

# Housing Select Committee Supplementary Agenda

Tuesday, 4 June 2019

**7.30 pm,**

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

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## Part 1

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Housing Select Committee			
Title	Resident engagement in housing development	Item	7
Contributors	Scrutiny Manager		
Class	Part 1	Date	4 June 2019

## Reasons for lateness and urgency

This report is late due to the shorter-than-usual time period between this and the previous meeting of the committee and the need to ensure that the committee has sufficient information to scope the proposed in-depth review.

The report is urgent and cannot wait until the next meeting of the Housing Select Committee as the committee has a limited number of meetings in the 2019/20 municipal year in which to complete the proposed in-depth review.

### 1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1 As part of its work programme the Committee has agreed to undertake an in-depth review of resident engagement in regeneration and housing development.
- 1.2 This paper sets out the rationale for the review, provides some background information and sets out proposed key lines of enquiry for discussion and agreement by the Committee.
- 1.3 The in-depth review process is outlined at [Appendix 1](#).

### 2. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

- Note the contents of the report.
- Consider and agree the proposed key lines of enquiry and timetable for the review (outlined in sections 7 and 8).

### 3. Policy context

- 3.1 The Council's [Corporate Strategy \(2018-2022\)](#) outlines the Council's vision to deliver for residents over the next four years. Delivering this strategy includes the following priority outcomes that relate to the provision of new affordable homes:
  - *Tackling the Housing Crisis* – Providing a decent and secure home for everyone
  - *Building and Inclusive Economy* – Ensuring every resident can access high-quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.
  - *Building Safer Communities* – Ensuring every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

- 3.2 The *Homes for Lewisham*, Lewisham's Housing strategy (2015–20), includes the following priority outcomes that relate to the provision of new affordable homes:
- *Key Objective 1* – Helping residents in times of severe and urgent housing need.
  - *Key Objective 2* – Building the homes our residents need.
  - *Key Objective 4* – Promoting health and wellbeing by improving our resident's homes.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 London is facing a significant housing shortage and many residents in Lewisham are struggling to access housing that is genuinely affordable and appropriate to their needs.
- 4.2 The average house price in Lewisham, as of March 2019, is £400,000. This is a fourfold increase since the year 2000 and more than 13 times the current average salary in Lewisham of around £30,000. There are also 10,000 households on the housing register in Lewisham, and 2,000 homeless households in temporary accommodation.<sup>1</sup>
- 4.3 In July 2012 the Council embarked on a programme to build 500 new social homes in response to a series of on-going housing challenges, most notably an enduring under-supply of new affordable homes available to the Council to meet housing demand.
- 4.4 The new administration has set a target of a further 1,000 new social homes by 2022.
- 4.5 This is a step change for the Council from affordable housing enabler to a direct delivery agent of new homes. This process requires that the Council examines the land it owns to assess how new homes can be delivered.
- 4.6 This can be through infill developments on under-used space or by more comprehensive rebuilding of wider areas. The programme will be delivered in collaboration with the Council's housing delivery and management agent Lewisham Homes.
- 4.7 At Mayor and Cabinet in March 2019, officers received approval to invest in feasibility work on the 1,000 homes programme.<sup>2</sup> The approval related to the first tranche of directly delivered council homes and is expected to yield a significant number of infill units on underutilised land.
- 4.8 The majority of the Council's development work is expected to take place on land the Council owns, and therefore tenants in properties managed by Lewisham Homes, and tenants within the Brockley PFI are most likely to be affected by development. The Council intends to work with both organisations to engage with residents through existing Tenants and Residents Association networks and Resident Engagement Panels.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [London Datastore](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Mayor and Cabinet, Wednesday, 27th March, 2019 6.30 pm](#), item 20

<sup>3</sup> [Mayor and Cabinet, Wednesday, 10th October, 2018 6.30 pm](#), item 299

- 4.9 Previous development work by the Council has involved a range of resident and community engagement activity. This has included: public consultation events; face-to-face sessions with residents, stakeholder groups and local businesses; resident steering committees; surveys, letters, posters and door knocking. It has also included developing sets of commitments to residents in order to guide the development process.<sup>4</sup>
- 4.10 The Council has recently carried out consultation on the establishment of a Resident Charter, which would set out the minimum guaranteed offer for all residents whose homes would be demolished and rebuilt as part of Council-led redevelopment. The Council has also made a commitment to carry out a resident ballot on all proposals that involve the demolition of existing homes to deliver new homes. It is anticipated that the first resident ballot will be held on the Achilles Street development.
- 4.11 The seven draft principles of the proposed Resident Charter are set out below:<sup>5</sup>
1. *Before any estate regeneration, a Residents' Ballot will take place to give you a say in the future of your estate. To help you make an informed decision, we will make you a formal offer - in writing – which you can then choose to accept or reject in the ballot.*
  2. *We guarantee to build more homes for social rent. Any proposals for estate regeneration will be driven by our priority to increase genuinely affordable homes.*
  3. *We will regularly communicate with all residents writing to everyone at least once every three months in the run up to a Residents' Ballot and throughout the design, planning and eventual construction process, presenting transparent information that is accessible to everyone.*
  4. *Everyone will help shape the proposals and all estate residents will be encouraged to participate in the design process and nominate individuals to form a Residents' Steering Group which will work alongside the Council's Estate Design Team to help inform decisions through the design, planning and construction phases.*
  5. *If you are a Council tenant who wishes to stay, you will be guaranteed a new home at a social rent level, with the same tenancy conditions that you have today and a Housing Needs Assessment will ensure you are provided with a home that matches your requirements.*
  6. *If you are a resident leaseholder or freeholder who wishes to stay, you will be guaranteed to remain in home ownership. You will be given the opportunity to transfer the equity from your current home, into a new home.*
  7. *We will always strive to create and strengthen thriving communities that are inclusive and sustainable for existing and new residents, supporting new jobs, choice of shops, leisure and high quality open space wherever we can.*

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<sup>4</sup> [Mayor and Cabinet, Wednesday, 12th December, 2018 6.30 pm, item 345](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Mayor and Cabinet, Wednesday, 10th October, 2018 6.30 pm, item 299](#)

## 5. Relevant guidance and analysis

- 5.1 A wide range of relevant research and guidance on resident engagement in housing has been published by a number of organisations.
- 5.2 Key points from a selection of the most relevant reports are summarised below in order to provide further background and context as the committee sets the scope of its review.
- 5.3 ***Better Homes for Local People*, the Mayor of London’s Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration**, 2018, sets out the Mayor’s expectations for how local authorities and housing associations should engage with residents as part of all estate regeneration schemes. It sets out practical guidance, principles and examples of good practice (see case studies below).
- 5.4 According to the guidance, for estate regeneration to be a success there must be resident support for proposals, based on full and transparent consultation from the very start of the process, and meaningful ongoing involvement of those affected.<sup>6</sup>
- 5.5 The report describes early engagement as “essential” and states that residents should be given opportunities to be involved from the outset in developing the vision, options appraisals, design, procurement, and delivery of schemes.<sup>7</sup>
- 5.6 As well as social tenants, resident leaseholders and freeholders, councils and housing associations should seek to consult with private tenants or those living in temporary accommodation, as well as non-resident leaseholders and freeholders. Councils and housing associations should also engage with Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs), or similar resident representative bodies, where they exist.<sup>8</sup>

### Case study: Landlord social impact monitoring (Countryside)<sup>9</sup>

Ealing Council, L&Q housing association and the developer Countryside were involved in the Acton Gardens estate regeneration scheme.

They wanted to measure the social impact of their actions, and report on residents’ feelings and experiences of the regeneration throughout the process.

Independent academic researchers were commissioned to interview residents on both the existing and the regenerated parts of the estate and in the surrounding area (544 households in total).

Through in-depth interviews they were able to gain a deep understanding of how residents felt about the estate regeneration, and how it could be a successful social regeneration as well as a physical one.

The research will be carried out every two to three years during the 13-year lifetime of the regeneration process to measure progress against its indicators

As well as recognising the value that residents place on their connections with friends and neighbours in the area, the research identified further areas that would require attention in the coming years.

In particular, these included ensuring that existing residents of the estate fully understand the re-housing process; and working to accommodate local organisations that offer informal, but very important, support services to the community.

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<sup>6</sup> Mayor of London, *Better Homes for Local People*, 2018, p4

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p10

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, p11

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, p32

- 5.7 The report sets out a range of potential consultation and engagement methods (see below), but states that Councils, housing associations and partners should always be open to suggestions from residents and other stakeholders about developing more effective consultation and engagement mechanisms.<sup>10</sup>
- 5.8 The report also notes that many estates include businesses providing local services and employment and states that owners and operators of businesses should also be engaged, and that any proposals should give weight to the importance of minimising disruption to those businesses and retaining local employment opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

**Direct proactive engagement of a wide group of residents** – e.g. through surveys, votes, and ‘door-to-door’ conversations.

**Involvement of residents in developing the detail of proposals** – e.g. through specialist resident committees, forums, and workshops; steering groups with resident representation; and meetings of Tenant and Resident Associations and neighbourhood forums.

**Broader opportunities for residents to be kept updated and engage** – e.g. through ‘drop-in’ days and public meetings; letter, email, and newsletter updates; and web-based consultation tools, such as Commonplace, or Online forums, such as Facebook pages for the estate.

- 5.9 The report recognises that often residents may need support to engage more effectively and states that Councils, housing associations and their partners should provide independent capacity-building and advocacy support for residents if they request it. Residents should also be given an opportunity to select their own Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisors (ITLAs – see case study below), paid for by landlords, and to de-select them if they are unhappy with the advice or support that they are receiving.

**Case study: Landlord funding of an Independent Tenant and Leasehold Advisor (London Borough of Hackney)<sup>12</sup>**

Hackney Council wanted to ensure that residents on one of its regeneration schemes were as engaged as possible and so has funded an Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisor (ITLA) for over 10 years.

An ITLA’s purpose is to provide independent and impartial advice to residents on all aspects of the proposals for the future of their homes, enabling them to fully interact with, and play an informed role in, the process.

Their first task was to assist Hackney to set up a steering group. Council officers attend to report on progress and answer questions. The ITLA coordinates the meetings, agendas and minutes, providing an independent and impartial record.

The ITLA spends a considerable amount of time on the estate engaging residents to encourage participation. They also feedback to vulnerable and elderly residents who are unable to make meetings or drop-in sessions.

The ITLA has helped the local authority engage with hard-to-reach tenants and leaseholders, and is also an extra pair of eyes and ears on the ground, which helps flag up any potential risks and highlights concerns and views of the residents.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, p11

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*, p12

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*, p30

### Case study: Tenant involvement in regeneration (London Borough of Enfield)

Enfield Council in north London started from the position that the regeneration of Alma Estate would only succeed if it was supported by residents.

Following discussions with tenants, it was agreed that all of the replacement council homes would be larger than the existing homes, and therefore also significantly larger than the London Housing Design Guide.

The design and configuration of the replacement homes was led by residents via a series of design workshops facilitated by the project architects.

The new social homes are larger than the planned private ones on the estate. This was important, not only to ensure that residents are gaining, not losing, space but also because by providing larger council homes it is hoped that there will be more space for families with children

The experience of preparing plans for the redevelopment of Alma Estate has had a positive impact on residents who have grown in confidence and have become empowered to do more in their local community

5.10 The adoption of Resident Charters is also covered by the guidance: “*Resident Charters set out councils’ or housing associations’ commitments to residents at an early stage of the discussions over estate regeneration proposals and can be an effective way to engage residents*”. The guidance states that Resident Charters can be adopted for an individual estate regeneration project, or as a broader statement to cover multiple projects or a programme.

5.11 **New Conversations**, the LGA guide to engagement, 2017, provides guidance on engagement for councillors and officers. As well as setting out a wide range of engagement techniques and case studies, the guidance also discusses the role of frontline councillors.

5.12 The guidance notes that:<sup>13</sup>

*Councillors [...] are at the front line of engagement. They’re going to have to live by a decision day after day, lobbied by residents. It’s their electoral fortune at risk – and they’re often going to be a resident themselves.*

*Within this, councillors can sometimes undermine decisions the council makes, by choosing to oppose them. However, they can also make a project come to life. Local politicians generally have a close relationship with stakeholders and often lead local opinion. They can broker a compromise and bring together a coalition of the willing. To make the most of this, good engagement needs to be rewarded, recognised and plugged into the council’s corporate mission.*

5.13 The guidance goes on to discuss the role of frontbenchers, opposition groups and frontline councillors in the development of proposals and engagement, noting that frontline councillors can help establish closer connections with affected groups in the community:

*Including a range of councillors in a project often leads to compromises on a set of proposals as concerns come to light. A fear of things being watered down like this is often the reason why Frontline councillors are excluded, but fighting through this must be part of the new conversation councils are having. Frontline councillors should no more be bypassed than residents.*

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<sup>13</sup> LGA, *New Conversations*, 2017, pp88-9

*Good officers [...] ought to encourage councillors to provide a steer. There's sometimes a misplaced fear of less senior politicians in a similar way as there is of residents. Officers and executive councillors live and breathe their projects, so tend to race ahead and become overly rational about what needs to happen. Frontline councillors are a tonic to this. They're able to empathise more with the community and are sensitive to the subtler consequences of decisions. Empowering councillors by asking them to lead steering groups guarantees that you've got someone constructively asking the hard questions – keeping you connected to the concerns of affected groups.*

#### **Case study: Community researchers in Camden**

Camden Council recruited a range of local people to be paid as “community researchers”, rather than relying on external and expensive agencies who don't know the lie of the land. Researchers range from parents who need flexible hours to the long-term unemployed.

After receiving training (in participatory appraisal and quantitative research techniques) their work included face-to-face interviews and raising awareness about local issues. They have so far gathered information on topics such as public health, and consulted residents on social housing policy.

- 5.15 The LGA guidance also includes a *Back of a clipboard* starter kit on engagement for councillors (written by Cllr Peter Lamb, based on his experiences as a local councillor in Crawley) which sets out five approaches for councillors to become as engaged as possible with residents and local businesses.<sup>14</sup> (see [appendix 2](#))
- 5.16 The **London Assembly Housing Select Committee** carried out a scrutiny review of estate regeneration in 2015. The review looked at how to improve the process of regenerating housing estates and found, among others things, that there needs to be far greater clarity about the purpose of proposed regeneration and better collaboration between landlords and residents in exploring and evaluating the options.<sup>15</sup>
- 5.17 The final report, *Knock it Down or Do it Up?: The challenge of estate regeneration*, set out a number of principles under three themes: decision-making, finance and communications. It is intended to provide a guide for community groups, councillors and housing professionals to some of the best ways to work together to regenerate estates. The conclusions in relation to decision-making and communications are the most relevant to this review and are summarised below.
- 5.18 On decision-making, the review stated that most important is clarity on a scheme's key drivers. This is particularly the case when changes have occurred to the policies or financial circumstances underpinning the scheme: “*the absence of clear information can lead to accusations of post hoc rationalisation, which degrades or, in some cases, completely destroys the trust underpinning effective collaboration between communities, housing providers and other regeneration partners*”.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, pp90-3

<sup>15</sup> London Assembly, *Knock it Down or Do it Up?*, 2015, p4

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*, p10

- 5.19 The report noted that, *“in any proposals for change there will always be those who gain and those who lose, and being clear about this is also an important principle, no matter how difficult the ensuing conversation will be”*. The report highlighted comments from Professor Becky Tunstall of York University: *“It might be that there will have to be losers and if you say that to people at the beginning, it will be easier to accept”*.<sup>17</sup>
- 5.20 The report also discussed the importance of understanding residents’ needs in order to ensure that the local community benefits from any proposals. The report acknowledged that this can be complicated and demands application and cited the below case study as an example:<sup>18</sup>

#### **Case study: Understanding Residents’ Experience of the Whitecross Estate, Islington**

In 2010, Peabody, a housing association, commissioned Publica, a public realm and urban design company, to develop a vision and principles for the future of the Whitecross Estate based on residents’ experience. This was in response to a request from residents for this kind of approach.

Publica reported on the history of the estate and resident demographics, as well as the buildings, public realm and routes used through the estate.

Residents’ views were gathered by accompanying individuals and groups on walks around the estate, offering perspectives on diverse experiences of estate life, such as car parking, stairwells, the market, play areas, mobility, light pollution and so on.

This data, together with evidence gathered at public meetings, informed the final report, which also included Peabody’s aspirations for the estate, and developed a series of 15 principles for the estate’s future.

Peabody now hopes to deliver the overall upgrade programme of redesigned public spaces on the estate by September 2017. It is also consulting on small scale infill development on parts of the estate.

- 5.21 The report noted that active and ongoing community engagement is essential in order to ensure that the *“active support of residents and neighbours can be leveraged”*.
- 5.22 One of the important ways to promote positive engagement, the report stated, is to secure the enthusiasm of community leaders. The report set out examples of how this can be achieved, such as setting up resident steering groups and using them as a communication channel with residents, and making sure that local councillors are actively engaged and spreading the work locally.<sup>19</sup>
- 5.23 Offering a range of communication methods, from paper-based to face-to-face can also maximise the chance of positive engagement from all sections of the community. Having an on-site office, with some late-night opening, for example, can help to ensure that residents who have day-time commitments are able to engage as easily as possible.<sup>20</sup>
- 5.24 The report noted that some capacity-building is likely to be required to enable communities to participate as fully as possible, referring to comments from the London Tenants’ Federation: *“if you want communities to engage from the grassroots, then they need support”*. In some cases, independent resident

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, p12

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*, p17

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*, p27

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p30

advisers, appointed by a panel of residents, have been used to support engagement activity. Merton and Sutton were cited as examples.<sup>21</sup>

- 5.25 While the intensity of engagement will vary over the course of a scheme, the report stressed that active communications should be an important aspect of 'business as usual', and that "constantly taking the community pulse in this way helps providers to anticipate and address issues early, before they become serious problems".<sup>22</sup>
- 5.26 Where serious problems have arisen and relationships have broken down, the report noted an example from Southwark of where trust between residents and providers has been improved by the creation of an independent body:<sup>23</sup>

#### **Case study: Creation Trust on the Aylesbury Estate**

Creation Trust is a charity dedicated to making sure that residents living on the Aylesbury Estate receive the benefits of the area's regeneration and are supported through the process. More than half the places on Creation's Board of Trustees are reserved for resident members, including both tenants and leaseholders, so that local people have real influence over the decisions made. Creation Trust works closely with Southwark Council and Notting Hill Housing Trust (the developer) to ensure that the Aylesbury Area Action Plan is adhered to. It is part-funded by Southwark Council but has also been eligible for funds from the National Lottery and the Football Foundation to deliver additional projects for residents.

- 5.27 The review acknowledged that that engagement programmes with a selection of activities like those discussed are expensive, but noted that residents are a key resource and that "tapping their experience of what will work and what won't can not only short-circuit issues which arise but also develops resilient relationships which will be vital for nurturing the sustainable and diverse communities to which we aspire".
- 5.28 The **Design Council** published a Technical Paper on *Involving local residents in the design of small and infill sites* in 2016. It discussed the challenges of small and infill sites, the benefits of involving residents, and sets out guidance and techniques for engaging with tenants and residents (see table below).
- 5.29 Given that a significant proportion of the homes to be built as part of Lewisham's 1,000 home programme will be infill developments this guidance may be relevant to this review.
- 5.30 The guidance notes that involving local tenants and residents in the design of small and infill spaces can help to unlock land for new homes while also raising the quality of both the new homes and the place as a whole, providing an opportunity to tackle social and environmental problems.
- 5.31 It also recognises, however, that while small and infill sites can provide opportunities to make the best of publicly owned land, they are often sensitive, and almost always complex because of the impact on, and proximity to, an existing community.

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, p31

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p32

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, p33

- 5.32 The paper states that it may take time to build confidence with residents who may have suffered from anti-social behaviour in the past that good design can help reduce these problems. And although the opportunities presented by new development may not be immediately obvious to residents, influencing the design at an early stage offers a chance of addressing some of these issues. Involving residents in design helps identify issues and solve problems.
- 5.33 The guidance notes that involving local residents may require different ways of working and additional resources to get the process going, but highlights one of the steps to engaging residents is providing skilled support and facilitation, preferably from independent providers. It states that “facilitators need to be skilled in engagement techniques as well as having an understanding of design” and that “working with designers from the outset is essential to respond to needs and explore options, including those that would not have been conceived of by residents and officers themselves”.<sup>24</sup>

#### **Design Council: Some techniques for engaging with tenants and residents**

- 1 Identify the area around the site that will be affected by development, and residents whose needs must be considered.
- 2 Develop contacts with residents by speaking to people known to be active in the area: ward councillors, community workers, tenants’ groups, people connected to local community organisations and facilities such as community centres, schools, churches, etc
- 3 Initially work with a small group of interested people as a Working or Steering Group. You could expand membership of an existing group e.g. Tenants and Residents’ Group or Parish Council.
- 4 Appoint and work with a community engagement facilitator, who has design expertise and skills, or ensure that a design team is part of the process; preferably the design team that will be carrying out the work.
- 5 With the facilitator organise workshops and visits to successful projects with a view to raising aspirations, an understanding of design principles and what can be achieved; be careful not to raise unrealistic expectations.
- 6 Analyse the area to find out what works well, defining characteristics that are valued, and problems to be addressed. Do this on site as part of walkabouts and note findings down on maps of the area.
- 7 Ensure that this work, and all subsequent project work, is broken down into manageable parts. This is essential to include as many people as possible, avoid some individuals becoming overloaded but also to ensure a focus on delivery.
- 8 Develop Vision and explore options

- 5.34 The **LGA’s good practice guide on tenant engagement, *Engaging and empowering tenants in council-owned housing, 2019***, produced in partnership with TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service), presents the findings of research carried out on tenant engagement delivered by councils across the country. The guide looks at a range of engagement methods, including the growing use of digital engagement techniques.
- 5.35 On digital engagement, the report notes that many organisations are embracing alternative ways to engage and communicate with resident and that many traditional in-person involvement activities are moving online. It states that “the benefit of enabling greater opportunity for digital involvement broadens the

<sup>24</sup> Design Council, *Involving local residents in the design of small and infill sites*, 2016, p4

reach and sometimes quality of engagement. Going digital will mean you are able to involve more tenants on their own terms, provided you are committed to engaging in this way and responding as you would to a collective group". Examples noted in the review include the use of: online forums; online surveys; virtual groups; email communications replacing postal; and use of social media platforms.

5.36 The guidance also sets out a number of self-reflection questions on digital engagement: <sup>25</sup>

- Do you know which areas and neighbourhoods have access to broadband?
- Do you know of areas and neighbourhoods without access to broadband?
- Are you aware of residents who have email?
- Are you aware of residents preferred communication / engagement channels?
- Have you got a digital engagement/inclusion strategy that addresses the barriers to on line engagement?
- Have you approaches in place to engage with residents without access to broadband or technology?

## 6. Meeting the criteria for a review

6.1 A review into resident engagement in housing development meets the criteria for a scrutiny review because:

- The issue affects a number of people living, working and studying in Lewisham
- The issue is strategic and significant
- This issue is of concern to partners, stakeholders and the community
- Scrutiny is likely to add value – Lewisham Council is currently working on a programme to deliver 1,000 new social homes by 2022. This will involve various levels of resident engagement so now would be a good time for the committee to review current practice in order to consider if there are areas of improvement which could support the Council achieve its strategic objectives.

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<sup>25</sup> LGA, *Engaging and empowering tenants in council-owned housing*, 2019, p27

## **7. Key lines of enquiry (KLOE)**

7.1 It is proposed that the review draws on evidence from Council officers, key local partners, as well national research and relevant experts, within the following key lines of enquiry:

- *How does the council, and its housing partners, currently engage with communities around regeneration and housing development?*
- *What has the council learned from previous engagement and how has this influenced subsequent engagement and consultation?*
- *How does the council engage with often-excluded groups (young people and BAME, for example) and how does this affect the relationships between the council and residents?*
- *What role can TRAs and similar bodies play in community engagement and how is the creation of new TRAs and similar facilitated through our partner organisations?*
- *What is the role of councillors in bringing communities along with developments and what opportunities are there for member development?*
- *What can we learn from how other local authorities carry out engagement and consultation on housing development?*

## **8. Timetable**

### **First evidence session – Wednesday 10 July**

8.1 Focus of the session: the council, its partners' and other local housing providers' approach to resident engagement on housing development, both in relation to infill development and wider redevelopment programmes.

8.2 To include example case studies of resident engagement; techniques and methods used; examples of early engagement; examples of resident involvement, support and capacity-building; examples of engagement with often excluded, vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups; evidence of engagement influencing outcomes; evidence of evaluation, challenges and lessons learned.

*Committee to discuss and agree further information required*

8.3 To receive evidence from senior Council officers and key housing partners, including: Lewisham Homes, RB3, Phoenix, L&Q and Peabody.

*Committee to discuss and agree any further suggestions*

8.4 To include resident engagement case studies on recent developments, including: Mayow Road, Hazlehurst Court, PLACE/Ladywell, and Edward Street.

*Committee to discuss and agree any further suggestions*

### **Additional evidence-gathering**

- 8.5 To request written evidence from other local authorities and housing providers. For example, LB Hackney; LB Camden; LB Southwark.  
Committee to discuss and agree suggestions
- 8.6 To request written evidence from relevant community and resident groups, in particular resident groups in Lewisham Homes and RB3 housing.  
Committee to discuss and agree suggestions
- 8.7 To attend upcoming engagement events in Lewisham and out of borough.  
Scrutiny manager to discuss with officers and identify potential events
- 8.8 To ask for public engagement through a call for evidence on [council website](#).  
Scrutiny manager to draft for member agreement  
Council communications team to publicise on social media  
Committee members to promote among their own networks

### **Second evidence session – Wednesday 18 September**

- 8.9 To receive evidence from relevant resident and community groups.
- 8.10 To receive evidence from other local authorities and housing providers.
- 8.11 To receive evidence from expert witnesses, for example:
- [TPAS \(Tenant Advisory and Participation Service\)](#) - tenant engagement organisation and author of the [National Tenant Engagement Standards](#).
  - [The London Tenants Federation](#): a tenant-run membership organisation which brings together borough and London-wide representative social housing tenant organisations.
  - [G15](#) - the group of London's largest housing associations
  - [Centre for London](#) - a politically independent think tank which has produced a number of reports on housing, including, [STOPPED: Why People Oppose New Residential Developments in Their Back Yard](#).
  - [Prof Rebecca Tunstall, Centre for Housing Policy, York University](#) – researcher on social housing management, tenant participation, and neighbourhood regeneration, and witness for the London Assembly Housing Select Committee's [2015 review of estate regeneration](#).
  - [Prof Loretta Lees, Leicester University](#) – researcher on urban regeneration and evidence contributor to London Assembly Housing Select Committee's 2015 review of estate regeneration.
- Committee to discuss and agree further witnesses – the committee may wish to consider its options following written evidence received.
- Scrutiny manager to continue researching potential witnesses.

### **Third evidence session – Wednesday 30 October**

- 8.12 Depending on the volume of evidence the committee chooses to consider, the number of witnesses it would like to hear from, and the level of response to any calls for evidence, there is capacity for a third evidence session if needed.
- 8.13 Depending on the availability of witnesses, this session could be focused on receiving evidence from resident and community groups or other local authorities and housing providers and expert witnesses.

### **Final report and recommendations – 16 December**

- 8.14 Committee to consider final report presenting all the evidence and agree recommendations for submission to Mayor and Cabinet.

## **9. Further reading**

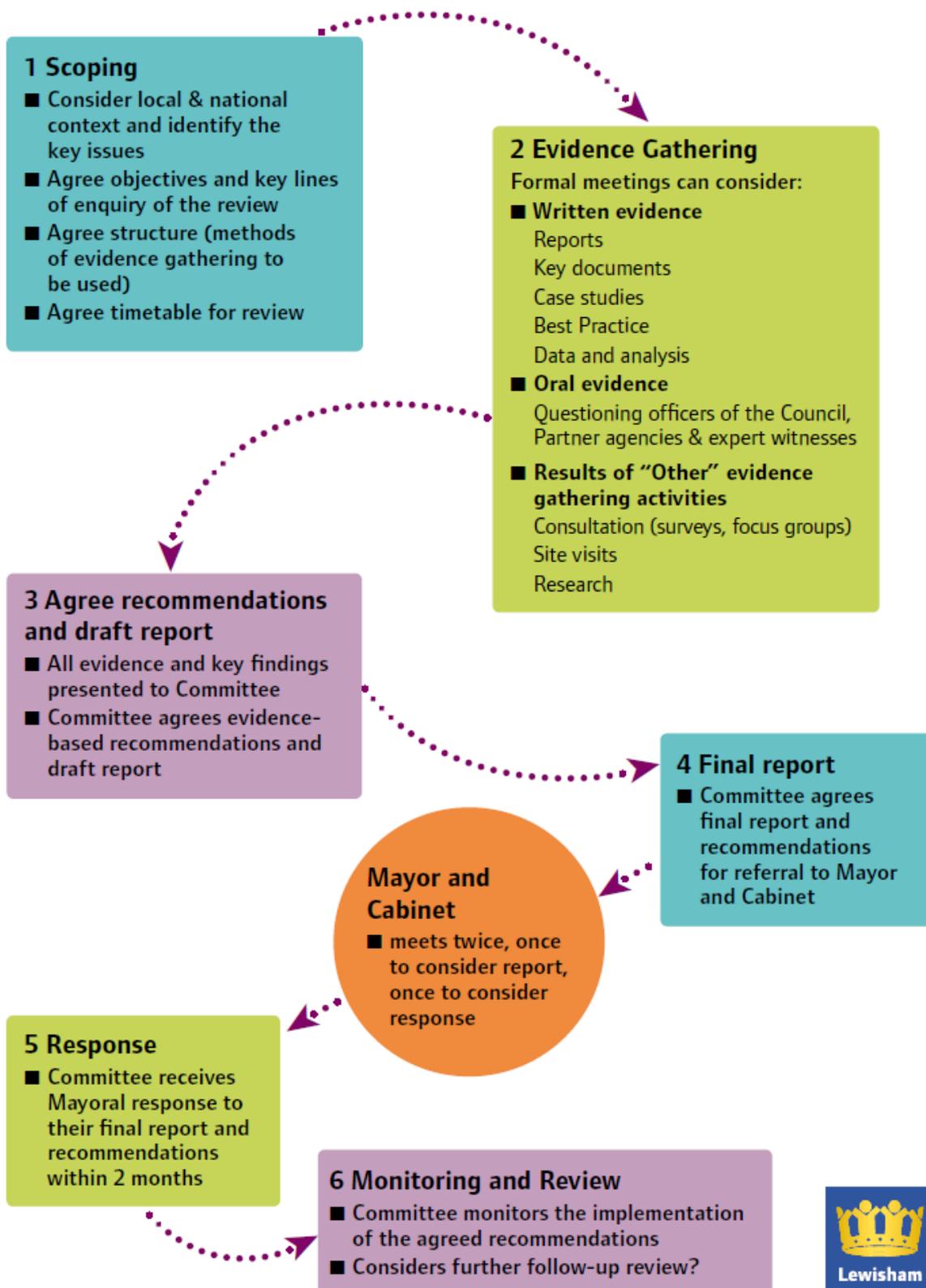
- [\*Estate regeneration: resident engagement and protection\*](#), MHCLG, 2016:  
Government guidance on how landlords, developers and local authorities should engage with residents throughout an estate regeneration scheme.
- [\*STOPPED: Why People Oppose New Residential Developments in Their Back Yard\*](#), Centre for London, 2016:  
“This report looks behind the NIMBY stereotype and identifies seven specific types of public concern around urban change in London.”
- [\*Estate Regeneration: more and better homes for London\*](#), London First, 2017:  
“This report considers what more can be done to support the physical regeneration process to help deliver, amongst other objectives, more new homes where this has been selected as the best option. It highlights three key issues that must be addressed to support a new wave of regeneration, setting out a series of key considerations on each”.
- [\*Delivering infill development\*](#), Future of London, 2015  
“This briefing paper and related roundtable discussion have been framed by these big questions: What are the main barriers to delivering infill development? How can they be overcome or mitigated, and who should bear this responsibility? Is infill housing development a threat to other uses, or is it an opportunity for new placemaking? What attitudes do existing communities have towards infill development and how can organisations delivering these sites respond?”

## **10. Further implications**

- 10.1 At this stage there are no specific financial, legal, environmental or equalities implications to consider. However, each will be addressed as part of the review.

**For further information please contact John Bardens, Scrutiny Manager, on 02083149976 or email [john.bardens@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:john.bardens@lewisham.gov.uk),**

## How to carry out an in-depth review



## Appendix 2

# ‘Back of a clipboard’ engagement list – a starter kit for frontline councillors

Below is a five-step starter kit for being as engaged as possible with your residents and local businesses. It was written by Cllr Peter Lamb, based on his experiences as a local councillor in Crawley.

In all of the engagement you do, however, be aware that your role as councillor exists in two capacities. The first is as a representative of the council (and there will be advice both from your council and from the LGA on how to do this).<sup>55</sup> The second is as a representative of your political party (if you are in one, in which case you’ll have separate guidance on this). A big part of getting the engagement right will be in balancing these two things – so you’re able to fulfil your role both as a representative of the council in the community, and as a representative of community concerns within the council.

### 1. Get out there

With all the new technology connecting us, it’s all too easy to forget that the best way to engage is often face-to-face. Not every part of the community has the ability to access the internet regularly. Online communication usually requires residents to opt-in to hear what you have to say, meaning you preach to the converted. Many still prefer to speak to a real person for example at:

**Advice surgeries:** These provide residents with the opportunity to meet their local representative and raise any issues they might have. All that’s needed is an accessible venue, somewhere to sit and a bit of advertising.

**Mobile surgeries:** Surgeries provide an opportunity to reach out to harder-to-engage parts of the community, instead of waiting for residents to come to a venue.

**Community events:** One of the best ways of engaging with your local community is through participating in local events.

### 2. Keep people in the loop

Though people are busy, most would still like to know what is going on in their community. Regular information from local representatives can help to build the trust upon which future engagement can be based. There is much evidence to support the assertion that people are more receptive to engagement that informs and are far less keen on engagement that seeks to promote a particular point of view or sectional interest. Here are a few ways of keeping your residents in the loop effectively:

**Newsletters:** Give some thought to the design. With all the junk mail a person gets these days, you have at most a couple of seconds to grab their attention.

**Direct mail:** People will often read letters which come through their door, particularly if they’re addressed to them personally. While direct mail may be too expensive for regular newsletters, it can be useful for communicating about a particularly important issue. For example, when planning permission is being sought for a project which you do not believe is in the area’s best interests, it may help drive up the number of objections (be aware that, if you’re on a planning committee yourself, this isn’t allowed).

**E-newsletters and text messages:** A fast and cheap way of reaching residents. Online services like MailChimp are a good idea if you’re doing this, as anything involving complex designs or mail outs to a large number of people are likely to be blocked without one. Also, remember that no council resources can be used for party political communications, so be

clear whether you are acting as a representative of the council or of your party when you are sending out a communication.

### 3. Reach out

Networks of engagement already exist which can help you to connect with your residents. Here are a few ways of reaching out:

- **Make the most of the council:** Although Communications and Community Engagement teams have been put under pressure due to budget cuts, almost every local authority still employs officers in these roles. Ask them how they can help you engage with local people.
- **Work with other agencies:** Reach out and partner with parish councils, neighbourhood policing teams or the many other bodies which represent residents.
- **Community networks:** Highly-connected people influence community opinion. To persuade them is to persuade others. Examples may include the chair of a residents' association, school governors and long-serving teachers, local small businesspeople and publicans, religious leaders and neighbourhood watch co-ordinators.

### 4. Use the media

Despite the rise of newer channels, 'traditional media' remains an important means of communication.

**Local newspapers:** The falling number of local reporters means that newspapers are more willing to accept pre-prepared content.

**TV/ Radio:** TV and radio remain popular channels, and while the opportunity to communicate a message via the airwaves is rare, the potential reach is considerable.

**Blogs/online radio:** Some local news blogs and online radio sites now have a similar audience size to their analogue equivalents.

### 5. Go digital

Digital media can offer a global audience, yet fail to make solid contact with the community you want it to. It also poses risks. Representatives can find themselves held to account years later for a misjudged comment made in a moment of madness. Nonetheless, digital channels can be powerful if used in the right way.

**Google Alerts:** Once you've put a term into Google Alerts, you will receive an email whenever a new story relating to it is published online which allows you to keep on top of issues that are important in your local areas for example a supermarket development. This is vital real time information to enable you to engage appropriately in relation to current and emerging issues.

**FixMyStreet:** Users submit practical problems in the community – like a broken paving slab or some graffiti – to the local authority, and councillors can respond and comment.

**Facebook:** Individual councillors often don't automatically attract huge numbers of local residents to their profile, groups or pages. This doesn't mean it isn't useful for engaging, but you need to go to where people are, by following or liking other appropriate pages set up by local groups or individuals.

**Twitter:** As with Facebook, Twitter offers a potentially global reach but requires people to actively engage with you.

**NextDoor:** A neighbourhood based forum for local people to exchange ideas.

**Surveys/Polls/Petitions:** While you will also need to use other methods to advertise your survey, poll or petition, online tools can be a powerful two-way route to community engagement and to taking the temperature of opinion around issues in your area. There are various ways of running a survey or a poll online for free, including on Facebook or Twitter, or on specific sites like Survey Monkey.

**Personal website or blog:** A channel of communication exclusively within your control.

This guide was compiled by Cllr Peter Lamb, Leader of Crawley Borough Council. You can read an extended version [here](#).

Source: LGA, [New Conversations](#), 2017