Staff capacity • Impact of the pandemic • Main Issues faced over longer term 	Commission received report from Ade Aderemi, Head of Customer Services.
	Safer Neighbourhood Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination and support provided to the Safer Neighbourhood police teams • Structures and number of people in such teams, turnover levels of police officers • Ward specific differences amongst the police teams • Community cohesion role of the police teams in the wards and key competencies required • Impact of pandemic 	Commission interviewed Chief Inspector, Steve Boswell in charge of all Safer Neighbourhood Teams from the London MET Police.
	Work Programme	Considered at each meeting.

<p>3 October 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear from David Eyles of the Leaseholders Association of Southwark on leasehold matters • To hear from leaseholder representatives on leaseholder experiences of legacy and current repair issues • Issues with Leaseholder charges and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on leaseholders especially but not limited to rising energy bills and repair issues. 	<p>Officer attending Louise Turff, Head of Homeownership Services, Finance and Governance to present a report on how expenditures are accounted for in service charges and also any repair issues</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on Empty homes 	<p>Progress made on the utilisation of empty homes.</p> <p>Officers attending Perry Singh, Strategy and Business Support Manager, Housing and Modernisation.</p>

<p>21 November 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Cabinet Member for Council homes and homelessness • Interview with the Fire Commander for London Borough of Southwark 	<p>Interview with Councillor Darren Merrill including a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the Cabinet member portfolio for Council Homes and Homelessness. Including the following topics but not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing repairs service including the contact centre service, multiple failures, repeated calls, contractors and an update on the new strategy in development. ➤ Housing Allocation Statistics & Overcrowding to note as an agenda item. ➤ Leaseholder Charges with input from asset management team, VFM for charges and transparency. ➤ Empty homes <p>Report from Verona Clark, Borough Commander for the Southwark Fire Brigade on key fire safety issues.</p>
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	Proposed Items for upcoming meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The projected impact of the cost of living crisis on Southwark council housing tenants, report covering but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in Domestic Abuse and the impact of the change of providers from Solace to Refuge. ○ Increase in Anti-Social Behaviour • Interview with Cabinet Member for Community Safety. (Safer Southwark - Community Safety Plan Review) • Interview with the Police Commander for London Borough of Southwark (Trust and visibility of the policing in the community) • Housing Repairs service overall strategy review including contact centre repeated calls (multiple failures). • Final Scrutiny recommendations 	<p>To receive a comprehensive report from officers on the projected impact of the cost of living crisis on Southwark Housing. The report to include Domestic Abuse (impact of changing providers from Solace to Refuge) and Anti-social behaviour. To be confirmed 15 February 2023 meeting.</p> <p>Attendance of Cabinet member and officers for these items to be confirmed 15 February 2023 meeting.</p> <p>To be confirmed for 15 February 2023 meeting.</p> <p>To be confirmed for 19 April 2023 meeting.</p>

