

Overview and Scrutiny



Housing Select Committee Agenda

Tuesday, 28 November 2023

7.00 pm, Civic Suite

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Nidhi Patil (nidhi.patil@lewisham.gov.uk)

This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

Part 1

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The public are welcome to attend committee meetings. However, occasionally, committees may have to consider some business in private. Copies of reports can be made available in other formats upon request

Housing Select Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Tuesday, 28 November 2023.

Jeremy Chambers, Monitoring Officer
Monday, 20 November 2023

<p>Members</p> <p>Councillor Stephen Penfold (Chair)</p> <p>Councillor Bill Brown</p> <p>Councillor Natasha Burgess</p> <p>Councillor Suzannah Clarke</p> <p>Councillor Rosie Parry</p> <p>Councillor Sakina Sheikh</p> <p>Councillor Rudi Schmidt (ex-Officio)</p> <p>Councillor Ese Erheriene (ex-Officio)</p>	
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MINUTES OF THE HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 12 September 2023 at 7.00pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Stephen Penfold (Chair), Will Cooper (Vice-Chair), Rosie Parry and Ese Erheriene.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Natasha Burgess, Suzannah Clarke, and Sakina Sheikh.

IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY: Councillor Bill Brown.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Sophie Davis (Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety), Councillor Brenda Dacres (Cabinet Member for Housing Development & Planning), Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment), Fenella Beckman (Director of Housing Strategy), Lynne Sacale (Housing Transformation Programme Lead), Helen Clarke (Director of Communications and Engagement) and Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

ALSO PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Corporate Governance), Councillor Liz-Johnston-Franklin, Kate Watson (Consultant, Turner and Townsend), Billy Clifflin (Consultant, Turner and Townsend) and Louise Trenchard (Consultant, Turner and Townsend).

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023

1.1. RESOLVED: that the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a true record.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1. Councillor Cooper declared an interest as a service manager for Community Advice Works- which provides advice and advocacy for people regarding housing matters in Lewisham.

2.2. Councillor Penfold declared an interest as an employee of the Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network- which provides advice to refugees and migrants in Lewisham.

The Chair informed the committee that the items on the agenda would be considered in the following order- Co-optee proposals; Lewisham Homes Annual Performance Out-turn Report; Housing Retrofit Strategy; Brockley PFI- Annual Review Report; Update on Housing Futures Programme.

3. Co-optee proposals

Charlotte Dale (Head of Scrutiny and Policy) introduced the report, accompanied by Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Corporate Governance). The following key points were noted:

3.1. It was noted that the Committee's intention was to ensure that the views and needs of social housing tenants informed the recommendations that the Committee made on policies and decisions that affect them.

3.2. Two primary approaches were discussed for achieving this goal.

3.2.1. The first approach emphasised enhanced tenant engagement, which included inviting tenants to participate as expert witnesses in formal meetings, attending more

informal sessions or focus groups, and conducting site visits to social housing estates or participating in TRA (Tenant and Residents' Associations) or similar meetings.

3.2.2. The second approach involved the establishment of one or more co-optee positions, wherein tenants/leaseholders would assume the role of additional formal committee members, aiding in the evaluation of evidence and actively contributing to the discussion and subsequent recommendations.

3.3. The report comprehensively outlined the considerations associated with each option. Regarding the formal co-optee option, it also delineated the relevant constitutional processes that would need to be followed.

The Committee members were invited to ask questions. The following key points were noted:

- 3.4. The discussion highlighted the importance of formal co-optees having to declare conflicts of interests. The Committee Chair stated that in the past, some councillors sitting on the committee had also been Lewisham Homes tenants and since this Committee wasn't a decision-making body, the conflict of interest didn't disqualify them from contributing to the discussion. The Director of Law and Corporate Governance emphasised that declaring interests was required in formal council meeting regardless of whether decisions were going to be made or not; and that had the councillors who had also been Lewisham Homes tenants had a direct pecuniary interest in the item under discussion, they would have needed to have declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting room.
- 3.5. Formal co-optees would have to adhere to the same code of conduct as councillors, including declaring interests. However, declaring an interest did not automatically disqualify someone from the discussion, this was only the case where the interest was deemed prejudicial, such as a direct financial interest. Informal attendees and expert witnesses would not be bound by this code of conduct.
- 3.6. The discussion emphasised that while it was important for the Committee to hear from residents, it was also important to understand the optimal method for soliciting their input and determining the most effective approach to resident engagement.
- 3.7. It was discussed that while considering a formal co-option scheme, factors such as the selection process for co-optees (appointment or election) and associated costs, also needed to be considered.
- 3.8. The Committee acknowledged that formal co-optees from specific organisations might have a narrow focus and could lack interest in all items on the Committee's agenda, rendering their full meeting attendance inefficient.
- 3.9. It was noted that no other local authority with co-optees on their Housing Select Committee or its equivalent, granted voting rights to them.
- 3.10. If the formal co-option route was chosen, it was recognised that implementing constitutional amendments would take time and aligning them with the Council's AGM might be advisable.
- 3.11. It was discussed that the report raised good points and clearly outlined all available options. However, at that time, the Committee was unable to reach a decision regarding the most effective co-option strategy. As a result, it was agreed that the Committee would temporarily implement the informal attendee approach to gauge its uptake and effectiveness. The Committee Chair would discuss next steps with the Head of Scrutiny and Policy to determine the subsequent course of action.
- 3.12. The resident engagement plans for Lewisham Homes would be considered when discussing next steps for this co-option scheme to ensure alignment.

3.13. It was suggested that Committee members could meet with other local authorities such as Tower Hamlets, Southwark and Croydon to gather insights on their experiences with the co-option scheme.

RESOLVED:

- that the Chair of the Committee, in collaboration with the Head of Scrutiny and Policy, would formulate a plan for advancing the co-optee proposal and its implementation, to be presented at the next Committee meeting.

4. Housing Retrofit Strategy

Martin O'Brien (Head of Climate Resilience) introduced the report, followed by a presentation by Kate Watson, Billy Clifflen and Louise Trenchard from Turner and Townsend. The following key points were noted:

- 4.1. The Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group (TFG) had reported its findings to the Mayor and Cabinet last year, highlighting that housing accounted for half of the Council's local carbon emissions. Housing retrofit therefore played a crucial role in the pursuit of achieving net zero emissions. A central recommendation from the TFG was for the Council to formulate and publish a Housing Retrofit Strategy, complete with clear and measurable targets.
- 4.2. Turner and Townsend had been appointed as consultants to oversee this project, which was anticipated to span the next 5 months.
- 4.3. Kate Watson, Louise Trenchard and Billy Clifflen from Turner and Townsend highlighted the key points from their PowerPoint presentation to the Committee.

The Committee members were invited to ask questions. The following key points were noted:

- 4.4. The notion of achieving net zero carbon by 2030 was widely acknowledged as an exceptionally ambitious goal. Recently, the government faced a legal challenge in a judicial review, following allegations that its plans did not align with the legally binding commitment established in UK law to reach net zero emissions. It became apparent that the necessary scale of investment and delivery programs required for housing retrofit by the desired 2030 target were currently non-existent. What was imperative was the development of a Housing Retrofit Strategy that not only reflected Lewisham's ambition by declaring a climate emergency but also recognised the need for pragmatic actions within our control and resource constraints. This strategy aimed to facilitate the creation of costed projects and programs that could be implemented when government policy and funding allowed.
- 4.5. Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate) thanked the representatives from Turner and Townsend for the presentation, adding that she looked forward to engaging with them on this project. Turner and Townsend had previously worked with Haringey Council on a similar project, exploring how to activate council finances for successful programme advancement. It was noted that undertaking retrofitting work was an expensive exercise, made more challenging by the old housing stock in Lewisham.
- 4.6. The Committee Chair enquired about the distinctions between retrofitting street properties and blocks of flats. Turner and Townsend consultants explained that they would be undertaking work to identify different property archetypes, as each type would require a unique approach to retrofitting. Street properties, often Victorian-era, had limited retrofitting

options as some changes couldn't be made due to planning restrictions. In contrast, blocks of flats offered more retrofitting options and scalable fabric solutions.

RESOLVED: That

- that the report be noted.
- that officers be invited back to present the Housing Retrofit Strategy to the Committee in 6 months' time.

5. Brockley PFI- Annual Review Report

Fenella Beckman (Director of Housing Strategy) introduced the report, and was accompanied by John Pedretti (General Manager, RB3), Kenneth Gill (Area Manager, Pinnacle) and Hugo Marais (Head of Operations, Rydon). This was followed by questions from the Committee members. The following key points were noted:

- 5.1. Regenter B3 (RB3) hosted highly attended monthly open surgeries for residents, typically drawing a crowd of 30-35 residents. Additionally, they organised welfare advice surgeries twice a week, which also enjoyed substantial attendance.
- 5.2. In the contract, there were detailed provisions regarding the required 'handback' standard for the properties. This included the Council conducting surveys before the properties were handed back to assess the necessary work required to achieve the handback criteria.
- 5.3. Resident satisfaction with resident engagement had declined, based on the annual KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). Therefore, officers were looking for different ways to engage with the residents. Due to leaseholder questions taking up more time in the tenant and leaseholder forums in the past, a decision was made to hold separate sessions for each group. 4 annual sessions were held for the tenants and leaseholders where they could share their views on service delivery, community projects and initiatives such as wildflower meadows or community gardens. Officers anticipated having more data by the next quarter, allowing them to discern trends and determine whether residents favoured the new engagement approach.
- 5.4. The report noted that 58 complaints were not upheld. This was often due to it being the first time RB3 had been notified of a service failure, and a case was only classified as a complaint when a service failure was reported but not satisfactorily resolved. Stage 1 complaints were managed by the service managers, Stage 2 complaints were managed by the area manager and Stage 3 complaints went to the independent adjudicator. The lessons learnt from these complaints were communicated to the staff in weekly team meetings and officers were happy to collate some of those lessons learnt and share it with the Committee.
- 5.5. It was noted that Brockley PFI had housing stock beyond the Brockley ward, and clarity around that was deemed essential. Officers concurred on the importance of clarity, stating that their website already conveyed this information. They also mentioned that the upcoming quarterly magazine, scheduled for release in the next 3-4 weeks, could serve as a means to communicate this further.
- 5.6. Officers agreed to share with the Committee the procedure they followed for addressing antisocial behaviour and noise complaints.
- 5.7. It was discussed that some of the positive information in the report didn't align with councillors' direct experiences. For instance, while the report praised the Ermine Road community garden initiative, councillors learned it had been a challenging process. Officers explained that certain projects were initiated by a small group of residents, but broader

engagement was necessary to ensure majority support, leading to longer timelines.

Nevertheless, officers had recently opted for a shorter consultation period of 7-10 days.

- 5.8. Officers had faced challenges in recruiting for permanent positions in housing services, but they had recently offered and filled a permanent role, hopefully ensuring a full staff complement moving forward.
- 5.9. The Committee Chair enquired about the progress with setting-up a tenant and residents' association (TRA) for Alder and Lilac House on Wickham Road. Officers reported that a TRA meeting was arranged and held on 12 September 2023, attended by only one resident but RB3 officers were committed to increasing engagement. The Committee requested further details about the 2 TRAs being planned, and officers confirmed that the community engagement officer from RB3 would share that with the Committee.
- 5.10. Monthly rent collections were generally strong, with the exception of significant Universal Credit arrears, which accounted for 54% of the total arrears. Income and welfare officers actively supported residents in arrears to maximise their income and access additional benefits.
- 5.11. The Committee Chair noted that given the housing stock's size, RB3 should have fewer cases reaching the Housing Ombudsman. Officers reported that two cases were referred to the Housing Ombudsman last year. The Chair cited a June 2023 Ombudsman case against RB3, which had found severe maladministration by the landlord in handling a resident's damp and mould complaint, as well as record-keeping. Officers acknowledged that there had been service failure and communication issues in this case but also that they felt some of the points raised by them were overlooked in the report. Nevertheless, they assured the Committee that lessons had been learnt.
- 5.12. RB3 had a detailed, regularly reviewed damp and mould policy that would be shared with the Committee.
- 5.13. The report stated that in 2010, RB3 conducted refurbishment works, which included ensuring all properties achieved the required SAP rating. RB3 provided EPC certificates, where necessary, for void properties as this was a statutory requirement. The Chair enquired about the number of leaseholder properties and those in the conservation areas with an EPC rating of C. Officers did not have this information at the meeting but assured the Committee that it would be investigated and shared after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- that the report be noted and the requested information from officers of RB3 be provided as discussed during the meeting.
- that officers be invited to a future Committee meeting to present a detailed report on the PFI contract expiration preparations.

The Committee voted to suspend standing orders.

6. Lewisham Homes Annual Performance Out-turn Report

Ainsley Forbes (Chair of the Board, Lewisham Homes), Margaret Dodwell (Chief Executive, Lewisham Homes) and Sarah Willcox-Jones (Director of Repairs, Lewisham Homes) presented this item. The following key points were noted:

- 6.1. Lewisham Homes had been shortlisted for two awards at the 2023 Affordable Housing Awards, in the 'Contractor of the year' and the 'Recruitment or retention campaign of the year' categories.

- 6.2. 83% of Lewisham Homes properties met the decent homes standard. Emphasis was placed on the upcoming government consultation for a higher decent homes standard.
- 6.3. On a previous occasion when RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) was in the news, Lewisham Homes officers had conducted an investigation, concluding that there was no RAAC within their housing stock in Lewisham. However, they did have some unremediated LPS (large panel system) blocks that they had been discussing extensively with the Council (5 high rise blocks and 44 medium to low rise).
- 6.4. Officers reported that budget constraints for repairs and maintenance in 2023-24, were resulting in longer repair waiting times. Lewisham Homes remained committed to working with residents to encourage them to seek resolution through the organisation rather than pursuing legal disrepair routes.
- 6.5. Ainsley Forbes, Chair of the Board, expressed gratitude to the members of the Council for their integral roles in Lewisham Homes' operation over the years. Specifically, he thanked Councillors Susan Wise, Paul Bell and Sophie Davis for bridging the connection between Lewisham Homes and the Council. He also thanked Jennifer Daothong and Fenella Beckman for their challenging but co-operative working relationship with the Lewisham Homes Board and Executive.
- 6.6. Ainsley Forbes addressed the group, reflecting on the challenging past 2 years, marked by rising service demand and reducing resources. However, he indicated a positive shift in the current direction. He outlined his key requests to the Committee, and asked the Committee to-
 - 6.6.1. take the time to develop a comprehensive understanding of the service;
 - 6.6.2. understand what residents wanted, acknowledging that the previous discussion by the Committee on co-opting tenants/ leaseholders seemed very proactive;
 - 6.6.3. review and maintain good practices while identifying areas for improvement;
 - 6.6.4. ensure the implementation of an appropriate IT system to meet the new regulatory requirements.
- 6.7. Finally, Ainsley Forbes extended his appreciation to Margaret Dodwell (Chief Executive, Lewisham Homes), the Senior Leadership Team and all Lewisham Homes staff for their dedication and hard work.

The Committee members were invited to ask questions. The following key points were noted:

- 6.8. The Committee thanked Sarah Willcox-Jones, Margaret Dodwell and Ainsley Forbes for their hard work and dedication during challenging times like the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the supply-chain issues. They recognised that Lewisham Homes had made improvements and applauded the officers' efforts.
- 6.9. The Lewisham Homes contact centre was now fully staffed, showing a significant improvement compared to a 75% turnover in that service area last year. Over the past couple weeks, the phone wait times had been slightly longer than expected due to summer holidays and staff annual leave, with an average wait time of around 7 minutes, falling short of summer expectations. However, email and portal communication remained responsive, often responding to residents on the same day. Implementation of the Localz app had also reduced the burden on the contact centre.
- 6.10. In-house repairs averaged 6000 per month, but only around 50-60 residents were using Localz app to provide feedback. While app uptake was low, it was capturing feedback from highly satisfied and dissatisfied residents, providing a valuable range of information. Officers were promoting app usage through resident magazines and social media channels.

- 6.11. Lewisham Homes had planned to replace their outdated housing IT system before the pandemic, but Covid-19 caused a 2-year delay. Following the delay, the new housing system was due to go live in April 2023, but now it was expected to launch on the 4th of December 2023, or early in the new year if necessary. Choosing the right housing IT system was a collaborative effort between Lewisham Homes and the Council. Officers believed that they had chosen a modern, configurable IT system that had proven successful with Peabody and other social landlords. However, delays in acquiring the system had raised concerns. Currently, Lewisham Homes could not produce all of their Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) as they only had a one-way interface with their contractors but reporting TSM around repairs was now a mandatory requirement. The current IT system also had inadequate record-keeping capabilities and it was essential to replace the system to provide a better service to the residents.
- 6.12. In 2019-2020, Lewisham Homes conducted a property condition survey. However, a system was needed to integrate data from that survey with new data generated from the annual 20% resurveys. This would enable automatic updates of property conditions in the stock survey data whenever repairs were performed on a property.
- 6.13. In Lewisham Homes' 2022/23 Annual Report to Residents, on page 11 it stated that there were 120 new disrepair cases being opened each month along with 334 new damp and mould cases. However, in Appendix 1, the data suggested that 48 new disrepair cases were opened in March 2023. Officers stated that they would check this discrepancy and update the report with the correct information. Currently, Lewisham Homes had 450 live disrepair cases.
- 6.14. The in-house paralegal in Lewisham Homes would be working closely with the Council's legal team after the transition of services in October 2023. The in-house paralegal managed a small caseload of less complicated legal disrepair cases, and the HALA (Housing Associations' Legal Alliance) was used for the other cases.
- 6.15. In order to effectively encourage residents to opt for alternative dispute resolution, it was emphasised that building trust with them was essential. This required officers to increase their community presence and organise additional estate days.
- 6.16. There were concerns about agents for solicitors deceiving residents by posing as a social work repair team, offering free repairs for council-neglected issues and misleading them into pursuing disrepair cases. There were also safeguarding concerns about residents letting these agents into their homes without realising the potential consequences. It was suggested that a comprehensive communication campaign be launched to clarify that these agents were not Council employees and were misleading residents. Officers agreed to look into this and explore an effective communication campaign.
- 6.17. The Committee Chair enquired if retrofitting opportunities were being utilised when dealing with void properties. Officers reported that due to the restrictions of the financial envelope they were working in, undertaking retrofitting work on void properties without any further funding was difficult. However, they had been working closely with the Council to apply for grants and secure match-funding opportunities.
- 6.18. The report included information on Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints but not on Stage 3. Lewisham Homes officers informed the Committee that Stage 3 complaints were handled by the independent adjudicator which was in the Council's remit and hence data for Stage 3 complaints was not in the report. It was discussed that the Housing Ombudsman was actively encouraging the Council to move away from the 3-stage process.
- 6.19. Residents could now directly go to the Housing Ombudsman with complaints and were no longer required to exhaust the internal complaint processes beforehand. In 2022-23, the Housing Ombudsman received 6 cases from Lewisham, but it didn't specify who managed the properties. Lewisham Homes reported that 4 out of those 6 cases were theirs.

- 6.20. The report indicated that 101 new homes were scheduled for completion in 2023-24. The Committee Chair enquired about the progress of these homes and sought updates on the challenges faced with Algernon Road, Edward Street and Home Park. Lewisham Homes' development services transferred over to the Council in February 2023, as a result Lewisham Homes officers were unable to provide a current status update on this matter.
- 6.21. Tenant Satisfaction Measures regarding anti-social behaviour (ASB) had shown a low level of satisfaction, with no ASB evictions in the past year. A Committee member questioned if there was any correlation between these two factors. Officers explained that they primarily relied on injunctions instead of evictions but were encountering difficulties recruiting and retaining ASB staff despite a rise in ASB cases.

RESOLVED:

- that the report be noted.
- that the Committee thanked Ainsley Forbes, Margaret Dodwell and Sarah Willcox-Jones for their hard work at, and dedication towards, Lewisham Homes over the years.

7. Update on Housing Futures Programme

Fenella Beckman (Director of Housing Strategy) and Lynne Sacale (Housing Transformation Programme Lead) introduced this item, accompanied by Helen Clarke (Director of Communications and Engagement). They highlighted the key points from their PowerPoint presentation to the Committee. This was followed by questions from the Committee members and the following key points were noted from the discussion:

- 7.1. Resident engagement played a crucial role in establishing trust among residents and assessing their satisfaction with the service. The Committee was pleased to see the plans for continuation of resident panels after the transition of services back in-house. Following the service transfer, Lewisham Homes' community engagement team would sit within the housing directorate, distinct from the Council's corporate community engagement team, to maintain a dedicated focus on engaging with residents to meet their housing needs.
- 7.2. The Chairs of the tenant and residents' associations (TRAs) were very happy with the new resident engagement arrangements, as they felt it would bring them closer to senior housing officers and councillors, allowing them to better escalate issues.
- 7.3. Officers reported that they were keeping a close watch on staff turnover and vacancies. Currently, the percentage of vacancies was reported to be very low.

RESOLVED:

- that the report be noted, with the added notation that the Committee was pleased with the progress being made.

8. Select Committee Work Programme

8.1. The Committee members discussed the work programme – noting that the agenda item regarding budget cuts that was originally scheduled for the November 2023 committee meeting had been withdrawn.

RESOLVED:

- that a follow-up agenda item on the co-optee proposal, stemming from the discussion at this meeting, be added to the Committee's November 2023 meeting.

- that an update on Lewisham Homes' transition back in-house be scheduled for the Committee's November 2023 meeting.
- that the agenda for the next meeting on the 28th of November 2023 be agreed after making the suggested changes.

The meeting ended at 9.53pm.

Chair:

Date:

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Housing Select Committee

Declarations of Interest

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Corporate Governance)

Outline and recommendations

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

1. Summary

1.1. Members must declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda. There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
- (2) Other registerable interests
- (3) Non-registerable interests.

1.2. Further information on these is provided in the body of this report.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

3. Disclosable pecuniary interests

3.1 These are defined by regulation as:

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member’s knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - (a) that body to the member’s knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
 - (b) either:
 - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

4. Other registerable interests

4.1 The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

5. Non registerable interests

- 5.1. Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

6. Declaration and impact of interest on members' participation

- 6.1. Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take not part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- 6.2. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph 6.3 below applies.
- 6.3. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- 6.4. If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- 6.5. Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

7. Sensitive information

- 7.1. There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

8. Exempt categories

- 8.1. There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-
- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
 - (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or

guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor

- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception).

9. Report author and contact

- 9.1. Jeremy Chambers, Director of Law and Corporate Governance,
Jeremy.Chambers@lewisham.gov.uk ;0208 31 47648



Housing Select Committee

Report title: Co-optee proposals

Date: 28 November 2023

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Head of Scrutiny and Policy)

Outline and recommendations

To note that the Committee has invited nominations for informal co-optees to attend its meetings in 2023/24, pending the potential adoption of a formal co-optee scheme.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

12 September 2023 - The Housing Select Committee considered a report on co-optees

28 November 2023 - The Housing Select Committee receives an update on activity since it made the decision, at its September meeting, to have informal co-optees.

2024 – If Members wish to have formal Housing co-optees in the 2024/25 municipal year, a formal co-option scheme will need to be developed and agreed in advance; a budget (if applicable) will need to be identified; and the agreement of the Constitution Working Party and Council sought.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Committee has expressed an interest in having resident co-optees. This report updates Members on progress made since the last meeting in terms of securing the participation of informal resident co-optees.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note that nominations for informal co-optees from Lewisham Council Housing (formerly Lewisham Homes) and Regenter B3 have been sought, with a view to having them attend the remaining formal meetings of the

Committee in the 2023-24 municipal year. Further thought is being given to how private renters might be represented at meetings.

3. Background

- 3.1. Having informal or formal co-optees on scrutiny committees, over and above the statutory co-optees required by law, is one way of increasing scrutiny's access to local insight and understanding of local people and their needs.
- 3.2. At the last meeting the Committee received a report on statutory and non-statutory co-optees and the considerations to be taken into account should the committee wish to have co-optees.
- 3.3. It was noted that formal co-option beyond the statutory requirement, was provided for in legislation but local authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees if they wish to have formal co-optees. In Lewisham, the scheme would need to be agreed by the Constitution Working Party, followed by Council. A decision would need to be taken on whether or not the co-optee(s) could vote. Their attendance would not count towards quorum and it is assumed they would be disregarded for the purposes of political proportionality. Consideration would also need to be given to how they would be chosen and if, and how, they would be paid.

4. Informal co-optees

- 4.1. At the September 2023 Housing Select Committee meeting, it was agreed that the Committee would initially have informal co-optees and use the learning from that experience to inform a potential formal scheme. Following the meeting, invitations were sent to resident organisations at both Lewisham Council Housing and Regenter B3, on behalf of the Chair and the Committee, inviting them to each nominate an individual to attend future Housing Select Committee meetings to represent the resident voice. The Chair wrote to the following organisations/people:
 - All TRA Chairs and Vice-Chairs - Lewisham Council Tenants (Formerly Lewisham Homes)
the TRAs have been asked to collectively suggest a single co-optee
 - The Tenants' Panel – Regenter B3

An update on nominations will be provided at the meeting.

- 4.3 Having informal co-optees from these organisations will:
 - **Amplify Resident Voices** – the co-optees will serve as a direct link between the Housing Select Committee and residents, ensuring that resident opinions and concerns are heard and considered during discussions.
 - **Enhance Engagement** – having co-optees will foster greater resident participation in the scrutiny process, making it more inclusive and reflective of the community's needs and preferences.
 - **Ensure Effective Collaboration** – Members and residents will be able to work together on matters that directly impact local communities, leading to better-informed and more community-driven outcomes.

5. Private Renters

- 5.1 There is no clear Lewisham-based private renters organisation. The Committee will need to work with the Private Rented Sector in Lewisham Task and Finish Group (PRS TFG) to identify a suitable organisation, with a plan to inviting an informal PRS co-

optee to attend the Housing Select Committee meetings scheduled for January and March 2024. If a suitable organisation cannot be found, the Committee could consider advertising the position on the -council website/via social media. The opportunity could be specifically highlighted to the individual private renters who engage with the PRS TFG. However, thought will need to be given to the selection process to make it fair, and it should be recognised that they will not have an obvious mandate, as they will not be representing a specific renters organisation. This means it is more likely that they will just be expressing their own, individual views, rather than the views of private renters more broadly, as gathered through membership of a renters organisation.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The Committee will liaise with the PRS TFG to see if there is a suitable Lewisham renters organisation to approach, or agree an alternative way of securing the views of private renters.
- 6.2 Following the Committee's January 2024 meeting, Members and officers can consider how the informal approach has worked and decide whether a formal co-option scheme should be developed and agreed for implementation in the 24/25 municipal year.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 There are costs associated with having formal co-optees on scrutiny select committees, should a formal scheme be pursued in the future. Depending on the method of selection, a cost may be incurred. For example, if an election is required. Formal co-optees are normally provided with an allowance. A budget would need to be identified to cover this.

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 There is currently constitutional provision for the mandatory statutory education co-optees, and co-optees to the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee. Whilst there is a statutory requirement to make provision for co-optees to SSCSC, there is no requirement to appoint. At present, Lewisham does not appoint co-optees to SSCSC.
- 8.2 Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which relate to political balance, apply to the Housing Select Committee. There would need to be a decision on whether formal co-optees count towards political balance, should a formal scheme be pursued in the future. The assumption is that they would not, as is the case for statutory co-optees to CYP Select Committee.

9 Equalities implications

- 9.1 Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 9.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 9.3 There may be equalities implications arising from creating housing co-optees and these

would need to be taken into consideration should a formal co-option scheme be established.

10 Climate change and environmental implications

10.1 There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation in this report.

11 Crime and disorder implications

11.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation in this report.

12 Health and wellbeing implications

12.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation in this report.

13 Report author and contact

13.1 If you have any questions about this report please contact:

Charlotte Dale, Charlotte.Dale@lewisham.gov.uk



Housing Select Committee

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Rent Setting

Date: 28th November 2023

Key decision: Yes

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Borough-wide

Contributors: Interim Director, Resident Engagement and Services and Executive Director for Corporate Services

Outline and recommendations

It is recommended that Housing Select Committee:

- Note and comment on the content of this report.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

1st November 2023 – Meeting with residents in properties managed by Regenter B3, attended by Lewisham Council and Pinnacle

13th November 2023 – Lewisham Council meeting with TRA Chairs and the Leasehold Forum

February 2024 - Report to be presented to Mayor and Cabinet

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the rent service charge, garage and heating and hot water charge increase for Lewisham Council Dwellings and garages in 2024/25, including resident feedback on the proposals.
- 1.2. The proposed rent increase for 2024-5 would see rents rise by 7.7% (CPI @ 6.7% + 1.0%) or £8.57 per week on average.
- 1.3. The proposed average service and heating and hot water charge changes are detailed in the Lewisham Council and Regenter RB3 Service charge reports 2024/25, which are included at appendix 2 and 3 to this report. The proposal is for

an increase of £1.19 or 7.7% for Lewisham Council, and an increase of £0.76pw or 9.9% for RB3 managed properties.

- 1.4. No Proposals have been received to vary the current levy for the Tenants' Fund contribution. It will therefore remain at £0.15pw for 2024/25.
- 1.5. Garage rents are proposed to increase by 8.9%. This represents an increase of £1.58pw and would raise the average basic charge from £17.70pw to £19.28pw. The proposed increase will raise an additional £190k of revenue income. A garage increase report is included at appendix 4 to this report.
- 1.6. A target of 10% Housing Revenue Account efficiencies and/or savings are currently being sought for 2024/25. Work is in progress to identify these. These savings will be available for reinvestment in stock, services, or new supply.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Housing Select Committee note and comment on the content of this report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the following corporate strategy objective:
 - 3.1.1. Tackling the housing crisis – Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.
- 3.2. The contents of this report also support the objectives of the Housing Strategy 2020-26, as ensuring an appropriately funded HRA will work towards the delivery of the following objectives:
 - 3.2.1. Delivering the homes that Lewisham needs;
 - 3.2.2. Improving the quality, standard and safety of housing;
 - 3.2.3. Supporting our residents to live safe, independent, and active lives;
 - 3.2.4. Strengthening communities and embracing diversity.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Government's Rent Policy directs Registered Providers (RPs), including local authority landlords, to increase the annual rent charge by a maximum of CPI +1%.
- 4.2. During the period from April 2015 to April 2019, the Government mandated for all RPs to reduce dwelling rents by 1% per annum. The financial impact of this loss of income was significant and maintaining service levels throughout this period was challenging. For Lewisham Council this resulted in a loss of actual income of £2.8m during the four-year period. The loss was £25m when compared to the assumptions made within the Housing Revenue Account business plan for the same period and a resulting total loss of £374m over the 30-year lifespan of the Business Plan.
- 4.3. From April 2020 Government lifted the rent reduction policy and allowed a return to the previous method of rent increase calculations to at least 2025. This method of rent increase is based on CPI + 1%. This method had been implemented in Lewisham and became effective for rental increases applied from April 2020 onwards.
- 4.4. However, the exception to this was for the year 2023/24, when RPs were required to cap the rent increase to a maximum of 7%, in light of the high inflation as illustrated by the 10.1% CPI figure as announced in September 2022. This resulted in a real-terms loss of £3.0m to the HRA.

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- 4.5. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) faces significant challenges in meeting its obligations and the councils plans for new supply. This is partly due to the imposition of recent rent caps/reductions which has severely impacted on our ability to maintain decent homes, maintain, and invest in our existing stock, meet building safety and new regulatory requirements, and continue building new social homes.
- 4.6. Delivering sustainability and carbon reduction ambitions, as well as improving thermal comfort for our tenants is another pressure on the HRA.
- 4.7. Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, our top priority is to make our blocks safe; we are also required to achieve the mandated Decent Homes Standard, and particularly following the tragic case of Awaab Ishak, protect homes from damp and mould. We are increasingly having to choose which of these crucial works to prioritise.
- 4.8. There is a further complication in that due to recent legislative changes, leaseholders cannot be recharged for some of the fire remediation works, leading to further income losses.
- 4.9. In addition, debt interest charges will also increase based on the need to borrow for HRA investment needs and the increase in interest rates applied to debt.
- 4.10. At the present time, the financial models used by the council forecast CPI to be an average of 4% for 2025/26 and 2% for 2026/27. It reverts back to the Bank of England target of 2.0% annually from 2026/27. This will be constantly monitored and updated when necessary.

5. Proposal for 2024-5 rent increases

- 5.1. In line with the formula rent calculation policy, it is proposed that rents rise by 7.7% based on CPI of 6.7% (at September 2023) + 1% for 2024/25.
- 5.2. An 7.7% increase in average rents for HRA dwelling stock 2024/25 equates to an average increase of £8.57pw over a 52-week period. This would increase the full year average dwelling rent for the London Borough of Lewisham from £111.33pw to £119.91pw. The proposed increase will result in additional income of £6.140m for the HRA against 2023/24 income levels.
- 5.3. Looking forward, and for the purpose of business and financial planning, it is assumed that rental charges for the period 2024/25 to 2025/26 will be increased in line with the previous guidance of CPI + 1%.

6. Efficiencies and Savings Proposals for 2024/25

- 6.1. The HRA strategy and self-financing assessments are continually updated and developed, to ensure resources are available to meet costs and investment needs for 2024/25 and future years.
- 6.2. As a prudent measure the original HRA financial model was developed with no savings identified. There are ongoing discussions regarding delivering up to 10% efficiencies/savings and target management and maintenance costs per unit which may drive reduced costs. For example, there is already an assumed reduction in management costs for 2024/25 to reflect stock losses through Right to Buy Sales. However, this would need to be offset against reduced future rent income arising from Right to Buy. Any savings and efficiencies that are delivered against the current financial budget will be reinvested back into the HRA.
- 6.3. An update of the HRA Strategy, proposed rent and service charge increases and comments from consultation with tenant representatives will be reported to Mayor and Cabinet as part of the HRA Rents and budget strategy report. Mayor and Cabinet will make the final budget decisions in the New Year.

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7. Service Charges and Garage Rents

- 7.1. The agreed policy on Service Charges is that charges should reflect full cost recovery for the type of service undertaken. Heating and hot water costs are also recovered by a charge to tenants and leaseholders. The overall tenant and leaseholder increase being proposed is 9.9% for residents in properties managed by Regenter B3 and 7.7% for the remaining council residents.
- 7.2. The Regulatory Rent Standard recommends that service charge increases for social housing tenants are in line with rent increases. Regenter B3 residents are not included in the Rent Standard because PFIs are excluded, being subject to a separate contract.
- 7.3. Regenter RB3 and the council have provided separate consultation reports to the panels giving further details of the increase to be applied for 2024/25. These reports are included at appendix 2 & 3 to this report.
- 7.4. Residents in properties managed by Regenter B3 and council dwellings were asked to provide any comments and feedback on service charges and garage rent proposals for inclusion in the Mayor and Cabinet budget report to be presented in February 2024. Tenant's feedback and comments are included as appendix 1 to this report.

Garage Rents

- 7.5. Garage rents are proposed to be increased by 8.9%. This represents an increase of £1.58pw and would raise the average charge from £17.70pw to £19.28pw. The proposed increase would raise an additional £191k of revenue income, assuming no discount is applied.
- 7.6. The authority continually reviews rental values across the garage stock to ensure they remain on a sound commercial footing and reflect market rents. Any additional changes are likely to be consulted on and implemented for financial year 2025/26 onwards.
- 7.7. Property Services have provided a separate consultation report to the panel giving further details of the increase to be applied for 2024/25. This is attached at appendix 4 to this report.

8. Tenants' Levy

- 8.1. As part of the budget and rent setting proposals for 2005/06, an allowance was 'unpooled' from rent as a tenant's service charge in respect of the Lewisham Tenants' Fund. The current levy is £0.15pw.
- 8.2. No proposals have been put forward by the Tenants Fund Committee to vary this levy for 2024/25. Therefore, the charge will remain at £0.15pw for 2024/25.
- 8.3. The Lewisham Tenant's Fund Administrator has provided the panels with an update report regarding the accounts of the fund and budget proposals for 2024/25.

9. Engagement

Engagement with residents

- 9.1. Engagement meetings on rents, service charges and garage rent proposals have taken place in line with the existing arrangements through tenant representatives and leaseholders. These arrangements provide an opportunity to engage tenants in a discussion on rent rises and with residents regarding service charges. The views of residents received to date have been collated within Appendix 1 and these and any additional comments will be included in the report to Mayor and Cabinet.

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Mayor and Cabinet

- 9.2. Mayor and Cabinet will consider the proposed increases and feedback from residents and Housing Select Committee as part of the overall council budget setting report.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1. Financial Implications are contained within the body of the report.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the “**1989 Act**”) sets out legal requirements in relation to housing finance, in particular a duty to maintain a Housing Revenue Account (“**HRA**”). The 1989 Act provisions also include a duty to budget to prevent a debit balance on the HRA and to implement and review the budget.
- 11.2. The Housing Act 1985 (the “**1985 Act**”) gives the council power to “make such reasonable charges as [it] may determine for the tenancy or occupation of [its] houses”. The council is additionally required by the 1985 Act to review rents from time to time. The council must set rents in accordance with the Rent Standard and the Rent Policy Statement. The Council must act reasonably in relation to rent setting, and the decision maker should therefore be satisfied that the increase is reasonable and justified.
- 11.3. The Council’s duties in relation to the consultation of tenants on matters of housing management, as set out in Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, do not apply to rent levels, nor to charges for services or facilities provided by the authority. There is therefore no statutory requirement to consult with secure tenants regarding the proposed increase in charges. The Council however has undertaken to consult with tenant representatives as set out in this report. The results of any consultation must be conscientiously taken into account.
- 11.4. The council is required by the 1985 Act to notify tenants of variations of rent and other charges. If approved, the council will need to serve a notice of variation, at least 28 days before the variation takes effect.

12. Equalities implications

- 12.1. Social housing is a tenure type reserved for those households who are on lower incomes. Therefore, Lewisham Council tenants are more likely to be on lower incomes than the wider population. There is a likelihood that they may be in receipt of housing benefit or universal credit to support their ability to pay their rent.
- 12.2. Where a tenant is in receipt of Housing Benefit, the increased rent will be applied to all affected claims and a mass recalculation done. This will increase the HB for those both in receipt of full HB and for those on partial HB. Where a tenant is in receipt of Universal Credit, the full schedule of rents with the new rent level applied will be uploaded by Lewisham Homes to the UC portal for a recalculation and recovery for tenants.
- 12.3. Where tenants may struggle with the increased rent, Lewisham Homes and Regenter B3 offer in depth budgeting and financial support, which is available for all residents regardless of their arrears level.
- 12.4. Revenues raised because of the rent changes to HRA tenants will be retained within the HRA. This will be used to run the service and deliver future improvement programmes and stock investment to benefit our residents.

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- 12.5. Residents of Lewisham’s housing stock represent a wide range of protected characteristics. Whilst this change will have the same broad impact on all affected groups, any re-investment as noted above, means that those affected will continue to receive the expected level of service and benefit from future investment programmes.

13. Climate change and environmental implications

- 13.1. There are no specific climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

14. Crime and disorder implications

- 14.1. There are no specific crime and disorder arising from this report.

15. Appendices

- 15.1. Appendix 1 – Tenants’ rent consultation 2024/25
- 15.2. Appendix 2a – Rent report 2024/25 Brockley PFI
- 15.3. Appendix 2b – Service charges 2024/25 Brockley PFI
- 15.4. Appendix 3 – Rent and Service charges 2024/25 Lewisham Council
- 15.5. Appendix 4 – Garage rent increase report 2024/25

16. Report author and contacts

- 16.1. Simone Russell, Director of Resident Services, London Borough of Lewisham
Simone.russell@lewisham.gov.uk
- 16.2. On behalf of Exec Director Finance: Tony Riordan, London Borough of Lewisham
Tony.Riordan@Lewisham.gov.uk
- 16.3. On behalf of the Director of Law, Governance &HR: Melanie Dawson, Principal Lawyer - Place, London Borough of Lewisham melanie.dawson@lewisham.gov.uk

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Brockley Residents Feedback and Queries relating the Rent and Service Charges proposed increase for 2024/25

Meeting held at St Andrew's Church, 2nd November 2023

Resident Feedback/Query and Responses:

1	(TK) How is the cost of the garages distributed in terms of repairs to these garages? (SS) Lewisham has a pot for repairing garages (TK) within the current Section 20 Rydon asked for a contribution from leaseholders for garages
2	(AF) The water bill is now more expensive than when it was paid to the council. (SS) The water company has taken back the responsibility to collect charges from Lewisham Council, you now have a direct link to them and can challenge the difference with your water suppliers. (SRus) The council had an arrangement to collect on behalf of the water board. The water board now collects directly. The council has no influence towards water prices.
	(AF) Concerned about paying the water and other bills from Universal Credit (SRus) Explained the council does not have control. Certain elements of Service Charge qualify under certain benefits. If you think you've been over charged, you can challenge the Water Board (SS) Pinnacle have provided welfare officers to help with support and guide individuals. Advised to make contact. Some parts of Service Charge can be paid by UC. Income recovery team is responsible for the collection of Charges for Leaseholders and Tenants, they are available to talk issues through. Tuesday's and Wednesday's there is surgery at Brockley which anyone can make a booking to discuss money issues by emailing Brockley.customerservice@pinnaclegroup.co.uk
3.	(SR) Is the increase only for the estimated bill? (SS) yes, adding the RPI, it gives an idea how much items go up for the coming year. You will be charged on the Estimates, this is then adjusted in the Actuals. The Actual is the bill regardless of inflation. (SR) The Service Charge increases of RPI +1% are above inflation increases. (SR) Is the 9.9 % negotiable? (SS) The rate is in line with inflation, this is what it will cost for the new financial year. It is not negotiable.
4	(TR) The contract goes up by RPI+ X which gives a higher percentage therefore we keep it at just +1% to make the increase. When the RPI is higher on the Service Charge account, we try to minimise the deficit. No control over RPI, its fixed until the contract finishes.
5	(MB) After rubbish collection, some items are left on the floor where the job appears incomplete by the bin men (SRus) Suggested reporting it on the website Fly-tipping is an offence, resident's can contact 101 or log issues on 'Love Lewisham' website
6	(ET) Lewisham tenants fund charge is 15p, the charge goes into a fund to encourage the formation of TRA's who can then apply for grants each year, to cover administration costs, equipment/training etc. It is managed by a board of Directors and is a registered company. There is training for Chairs, Treasurers etc.. Sam can help with setting up TRA's.

7	I don't feel these charges are justified when there are no means of communicating with Lewisham Council officers, councillors or contractors and there are systemic problems with "appealing and substandard" work.
8	<p>This is the second consecutive year in which Pinnacle is imposing an almost double digit percentage increase (9.9%) on the cost of the service charge. This will place additional pressures on household finances during the cost of living crisis, and also, when many leaseholders are facing bills of (literally) thousands of pounds to contribute towards Regenter B3's major works programme. The paper is silent on these very real and specific financial pressures on leaseholders arising from the current major works round, which suggests Pinnacle did not consider these pressures in the round when determining this year's annual service charge increase. This is short sighted.</p> <p>We are always told that the increase of RPI + 1% on the service charge is mandated by the PFI contract that the council has signed with Regenter B3 (which requires the service charge to increase by RPIX). This gives leaseholders, and indeed the Council, no recourse to challenge any of these costs and "bakes in" above inflation increases over which no discretion appears to be able to be made. This seems fundamentally wrong.</p> <p>Many residents are wondering what will happen to the service charge after 2027, when the PFI contract with Regenter B3 expires and we understand the management of the properties in the Brockley PFI area will return to council management. I request that the Housing Committee seeks clarity on the future plans in this area (are the properties to return to council management?) And also, what will the consequences of this be for the future of the service charge and its calculation? Any proposed changes must be consulted upon fairly and transparently - particularly if they were to result in any further increases in service charge costs. I would ask that the Council responds on this point and provides residents with some reassurance.</p>

Lewisham Council Housing Service
Rent and Service charge meeting (TRA Chairs and Leasehold forum)
Monday 13 November 6.30-8pm- Microsoft Teams

Feedback

Rents and service charges

Feedback	
Property Services	
Communication	TRAs and residents cannot report communal repairs and leaks on the online system
Communication	There needs to be communication with residents about the cyclical maintenance programme
Communication	There is a lack of coordination and communication between departments.
Cost	Is there any correlation between increase in rent and increased service to residents – i.e. no maintenance
Investment	A lot of disrepair, even though decent homes were done ten years ago, it has not addressed the problems. Leaks are a huge issue and cause mould and condensation.
Investment	Pipes are failing, and causing leaks, because there is no cyclical maintenance programme
Investment	Legal fees for disrepairs could be reduced if there was investment in existing assets to repair leaks, etc. These aren't often addressed quickly enough which makes it more costly long term
Investment	Repairs system and capital programme system need to improve Kitchens and bathrooms changed every 15 years, but other works externally and communal areas have not been done in 25 years.
Repairs & Investment	What causes the huge delay for getting works done for leaseholders? Big delay for leak repair works – 2 years.
Compliance	Concern about security at independent living scheme – people coming in and no one knows who they are
Resident Services	
Consultation	Want LBL to take on board their (TRA/ Resident's views and ideas) and possible solutions i.e. for flytipping
Housing Management	Encourage TRAs to set up Tenant management Organisations (TMOs).
Housing Management	Independent living officer – given considerably more work, no change in amount of service charge for this reduced service

Environment	Gardening – not happening at Vineries
Environment	Environment is poor, need improved litter-picking
Environment	Appalling upkeep of the estate. Need to improve the basics and ensure the areas are well maintained Fly-tipping – can be resolved, put in a covered space, and put bins away from the road. If estates look good, people are less likely to litter.
Other	
Communication	There should be a road map for change with the Housing Services now they're in the council. How things will move forward.
Finance	Surprised that the council have gone with the maximum increase. It's misleading to say we are going with government advice, as the government say we can go up to 7.7%
ICT/ Home ownership/ Finance	There should be investment in a software upgrade to better predict and monitor service charges. There are currently many errors with the service charge billing

Garages

Feedback
Garages don't have electricity, so enable to store electric cars. What are the plans for electric charging points? Can use a lamppost which already has an electricity supply
It should be clearer what the spend is on garages overall and not just the repairs costs.

Lewisham Tenants Fund (LTF)

- No questions or comments on report
- Shirley - Chair of LTF asked to clarify that the LTF is a separate company.
- LTF requested a meeting with Gillian to discuss LTF

Response to feedback - Chair (Gillian Douglas (Executive Director of Housing))

Rent and Service Charge

- We are working on asset management strategy
- Have been impressed by the caretaking and environment teams, and believe they are doing a good job. They are not well resourced, and it's an aging workforce with sickness that needs to be covered.
- We need to set clear expectations for staff.
- We will see if we need to look at transferring resources between estates.
- Fly-tipping is an issue that requires solutions.
- Investment in the stock is needed.
- ACTION- Gillian asked for details of estates she should visit where residents have concerns
- ACTION- Gillian requested David (Colonnade) email her directly about the roof at Colonnade.

Garages

- ACTION- David Lee to seek update from Martin O'Brien on plans for electric car charging point installation in the Borough

Final comments and next steps

- Comments from this meeting will be presented to the Housing Select Committee (HSC) meeting, to help inform their discuss and inform their recommendations.
- Any additional comments following the meeting will go to Mayor & Cabinet (M&C) for a decision in February 2044.
- The report goes to full council at end of February 2024
- Residents will then be advised of the decision that is made.

Actions

- Arrange for Gillian to visit Tanners Hill, Jerningham and the Pepys estate (as requested by residents at meeting)
- David Lee to seek update from Martin O'Brien on plans for electric car charging point installation in the Borough
- Follow up on LTF request for a meeting with Gillian to discuss LTF
- Lewisham Housing to discuss concerns raised at Vineries with independent living team (staff time/ resource available, and security)

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Lewisham Council Dwelling Rents 2024/25		
Report Title	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Rent Setting	
Contributors	Director Resident Engagement and Housing Service/Executive Director for Corporate Resources	
Class	Part 1	Date: November 2023

1 Purpose of the Report

To outline the proposed rent increase of 7.7% for Lewisham Council Dwellings in 2024/25. Residents are invited to note this report and provide comments on the proposals.

2 Context

- 2.1 During the period from April 2015 to April 2019, the Government mandated for all registered providers of social housing (including local authorities) to reduce dwelling rents by 1% per annum. The financial impact of this was significant which meant that maintaining service levels throughout this period was challenging as a direct result of the loss of income.
- 2.2 From April 2020 the Government published a new Rent Policy which permitted Registered Providers to return to the pre- 2015 methodology for increasing rents annually, up to at least 2025. This method of rent increase is based on CPI + 1%. Lewisham Council has been applying this approach since April 2020.
- 2.3 The exception to this was for the year 2023-24, when all Registered Providers were required to cap the rent increase to a maximum of 7%, in light of the high inflation and the resulting 10.1% CPI as announced in September in 2022. This resulted in a real-terms loss of £3.0m to the HRA.
- 2.4 CPI at September 2023 has recently been confirmed at 6.7%. In adopting the Government's Rent Policy as described in 2.2 above, this results in an allowable rent increase of 7.7% (6.7% + 1.0%). So far there has been no indication from Government that there will be a cap on the increase as there was in 2022, and the proposed increase takes this assumption into account.
- 2.5 The maximum increase is required to be able to deliver against its objectives in relation to the management, maintenance and investment in its housing stock and deliver its wider corporate objectives for housing in the Borough, as detailed in Point 3 below.
- 2.6 The report below sets out the resulting impact on rents.
- 2.7 The potential average service charges and heating and hot water charge changes for 2024/25 are contained in a separate report.

- 2.8 No proposals have been received to vary the current levy for the Tenants' Fund contribution. The detail is covered in a separate report and summarised below.
- 2.9 The proposed increase to garage rents is covered in a separate report and summarised below.
- 2.10 Residents are invited to comment on the proposals. Residents' comments will be included in the Mayor and Cabinet budget report due in February 2024. Mayor and Cabinet will be requested to approve the increase of 7.7%.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the following corporate strategy objective:
- Tackling the housing crisis – Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.
- 3.2 The contents of this report also support the objectives of the Housing Strategy 2020-26, as ensuring an appropriately funded HRA will work towards the delivery of the following objectives:
- Delivering the homes that Lewisham needs
 - Improving the quality, standard and safety of housing
 - Supporting our residents to live safe, independent, and active lives
 - Strengthening communities and embracing diversity.

4 Proposal for rent increases

- 4.1 In line with the formula rent calculation policy, rents for 2024/5 will rise by 7.7% based on CPI of 6.7% (as of September 2023) + 1%, as allowable under the Government's Rent Policy.
- 4.2 A 7.7% increase in average rents for HRA dwelling stock 2024/25 equates to an average increase of £8.57pw over a 52-week period. This will increase the full year average dwelling rent for the London Borough of Lewisham from £111.33pw to £119.91pw. The proposed increase will result in additional income of £6.140m for the HRA.
- 4.3 It should be noted that the HRA cost base for management and maintenance, materials and capital investment will be inflated based on increases similar to or based on the CPI output data. Supply chain and labour supply remains challenging due to the difficult economic climate and the ongoing impact of Brexit and the geo-political situation in the world. There are also additional cost pressures associated with the zero-carbon agenda and the increased regulatory burden arising from the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and other legislative changes such as the Building Safety Act 2022. In addition, debt interest charges will also increase based on the need to borrow for HRA investment needs and the increase in interest rates applied to debt.

- 4.4 The following table provides details of the 7.7% average rent rise by bedroom numbers for housing stock in the HRA as at 1st April 2023. Service charges are not included in this table – please refer to the Services Charges Proposal Report, as referred to in Point 6 below.

Bed size	Average Rent 2023/24	Average Rent 2024/25	£ Change	% Change
Bedsit	£83.30	£89.72	£6.42	7.7%
1	£97.70	£105.23	£7.53	7.7%
2	£110.20	£118.69	£8.49	7.7%
3	£128.61	£138.51	£9.90	7.7%
4	£144.51	£155.64	£11.13	7.7%
5	£164.40	£177.06	£12.66	7.7%
6	£170.61	£183.75	£13.14	7.7%
7	£175.73	£189.27	£13.54	7.7%
Average Total	£111.33	£119.91	£8.57	7.7%

- 4.5 For the purpose of business and financial planning, it is assumed that rental charges for the period 2024/25 to 2025/26 will be increased in line with the previous guidance of CPI + 1%.
- 4.6 At the present time, the financial models used by the council forecast CPI to be an average of 4% for 2025/26 and 2% for 2026/27. It reverts back to the bank of England target of 2.0% annually from 2026/27. This will be constantly monitored and updated when necessary.

5 Efficiencies & Savings Proposals for 2024/25

- 5.1 The HRA strategy and self-financing assessments are continually updated and developed, to ensure resources are available to meet costs and investment needs for 2024/25 and future years.
- 5.2 There are ongoing discussions regarding appropriate savings and target management and maintenance costs per unit across all council-owned housing. Any savings and efficiencies that are delivered against the current financial budget will be reinvested back into the HRA.
- 5.3 An update of the HRA Strategy and proposed rent & service charge increases will be reported to Mayor and Cabinet as part of the HRA Rents and budget strategy report. Mayor and Cabinet will make the final budget decisions in the New-Year.

6 Service Charges & Garage Rents

- 6.1 The agreed policy on Service Charges is that charges should reflect full cost recovery for the type of service undertaken. Heating and hot water costs are also recovered by a charge to tenants and leaseholders.

- 6.2 A separate report to residents giving further details of the increase to be applied for 2024/25 is provided.
- 6.3 Garage rents are proposed to rise by 8.9%. This represents an average increase of £1.58pw and would raise the average basic charge from £17.70pw to £19.28pw. The proposed increase will raise an additional £150,000 of revenue income after blue badge discounts have been applied.
- 6.4 The authority continually reviews rental values across the garage stock to ensure they remain on a sound commercial footing and reflect market rents. Any additional changes are likely to be consulted on and implemented for financial year 2025/26 onwards.
- 6.5 Property Estates Services have provided a separate consultation report giving further details of the increase to be applied for 2024/25.

7 Tenants' Levy

- 7.1 As part of the budget and rent setting proposals for 2005/06 an allowance was 'unpooled' from rent as a tenant service charge in respect of the Lewisham Tenants' Fund. The current levy is £0.15pw.
- 7.2 No proposals have been put forward by the Tenants Fund Committee to vary this levy for 2024/25. Therefore, the charge will remain at £0.15pw for 2024/25.
- 7.3 The tenants' fund has provided the panels with an update report regarding the accounts of the fund and budget proposals for 2024/25.

8 Housing Select Committee

- 8.1 Housing Select Committee will consider the proposals on 28th November 2023.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 From April 2020, councils were able to return to the previous method of rent increases, which was CPI plus 1%.
- 9.2 Whilst Lewisham Council implemented this method to determine the rent rises from that date, Government capped rent increases for 2023/24 at 7%. Rents for 2024/25 are not currently subject to capping from government and will rise by CPI + 1%. CPI as of September 2023 was 6.7%. Therefore, using the formula increase, rent will rise by 7.7% resulting in an average increase of £8.57 per week.
- 9.2 The budget report will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 8th February 2024.

If you require any more information about this report, please contact Simone Russell via email: Simone.Russell@lewisham.gov.uk

Committee	Brockley Residents Meeting		Item No	
Report Title	Service Charges 2024/25			
Contributor	Regenter Brockley Operations Manager			
Class	Information	Date	2nd November 2023	

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report sets out proposals for resident's service charges in 2024/25.
- 1.2 The report requests Brockley Residents to note the proposals to increase the service charges for leasehold and tenanted properties in 2024/25. Resident's comments will be fed back to Mayor and Cabinet as part of the Council's overall budget setting process.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To inform Brockley Residents on the service charge proposals and feedback comments to Mayor and Cabinet.

3. Background of the Report

- 3.1 The Council's Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account. The account can only contain those charges directly related to the management of the Council's housing stock. By implication leaseholders must be charged the true cost of maintaining their properties, where the provision of their lease allows. This prevents tenants subsidising the cost to leaseholders, who have purchased their properties.
- 3.2 The service charges will be increased in line with the September 2023 RPI (Retail Price Index) of 8.9% plus 1% (uplift under RegenterB3 contract) making a total increase of 9.9%. This percentage will be applied to the actual cost of each service element of the 2022/2023 figures. These costs have been audited and the actual cost of each service arrived at.
- 3.3 Each year a review of the actual service charge costs is undertaken as part of the budget setting process and recommendations made to the Council in respect of proposed charges.
- 3.4 Last year the increased cost of living and the energy crisis pushed the retail price index figures into double figures, we are pleased that this year the figure has reduced to single figures. The audit of actual costs

completed every year, ensures that any necessary adjustments are undertaken to ensure full cost recovery.

3.5 In the current economic environment, it must be recognised that for some residents these service charge increases may represent a significant financial strain. Those in receipt of housing benefit will receive housing benefit on increased service charges. Within Brockley PFI managed stock, there are approximately 315 live HB claims and approx. 374 tenants on Universal Credit. We say approx. because there are many tenants who are in receipt of UC but manage their finances themselves paying bills and rent directly. Pinnacle, have a Welfare benefits and financial inclusion team available to support all Regenter Brockley residents. Officers determine the need, whether it be benefit/Income maximisation, help with benefit awareness and eligibility, amongst many other financial support areas. This service is offered to all residents.

4. Leasehold Service Charges

4.1 The basis of the leasehold management charge has been reviewed and externally audited this summer to reflect the actual cost of the service.

4.2 The following table sets out the current average weekly charge and the proposed increase for the current services provided by Regenter B3.

4.3 The proposed service charges for 2024/25 have been aligned to the 2022/23 actual service charges costs.

4.4 The data in the table for leaseholders has been calculated to reflect the charge applied for inflation as allowed for within the contract at a rate of 9.9% (September 2023 RPI of 8.9% + 1.0%) Overall, charges are suggested to be increased by an average of £1.93 per week which would move the current average weekly charge from £19.48 to £21.41.

Service	Leasehold No.	Actual Weekly Amount (End of Year 2022/2023)	Increase (9.9%)	weekly increase	New Weekly Amount at 9.9%
Caretaking	429	£3.56	9.90%	£0.35	£3.91
Grounds Maintenance	435	£2.17	9.90%	£0.21	£2.38

Communal Lighting	397	£1.84	9.90%	£0.18	£2.02
Bulk Waste	429	£1.47	9.90%	£0.15	£1.62
Window Cleaning	237	£0.03	9.90%	£0.00	£0.03
Resident Involvement	584	£0.29	9.90%	£0.03	£0.32
Customer Services	584	£0.47	9.90%	£0.05	£0.52
Ground Rent	568	£0.00	9.90%	£0.00	£0.00
General Repairs	584	£3.35	9.90%	£0.33	£3.68
Technical Repairs	401	£0.87	9.90%	£0.09	£0.96
Entry Phone	140	£0.66	9.90%	£0.07	£0.73
Lift	242	£1.76	9.90%	£0.17	£1.93
Management Fee	584	£3.01	9.90%	£0.30	£3.31
Total		£19.48		£1.93	£21.41

5. Tenant Service Charges

- 5.1 Tenant service charges were separated out from rent (unpooled) in 2003/04. Tenants pay service charges for caretaking, grounds maintenance, communal lighting, bulk waste collection and window cleaning.
- 5.2 In addition, tenants pay a contribution of £0.15pw to the Lewisham Tenants Fund. At present there are no plans to increase the Tenants Fund charges.
- 5.3 As outlined in this report, the principle to be applied to service charges is that full cost recovery should be maintained wherever possible. The service charge increase applied for 2024/25 will be set in November 2023 to be applied from 1st April 2024. Pinnacle review service charges on a regular basis to ensure they are appropriately set and will continue to do so.
- 5.4 The data in the table for tenants as shown below, has been calculated to reflect the charge applied for inflation as allowed for within the contract at a rate of 9.9% (September 2023 RPI of 8.9% + 1.0%) Overall, charges are suggested to be increased by an average of 0.72 pence per week which would move the current average weekly charge from £7.53 to. £8.25.

Service	Current Weekly Charge based on the Actuals for 2022/23	Increase (9.9%)	weekly increase	New Weekly Amount at 9.9%
Caretaking	£3.56	9.90%	£0.35	£3.91
Grounds Maintenance	£2.17	9.90%	£0.21	£2.38
Communal Lighting	£0.14	9.90%	£0.01	£0.15
Bulk Waste	£1.48	9.90%	£0.15	£1.63
Window Cleaning	£0.03	9.90%	£0.00	£0.03
Tenants fund	£0.15		£0.00	£0.15
Total	£7.53		£0.72	£8.25

Feedback received from residents at the meeting on 2nd November will be included in the Housing Select Committee Report. Other comments received to the end of November 2023 will be included in the Mayor and Cabinet Report.

Please ensure all comments are sent to Brockley Customer Services by email at Brockley.customerservice@pinnaclegroup.co.uk or by post to Brockley Customer Services, 111 Endwell Rd, Brockley, SE4 2PE.

If you require any further information on this report, please contact:
 Kenneth Gill, Area Manager or Sandra Simpson, Project Manager-Leasehold
Brockley.customerservice@pinnaclegroup.co.uk
 020 4 518 1447

Briefing for TRA Chairs and the Leaseholder Forum Lewisham Council Rents and Service Charge increase proposal 2024/25 and proposal for the Tenants Fund and Garage charges		
Report Title	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Rent, Service Charge and Garage Rent Setting	
Contributors	Director Resident Engagement and Housing Service/Executive Director for Corporate Resources	
Class	Part 1	Date: 13 th November 2023

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out and explain the proposed rent increase of 7.7% for Lewisham Council Dwellings in 2024/25. This reflects the Government’s Rent Policy and the Regulatory Rent Standard, which allows registered providers to increase rents by the annually reported CPI + 1%.
- 1.2. To set out and explain the proposed service charge increase of 7.7% for both Lewisham Council tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.3. To confirm that the Tenants Fund contribution will remain at 15 pence per week.
- 1.3. To summarise the proposed 8.9% increase to garage rents.
- 1.3. TRA Chairs and members of the Leaseholder Forum are asked to note, comment, and provide feedback on these proposals. Feedback will be reported to the Housing Select Committee at its meeting on 28th November 2023 and to the Mayor and Cabinet in February 2023.

2 Context

Dwelling rents

- 2.1 Lewisham Council is a Registered Provider (RP) of social housing and is required to comply with the Government’s Rent Policy. The Rent Policy stipulates the maximum increase which may be applied each year.
- 2.2 The current Rent Policy permits RPs to increase rents by a maximum of CPI (Consumer Price Index) + 1%. The CPI figure is taken from the nationally published CPI figure each September for the year preceding the rent increase.
- 2.3 The CPI figure for September 2023 was 6.7%. This means that the Council can increase rents for 2024-25 by 7.7% (6.7% +1%).
- 2.4 Last year the Government ruled that rent increases for 2023-24 must be capped at 7%, even though the CPI figure was 10.1%, during a year of

exceptionally high inflation. The aim of the cap was to reduce the burden on households. The effect of this though was to move the burden to RPs, who were still impacted by high inflation in funding their service delivery.

- 2.5 The Government has not so far indicated that it intends to cap the increase for 2024-25. The Council recognises the fact that tenants still face high living costs, however the Council will need to apply the maximum allowable increase of 7.7% for 2024-25, to be able to afford to continue to deliver services to residents, maintain and invest in the housing stock and make sure that the Housing Revenue Account is sustainable in the medium and long term.

Service charges

- 2.6 Service charges are payments made by residents for services received in connection with the occupation of their homes. Examples include the management and upkeep of communal areas, health and safety functions and repairs to/investment in the fabric of flat blocks. It also includes a range of services to estates. This may include communal heating and lighting.
- 2.7 Some of these services are required to be delivered for tenants as part of the tenancy agreement and/or the landlord's legal obligations. Where this is the case, the costs will be included as part of the weekly rent charge. Some additional services are 'de-pooled' from dwelling rents, which means they are payable on top of the rent charge. Leaseholders are required to contribute to the costs as set out in their individual Lease Agreement.
- 2.8 The Council is legally required only to pass on charges which are reasonably incurred. To make a reasonable assessment of what the charges should be, the Council calculates estimated service charges for the following year by looking at the actual charges which were incurred during the full previous year for which they have audited accounts and adding on an inflationary amount. For 2024-5, it is proposed the increase will be 7.7.%. Actual charges can only be fully determined at the end of the year once the services have been delivered. Once the actual charges are determined, Leaseholders will either receive a credit to their accounts for any overpaid monies or will receive a bill to make up the difference, where the estimated charges were less than the actual costs.
- 2.9 The Regulator of Social Housing does not govern service charge increases in the same way as it governs rent increases. However, its guidance within the Rent Standard is that registered providers should endeavour to limit service charge increases for tenants within the limit of the increase it applies to rent. As explained above, this is currently CPI + 1%.
- 2.10 Where the service charges include repairs and maintenance costs, the Council has used an average of the past three years' costs, to help eliminate any unusual fluctuations in costs. The inflationary uplift is added to this. For services such as asbestos surveys, fire risk assessments and pest control, these costs will be charged in line with the contract values, as charged at the time.

- 2.11 Due to the high cost of procuring and delivering these services in recent years, the ongoing cost of living pressures and the current high CPI figure when compared to previous years, the Council is not passing on the full cost of all works to tenants through its service charges. However, this will be reviewed in future years when inflation (CPI) comes down.

Tenants' fund contribution

- 2.12 The Tenants' Fund was set up more than 20 years ago to provide financial support for residents' associations and other activities. The Fund is administered by an independent Tenants' Group which has registered as a business with Companies House. All tenants contribute 15p per week to the fund, from their rent payment. No proposals have been received to vary the current levy for the Tenants' Fund contribution. The detail is covered in a separate report.

Garage Rents

- 2.13 Garage rents are set by the Council's Estates Team. Garage rent increases are not included in the Regulator's Rent Standard nor the Government's Rent Policy as they are not dwellings.
- 2.14 It is proposed that garage rents are increased by 8.9%. This represents an average increase of £1.58 per week. The proposed increase will raise an additional £150,000 after blue badge discounts have been considered.
- 2.15 The income goes into the Council's General Fund and not the Housing Revenue Account. The proposed increase to garage rents is covered in a separate report.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the following corporate strategy objective:
- Tackling the housing crisis – Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.
- 3.2 The contents of this report also support the objectives of the Housing Strategy 2020-26 and ensuring a properly funded HRA.
- Delivering the homes that Lewisham needs
 - Improving the quality, standard and safety of housing
 - Supporting our residents to live safe, independent, and active lives
 - Strengthening communities and embracing diversity.
- 3.3 In order to deliver on its Housing Strategy, the Council must produce a balanced HRA Business Plan, which by law is not permitted to go into deficit. As outlined above, it should be noted that the HRA cost base for management and maintenance, materials and capital investment will be increased due to

inflationary pressures. Supply chain and labour costs remain challenging due to the difficult economic climate and the ongoing impact of Brexit and the geo-political situation in the world. There are also additional cost pressures associated with delivering on the zero-carbon agenda and the increased regulatory burden arising from the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and other legislative changes such as the Building Safety Act 2022. In addition, debt interest charges will also increase based on the need to borrow for HRA investment needs and the increase in interest rates.

Proposal for rent increases

- 4.1 In line with the formula rent calculation policy, rents for 2024-25 will rise by 7.7% based on CPI of 6.7% (as of September 2023) + 1%, as allowable under the Government’s Rent Policy.
- 4.2 A 7.7% increase in average rents for HRA dwelling stock 2024/25 equates to an average increase of £8.57pw over a 52-week period. This will increase the full year average dwelling rent for the London Borough of Lewisham from £111.33pw to £119.91pw. The proposed increase will result in additional income of £6.140m for the HRA.
- 4.4 The following table provides details of the 7.7% average rent rise by bedroom numbers for housing stock in the HRA as of 1st April 2023.

Bed size	Average Rent 2023/24	Average Rent 2024/25	£ Change	% Change
Bedsit	£83.30	£89.72	£6.42	7.7%
1	£97.70	£105.23	£7.53	7.7%
2	£110.20	£118.69	£8.49	7.7%
3	£128.61	£138.51	£9.90	7.7%
4	£144.51	£155.64	£11.13	7.7%
5	£164.40	£177.06	£12.66	7.7%
6	£170.61	£183.75	£13.14	7.7%
7	£175.73	£189.27	£13.54	7.7%
Average Total	£111.33	£119.91	£8.57	7.7%

5 Proposal for Service Charge increases

- 5.1 The Council will increase services charges by 7.7%, in line with the rent increase.
- 5.2 The table below sets out the estimated service charges for 2024-25, when compared to the current charges for 2023-4.

Existing Service	Tenant(T)/Leaseholders(LH)	2022/23 Actual		2024/25 Estimate		Increase from 2022/23 actual(%)
		Weekly Charge	Actual 2022/23	Weekly Charge	Estimate 2024/25	
Asbestos surveys	LH	£0.06	£12,219.92	£0.12	£46,814.43	Budget Estimate
Bulk waste	T & LH	£1.65	£373,032.73	£1.77	£401,756.25	7.7
Caretaking	T & LH	£7.74	£1,677,294.49	£8.33	£1,806,446.17	7.7
Drying room rents	LH	£1.35	£140.00	£1.45	£150.78	7.7
Entryphone	LH	£0.20	£22,307.87	£0.22	£24,025.58	7.7
Fire risk assessment	LH	£0.24	£58,245.06	£0.23	£178,269.02	Budget Estimate
Grounds maintainance	LH	£1.38	£313,573.09	£1.48	£337,718.22	7.7
Ground rent	LH	£0.19	£50,563.74	£0.19	£50,563.74	N/A
Insurance	LH	£0.78	£207,736.33	£0.84	£223,732.03	7.7
Lift	LH	£3.16	£177,916.48	£3.41	£191,616.05	7.7
Management	LH	£2.72	£729,161.09	£2.93	£785,306.49	7.7
Pest control	T & LH	£0.31	£57,124.19	£2.11	£32,591.45	Budget Estimate
Repairs & Maintenance - Building	LH	£3.12	£968,696.25	£2.94	£912,647.49	3 yr ave. plus 7.7%
Storage shed rents	LH	£0.48	£572.00	£0.52	£616.04	7.7
Sweeping	LH	£1.36	£305,703.71	£1.46	£329,242.90	7.7
Technical repairs	LH	£1.11	£351,821.38	£1.15	£362,231.45	3 yr ave. plus 7.7%
Window cleaning	T & LH	£0.04	£9,997.92	£0.07	£9,245.94	Budget Estimate
Total excluding Energy Charges		£25.90	£5,316,106.25	£29.23	£5,692,974.02	
Heating	T & LH	£15.95	£175,036.39	£17.18	£188,514.19	7.7
Communal lighting	T & LH	£1.34	£299,189.51	£1.44	£322,227.10	7.7
Total Energy Charges		£17.29	£474,225.90	£18.62	£510,741.29	
Grand Total		£43.19	£5,790,332.15	£47.85	£6,203,715.31	

5 Efficiencies & Savings Proposals for 2024/25

- 5.1 The Council is playing its part on giving tenants and leaseholders value for money, whilst ensuring that resources are available to meet costs and investment needs for 2024/25 and future years.
- 5.2 There are ongoing discussions regarding appropriate savings. Any savings and efficiencies that are delivered against the current financial budget will be reinvested back into the HRA.
- 5.3 An update of the HRA Strategy and proposed rent and service charge increases will be reported to Mayor and Cabinet as part of the HRA Rents and budget strategy report in February 2024.

6 Recommendation

- 6.3 Residents are invited to comment on the proposals. Residents' comments from the meeting held on 13th November will be included in the Housing Select Committee (HSC) Report, which will be presented at the meeting on 28th November 2023. Where additional comments are received after the cut-off date for the preparation of the HSC report, the comments will be fed back through the Mayor and Cabinet budget report. The cut-off date for the Mayor and Cabinet Report is 30th November 2023. Mayor and Cabinet will be requested to approve the increase of 7.7% for both dwelling rents and service charges for tenants and leaseholders.

If you require any more information about this report, please contact **XXXXXX**

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INCLUSIVE REGENERATION Estates Team Report		
Report Title	Rental Increases for Garages from April 2024 –Lewisham Council and Regenter RB3	
Key Decision	Yes	Item No.
Contributors	Directorate of Place	
Class		Date: October2023

1. Purpose and Summary of the report

The purpose of this report is to advise the resident panel of the proposed increase in the rent paid by tenants for domestic garages owned by the Council for the next financial year. For the past few years, the garage rents have been increased in line with the Retail Prices Index, which currently stands at 8.9%. For the last financial year, the garage increase was capped at 10% although RPI for the year was 12.6%

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council approves, in principle, an increase in rent for the garage portfolio of 8.9%, to be effective from April 2024.

Blue Badge holders will continue to receive a 50% deduction on the weekly rent.

3. Policy Context

The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the following corporate strategy objectives:

- Building an inclusive local economy – Everyone can access high-quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.
- Making Lewisham greener – Everyone enjoys our green spaces and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.

4. Background

For the forthcoming financial year from April 2024, it is intended that the increase applied is 8.9%, which is in line with the Retail Prices Index.

There are approximately 134 Council garage sites in the borough, comprising 182 garage blocks. There are 2,379 garages in total, which are split 2,011 to Lewisham Council, 311 Brockley Regenter and 57 TMO's. The split between social tenants/ leaseholders and non- residential tenants is approximately 70%/30%

The current waiting list for Lewisham Council garages is in excess of 3,000 applicants.

A housing tenant with LB Lewisham pays the basic price for a garage (subject to any specific discounts agreed) and a non-housing tenant pays the basic price with the addition of 20% VAT. Blue Badge holders receive a 50% deduction on the weekly rent. The application of a discount is a discretionary decision on behalf of the Council, as garages are not a core social dwelling provision.

The highest rent charged is £ £27.39 per week and the lowest is £ 6.77 per week. However, some garages are charged at less than the lowest rate per week. These are discounted rates (50% of the full charge) for tenants with blue badges.

5. Financial Implications

The current annual rent roll for the garage portfolio is £2.26M, based on a basic average standard charge of £17.70 per week per garage (i.e. before discounts are applied).

If the rents are increased by 8.9%, as proposed, in April 2024, the revised annual rent roll will increase to approximately £2.41M, or from £17.70 per week to £19.28 per week per garage, an uplift of £1.58 per week on average, and a total increase of approximately £190,000 on the annual rent roll, or £150,000 after blue badge holder discounts have been applied.

6. Legal Implications

The Council's duties in relation to the consultation of tenants on matters of housing management, as set out in Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, do not apply to rent levels, nor to charges for services or facilities provided by the authority. There is therefore no requirement to consult with secure tenants regarding the proposed increase in charges. The Council still needs to act reasonably, and the decision maker should therefore be satisfied that the increase is reasonable and justified. The general principle is that the Council should be seeking best value.

The Equality Act 2012 (the Act) introduced a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty continues to be a "have regard duty", and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is

not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has recently issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled "Practice". The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice-and-technical-guidance/>

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- The essential guide to the public sector equality duty
- Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making
- Engagement and the equality duty
- Equality objectives and the equality duty
- Equality information and the equality duty

The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sectorequality-duty/guidance-on-the-equality-duty/>

7. Crime and Disorder Implications

There are no specific crime and disorder implications in this report. However, levels of voids could increase in the future if there is a lack of investment. Poorly maintained garages with high vacancy rates can in turn lead to increased levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

8. Equalities Implications

The proposed 8.9% increase will be applied across the portfolio to residents and non-residents. Blue badge holders will continue to receive a 50% discount on the weekly rent as existing.

9. Environmental Implications

There are no specific environmental implications in this report.

10. Conclusion

The proposed rental increase is considered to reflect market rent and be sustainable and will raise additional revenue from the portfolio of approximately £190,000, or £150,000 net after blue badge discounts have been applied.

11. Further Information

If there are any queries on this report, please contact David Lee david.lee@lewisham.gov.uk



Housing Select Committee

Report title: Building for Lewisham Programme Update

Date: 28 November 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: ALL

Contributors: Director of Inclusive Regeneration

Outline and recommendations

It is recommended that Housing Select Committee review and note the report.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

Mayor and Cabinet, 11 July 2018 - New Homes Programme

Mayor and Cabinet, 15 January 2020 - Building for Lewisham Programme

Mayor and Cabinet, 9 July 2020 - Building for Lewisham Update

Mayor and Cabinet, 12 January 2022 – Building for Lewisham Update

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update to Housing Select Committee on progress of the Building for Lewisham Programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Housing Select Committee review and note the report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The Council's Corporate Strategy (2022-2026) explains our values, priorities and focus for the next four years, our learning from how the borough worked together in

response to the pandemic, and how we plan to continue improving our services for residents, businesses and partners in an ever more challenging environment.

- 3.2. Above all, the strategy outlines the principles that showcase who we are as an organisation; our focus on equality, putting our residents at the centre of everything we do and ensuring transparency and sound financial management are embedded within all key decisions the council makes.
- 3.3. Delivering this strategy includes the following priority outcomes that relate to the provision of new affordable homes:
 - Cleaner and Greener – working to tackle the climate crisis through our development policies.
 - A Strong Local Economy – continue to expand our apprenticeship programme and invest in our high streets, doing what we can to be the best place in London for new businesses.
 - Quality Housing and Safer Communities – we will deliver more social homes for Lewisham residents, providing as many people as possible with safe, comfortable accommodation that they can be proud of and happy to live in.
 - Open Lewisham – we will co-design services and ensure strong consultation processes that reach out to people whose voices are seldom heard.
- 3.4. Housing Strategy (2020-2026), includes the following themes that relate to the provision of new affordable homes:
 1. delivering the homes that Lewisham needs.
 2. preventing homelessness and meeting housing need.
 3. improving the quality, standard and safety of housing.
 4. supporting our residents to live safe, independent and active lives.
 5. strengthening communities and embracing diversity.

4. Background

- 4.1. Building on the success of the New Homes Programme which delivered the first Council homes to be built in Lewisham for a generation, the Council commenced the Building for Lewisham Programme to accelerate the delivery of genuinely affordable new homes through direct delivery and in partnership with other organisations.
- 4.2. The programme formally commenced in January 2020, with the Council working in partnership with Lewisham Homes on the direct delivery aspect of the programme.
- 4.3. Since February 2023 Lewisham Homes' delivery function merged with the Council's Strategic Development team. The existing and future direct delivery aspect of the Building for Lewisham programme is now being delivered in house within the Council's Place directorate.
- 4.4. Officers have undertaken to update Members on progress of the programme on a regular basis. This report is an overview of the programme, highlighting key successes and challenges over the past 12 months and the forecast for the next 12 months.

5. Updates

- 5.1. The past 12 months have been significant for the Building for Lewisham programme. The detail provided below highlights some of the key successes and challenges:

Successes

- 5.2. In February 2023, ahead of the wider transfer of services from Lewisham Homes to the Council, the Development Team at Lewisham Homes merged with the Council's

Strategic Housing Team. The merging of the teams was designed to realise efficiencies in the way the programme is managed and reduce some of the complexity of processes and transactions between two organisations. The intent was also to make the most of the expertise and skills that sat between the two organisations, ensuring there was closer working to achieve the best housing outcomes. The merging of the teams has proved a success with a range of efficiencies realised and despite a difficult outlook for the development programme, the now combined team is working well to retain the programme's focus on genuinely affordable housing delivery.

- 5.3. On the direct delivery aspect of the programme, there have been 164 completions in the last 12 months:

Scheme	Tenure	New Homes	Completion
Creekside	Social Rent	22	May 2023
Creekside	Shared Ownership	34	May 2023
Mayow Road	Temporary Accommodation	26	April 2023
Mayow Road	Supported Housing	6	April 2023
Kenton Court	Social Rent	25	May 2022
Somerville	Social Rent	23	March 2023
Knapdale Close	Social Rent	17	January 2023
Silverdale	Social Rent	6	November 2022
Grace Path	Social Rent	5	November 2022

- 5.4. As above, the majority of the direct delivery homes have been for social rent but the Council has also delivered other tenures in the programme. The Creekside development is a mixture of social rent homes and shared ownership homes. Whilst shared ownership has been an intermediate affordable housing product delivered by our Housing Association partners for many years, the Creekside development has been the first directly delivered and managed shared ownership Council homes. At the time of writing, 31 of the 34 homes have been sold, demonstrating a strong appetite for this Council owned tenure providing affordable homes for those that do not qualify to join the Housing Register or are able to afford market sale housing.
- 5.5. The mixed development at Mayow Road has delivered much needed, good quality, in borough temporary accommodation as well as specialist supporting housing for adults with a high level of need. The specialist homes have been delivered in partnership with the NHS and colleagues in the Adult Social Care team providing 24-hour onsite support to allow residents to live with a degree of independence that they could not previously access. Both elements of the development not only provide good quality, new housing for our residents, but also provide significant budget savings for the Council and the NHS against private providers.
- 5.6. In the same period, the Council also undertook the highly successful Right to Buy Buyback scheme which saw officers seek and purchase properties that had previously been purchased under the Right to Buy for use as temporary accommodation for households to whom the Council have a housing duty. There were 111 properties which were purchased.
- 5.7. Working with our partners, there were also completions on schemes at Brasted Close and Meadow House. Brasted Close was delivered in partnership with the London Community Land Trust and Lewisham Citizens to provide 11 discount market sale

homes to local residents, based on the local median wage rather than the market rate. Meadow House has been delivered by Pinnacle Spaces and provided 43 new rented homes.

- 5.8. In the last 12-14 months, planning permissions have been granted for direct delivery schemes at Drakes Court, Fairlawn (former nursery site), Ladywell and Valentines Court. Combined, these permissions are for 163 new homes.

Current challenges

- 5.9. The Council has a mixed approach to delivering the new homes that our residents need through the Building for Lewisham Programme. This is through direct delivery, partner delivery, joint ventures and acquisitions. This has meant that the programme has not been impacted as would be the case if there was a single route to delivery. Never-the-less, there are challenges to delivery which are broadly set out below.
- 5.10. There are well documented economic factors which have impacted the wider economy but have particularly impacted the building sector since the Building for Lewisham Programme commenced. The key factors have been the increase in the cost of borrowing, increase in the cost of materials/labour, low grant levels and the reduction of property values.
- 5.11. In addition to the direct economic factors, there is also a shortage of skilled labour and developers are now required to interpret new or proposed building regulations which is causing uncertainty and additional cost. For example, developers are having to introduce second staircases to schemes which has required new designs and/or renewed planning consents. This is impacting the viability of schemes and causing delays.
- 5.12. Regrettably, these external factors have led to an impact on the Building for Lewisham Programme. The contractors delivering the sites at Edward Street, Home Park and Algernon Road have gone into administration. Other contractors who are on site, are struggling with the rise in costs causing delays to delivery and review of contracts. Of recent, when officers have sought to tender returns have exceeded budget expectations.
- 5.13. Officers are working on a range of options to overcome these challenges. These include securing the highest possible grant rates, maximising the use of Right to Buy receipts, pausing some pre-construction sites, undertaking thorough design reviews, addressing viability through maximising non-grant income and reviewing our procurement strategy.

Next 12 months

- 5.14. Despite the current challenges, the Building for Lewisham Programme will continue to deliver new affordable homes. Following is a table of the 456 new genuinely affordable rented homes which are currently in delivery and are expected to be completed within the next 12 months:

Scheme	Delivery method	New affordable rent homes	Expected completion date
Church Grove	Partner (RUSS)	6	January 2024
Endwell Road	Direct delivery	9	February 2024
Rushey Green	Partner (Phoenix)	45	February 2024
Bampton Estate	Direct delivery	39	February 2024
Heathside and Lethbridge	Partner (Peabody)	171	November 2023-March 2024
Housing	Direct delivery	70	March 2024

acquisitions			
Excalibur Phase 3	Partner (L&Q)	36	May 2024
Shaftesbury Centre	Partner (J49)	33	June 2024
Algernon Road	Direct delivery	4	June 2024
Elderton Road	Direct delivery	5	August 2024
Tidemill Phases 1 and 2	Partner (Peabody)	38	January 2023-August 2024

- 5.15. Additionally, within the next 12 months planning applications are programmed for the schemes at Mayfield, Greystead Road, Thomas Lane Yard, Manor Avenue and the Achilles Estate.
- 5.16. The proposed regeneration of the Achilles Street Estate in New Cross would be the single biggest direct delivery scheme in the programme with c300 homes being planned. Officers have been working with the Design Team and residents to progress to a planning application currently forecast to be submitted in Summer 2024. At this time, there are significant viability issues which need to be addressed. A full report on progress of the Achilles Street scheme is expected to be presented to Mayor and Cabinet early in the new year.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. The Building for Lewisham Programme is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is affordable within the HRA business plan and General Fund.
- 6.2. Predicted scheme costs, grant funding (including 141 Right to Buy receipts) and borrowing requirements are consolidated on a quarterly basis to track the progress of individual scheme, as well as progress at a programme level.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report, which is for noting.

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1. The provision of new social housing in the borough has a positive equalities impact. Households on the Council's Housing Register are more likely to have a protected characteristic than the wider population as access to the register is limited to those most in housing need.
- 8.2. It should be noted that the Council is committed to ensuring our developments will be inclusive and feature accessible and adaptable homes that will meet the needs of our residents throughout their life.
- 8.3. Through the process of applying for planning permission, there will be a robust assessment of potential equalities impacts.

9. Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1. Existing and future planning consents obtained are and will be in line with the standards expected by the Council and the GLA.
- 9.2. Any environmental implications from the delivery of new homes are considered and addressed on a scheme-by-scheme basis through the design and planning process. There are therefore no additional environmental implications arising directly from this report.

10. Crime and disorder implications

10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

11.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Report author and contact

12.1. Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration

Telephone Number: 0208 314 7279

Email: patrick.dubeck@lewisham.gov.uk



Housing Select Committee

Housing Futures Report

Date: 28 November 2023

Key decision: Yes

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Gillian Douglas, Executive Director of Housing Services, Fenella Beckman, Director of Housing Strategy, Lynne Sacale, Housing Futures Programme Lead,

Outline and recommendations

This report gives a final update of the Housing Futures Programme, the transfer of Lewisham Homes into the Council on October 1 2023.

It is recommended that members note:

- a) Outcomes of transition
- b) Governance arrangements
- c) Costings
- d) Lessons learned

1. Summary

- 1.1. The decision was made to bring Lewisham Homes services into the Council under a new Housing Directorate on 1 October 2023.
- 1.2. This report sets out progress, outcomes and lessons that have been learned during this process.
- 1.3. A phased approach to transition circa 550 staff allowed a better understanding of services and to be business ready for the integration in October 2023.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note the content of this report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the Corporate Strategy (2022 – 2026).
- 3.2. Lewisham's Housing Strategy includes the following themes:
 - Delivering the homes that Lewisham needs
 - Preventing Homelessness and meeting housing need
 - Improving the quality, standard and safety of housing
 - Supporting our residents to live safe, independent and active lives
 - Strengthening communities and embracing diversity

4. Background

- 4.1. Drivers for the change included the need to meet the new regulatory and legal requirements which have significantly increased the pressure of accountability on landlords and improved quality of housing services. The new requirements also ensure tenants and leaseholders are a key part of governance and scrutiny arrangements, all with the aim of ensuring tenants and leaseholders have a voice and remain at the heart of the service.
- 4.2. The first phase of the transfer involved bringing across the Lewisham Homes Development team, consisting of 12 staff, into the Strategic Housing and Growth team on 1 February 2023. It should be noted that the transfer of the development team was separate to the work being carried out to review the transition of Lewisham Homes into the Council and changes made to the delivery of the function did not require engagement with tenants and leaseholders. However, the transition itself did provide useful learning for the future transition of staff.
- 4.3. The Development team were followed by some of the support services being transferred on 1 May 2023, including ICT, Finance, Technology Digital and Data, Temporary Accommodation and the clienting of Lewisham's two Tenancy Management Organisations; in total this phase of the transfer consisted of 44 staff.
- 4.4. The final cohort of staff transitioned approximately 500 staff, largely covering a range of housing landlord functions, into the newly formed Housing Directorate on 1 October 2023.

5. Housing Futures

5.1. Outcomes/ achievements

- 5.1.1. A corporate led programme (Housing Futures) with dedicated resources and robust governance processes was implemented to oversee the transition. This was to ensure staff had a positive experience and were provided with the right tools to do their jobs, and that residents experienced as little disruption to services as possible.
- 5.1.2. In preparation of the transition a new Housing Directorate and structure was set up. Recruitment commenced in March for an Executive Director of Housing Services and the Council welcomed Gillian Douglas into the new role in mid-September.

- 5.1.3. Two new Director posts have also now been recruited to: Director of Housing Quality and Investment and the Director of Housing Resident Engagement and Services. These two new posts join the existing Director of Housing Strategy and completes the new Housing Directorate.
- 5.1.4. A total of 554 staff transferred under TUPE from Lewisham Homes to the Council. There were also 35 vacancies that transferred.
- 5.1.5. All staff received their local induction between the 3rd and 18th October 2023. 60% of these attended in person and the remaining 40% attended virtually. Local inductions were led by the new Executive Director for Housing Services which was very well received by the staff. *"It was nice to meet Senior Management in person as it makes it feel more genuine."*
- 5.1.6. The majority also attended the corporate induction on 25th October and the remaining staff will attend in November.
- 5.1.7. 59 Managers have also attended the Governance and Finance training led by the Director of Law and Corporate Governance and the Acting Executive Director for Corporate Resources. Further specialist training is also being rolled out, including procurement, finance, recruitment and selection and appraisals. All staff are expected to complete mandatory training which includes Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Display Screen Equipment, Health and Safety, Unconscious Bias, General Data Protection Regulation and Information Security.
- 5.1.8. All staff were successfully transferred to the Council payroll and paid on 18th October after detailed and careful planning and testing. A small number of staff queries were received and dealt with before mid-day, printed pay slips had duplicated lines, which has been rectified for next month. All on-line payslips were accurate. People Services and Finance teams worked collaboratively to ensure the smooth transition.
- 5.1.9. A total of 545 staff (as of 30 October) migrated across to the Council IT systems, over a period of four weeks. Minimum disruption has been achieved due to dedicated resources and additional purchase of tools and equipment.
- 5.1.10. The IT transition includes successful migration of operational, resident and historical data, 65 shared mailboxes and 138 MS Teams sites.
- 5.1.11. All phonelines have been active and monitored throughout transition to receive incoming customer contact; wait times and number of calls answered impacted within expected levels. The out of hours emergency response has also been in place and functioning effectively throughout.
- 5.1.12. The Customer Relations inbox for complaints and councillor enquiries was unavailable for four days from Monday 9th to Thursday 12th October. IT worked with the Housing team to prioritise and rectify as quickly as possible.
- 5.1.13. A letter was sent to all residents in September to update them of transition to the Council.
- 5.1.14. Resident engagement continues and all governance arrangements transferred to the Council. Meetings have taken place with key stakeholders including Leaseholder Forums and TRA Chairs. Other scheduled meetings include the Service and Performance Panel (12 December 2023), the new Housing Board (23 November) and a TRA Chairs meeting on 30th November.

5.2. **Costs associated with transition.**

- 5.2.1. Programme costs have been carefully monitored and reported on a fortnightly basis. Actual spend is currently being finalised and will be within the approved amount as reported to Mayor and Cabinet in June 2023.
- 5.2.2. The main areas of costs relating to transition were mainly attributed to IT to enable staff in both organisations to continue to have the technology, systems,

applications and hardware needed without interruption to the service. Other main areas are attributed to programme resources, including professional services and one-off redundancy costs.

5.2.3. High level costs to be covered in Financial Implications.

5.3. **Lessons learned.**

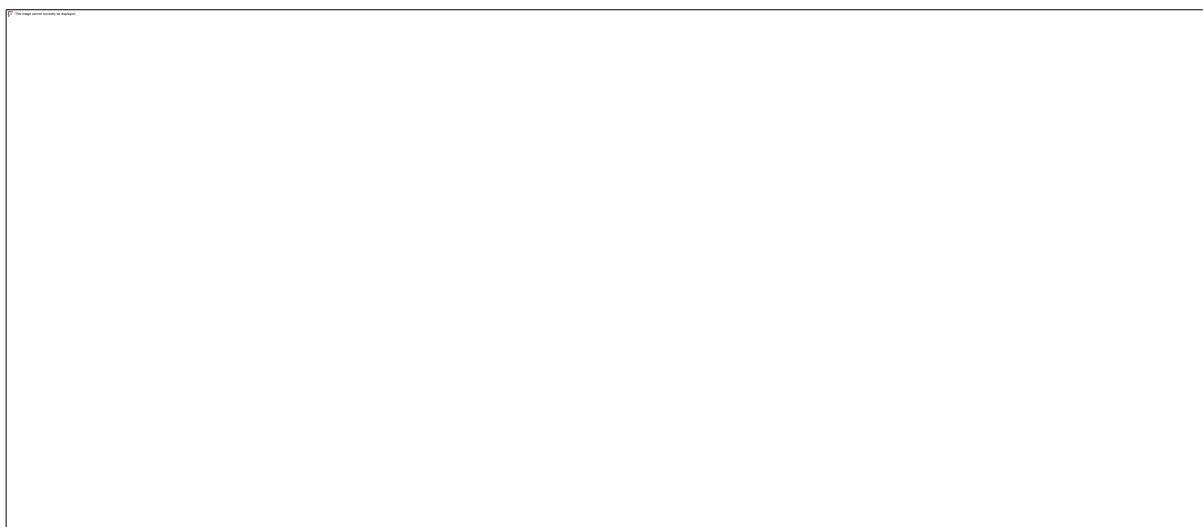
- 5.3.1. The phased approach to the transition of staff allowed us to learn from the integration challenges experienced in the previous phase and give us much better understanding for the final phase of transferring 500+ staff in October.
- 5.3.2. We were also able to learn from other Councils where ALMO transfers have already taken place. These learnings included early engagement, careful planning of transfer of data, having sufficient resources and understanding longer term and realistic expectations. Where ALMO transfers have already happened, Councils review Business and Improvement Plans year on year and estimate at least 3–5-year programmes before realising real benefits, including financial. Success to benefit realisation appears to be those where they have a clear programme of change with robust performance monitoring and reporting in place.
- 5.3.3. Other ALMO transfers did not have to set up their IT systems, re-network buildings or move to different accounting systems. Successful management of the migration of core housing service IT applications into the Councils' IT estate is attributed to dedicated resources and additional purchase of tools and equipment.
- 5.3.4. Minimum disruption to staff, services and residents has been achieved and, in the main, staff have continued to have the tools, systems, applications and hardware needed to do their jobs. To allow key council officers to maintain service continuity whilst also overseeing implementation of the transition, having the additional, dedicated programme resources allowed for better transition of services and robust handover with no lost learning.
- 5.3.5. Having clear lines of communication and approval/ decision making processes in place and formally recorded helped to improve relationships and improved ways of collaborative working. The dedicated Communications Officer proved positive to engage and inform staff with useful 'how to' guides, frequently asked questions and induction sessions welcomed by the transferred staff.
- 5.3.6. Timing of transition could have been better mapped and prioritised before the decision was made to bring the housing service in-house. Having clear deadlines and milestones may have allowed earlier improved focus and buy in from all parties. However, shorter timescales may have led to a rushed and less successful transition than the one we have achieved in October.
- 5.3.7. As transition deadlines became closer, engagement and discovery work increased and allowed better understanding and detail of service delivery. Earlier exposure to this information would have allowed for improvements and transformation planning to have commenced sooner. Maintaining definition between transition and business as usual has supported the success of transition, although may delay the timescales of benefit realisation across the service.

5.4. **Governance arrangements**

- 5.4.1. All Terms of Reference and responsibilities for the previous formal committees within Lewisham Homes (Audit, Risk and Assurance, Governance and People and Investment Committee) have been reviewed and are in line with existing terms of reference of the Council's established decision-making bodies: Mayor and Cabinet, Audit and Risk or the relevant Scrutiny Select Committee.
- 5.4.2. All resident engagement committees have been renamed 'panels' to ensure consistent use of language within the Council. These are service led under the new Executive Director of Housing Services. Stakeholder led engagement also falls under the new Directorate and will go through full review in line with new

regulation and improvements required.

- 5.4.3. The diagram below sets out the Resident Engagement structure that is now in place.



6. Next Steps

6.1. Our commitments

- 6.1.1. In a letter sent to residents in September 2022, ahead of consultation for the transfer of services, the Council referred to being a good landlord and wanting to set an example for landlords of social housing in the borough. It included the aim of keeping properties in good repair, maintaining the safety of buildings, handling tenant complaints effectively, engaging with tenants helpfully and with respect and taking a responsible role in managing the neighbourhood.
- 6.1.2. The letter made commitments to tenants and leaseholders including the following:
- 6.1.2.1. We will establish a Residents' Board and a new Tenant and Residents Association Forum to represent tenants and leaseholders and work directly with the Council as it develops the housing management service, ensuring residents are involved in all key decisions relating to how their homes are managed.
- 6.1.2.2. We will invest the savings we make as a result of bringing housing management back in house to improve the service you receive.
- 6.1.2.3. We will ensure that all residents continue to have a named contact who knows their area. Residents of housing blocks will also have a nominated person to deal with all safety concerns and ensure residents feel safe in their home.
- 6.1.2.4. We will publish a four-year investment programme of planned works to improve homes including external redecoration and planned maintenance.
- 6.1.2.5. We will improve tenants' overall satisfaction with their housing management service by making it easier for you to communicate with us, completing repairs more quickly and making staff more visible on your estate over the next four years.
- 6.1.2.6. We will respond to 98% of all complaints within 10 days. Where the complaint needs further investigation and a full response within 10 days is not possible, we will let you know within five days.
- 6.1.3. Since that letter, and in line with Housing Futures updates during 2023, the transition programme has been the focus and priority for the Council,

concentrating on TUPE and the mechanism of bringing in the housing service.

- 6.1.4. Now the transition is complete, our focus can shift, and our priority is to revisit those commitments and align to our Housing Strategy. We are committed to a programme of transformation and will work with tenants and leaseholders to prioritise those promises and deliver to the best of our ability.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. The progress update report in June 2023 estimated the cost of transitioning services from Lewisham Homes to Lewisham Council between £3.3m - £3.9m. Final transition costs are expected to be within the amounts set out.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. There are no specific legal implications for this report which is for noting.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1. The Council's Single Equality Framework provides an overarching framework and focus for the Council's work on equalities and helps ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 9.2. The consultation and engagement process with tenants and leaseholders complied with the Council's policies.
- 9.3. The programme of transferring Lewisham Homes services back to the Council was developed to ensure it complied with Council policy.

10. Climate change and environmental implications

- 10.1. There are no direct environmental impacts arising from this report, although there are significant challenges in ensuring the housing stock can be improved to meet the Council's ambitions. Improving efficiency of the management of the housing services will provide greater capacity for the HRA to be able to invest in the stock.

11. Crime and disorder implications

- 11.1. There are no direct implications relating to crime or disorder issues.

12. Health and wellbeing implications

- 12.1. There are no direct implications relating to health and wellbeing issues.

13. Report author and contact

- 13.1. Lynne Sacale, Housing Futures Programme Lead.
Lynne.sacale@lewisham.gov.uk 07968 428141



Housing Select Committee

Report title: Select Committee Work Programme Report

Date: 28 November 2023

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Contributor: Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report gives Committee members an opportunity to review the Committee's work programme and make any modifications required.

The Committee is asked to:

- Review the work programme attached at Appendix B.
- Consider the items for the next meeting and specify the information required.
- Review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix E to consider whether there are any items for further scrutiny.

Timeline of decision-making

Housing Select Committee Work Programme 2023/24 – draft agreed on 06.06.23

Housing Select Committee Work Programme 2023/24 – agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 04.07.23

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Committee proposed a draft work programme at the beginning of the municipal year. This was considered alongside the draft work programmes of the other select committees and agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2023.

- 1.2. The work programme should be reviewed at each meeting to take account of changing priorities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:
 - Review the work programme attached at Appendix B.
 - Consider the items for the next meeting and specify what evidence is required, including being clear about the information the committee wishes to be included in officer reports.
 - Review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix E to consider whether there are any items for further scrutiny.

3. Work Programming

- 3.1. When reviewing the work programme, the Committee should consider the following:

The Committee's terms of reference (Appendix A)

- 3.2. The Committee's areas of responsibility, include, but are not limited to:

- Homelessness and rough sleeping
- Social housing
- Affordable housing
- Private rented sector

- 3.3. The Committee has a key role in scrutinising the performance and supporting the development of the council's housing-related strategies and policies. It also has a role in engaging and reflecting the views of residents in relation to housing-related matters.

Whether any urgent issues have arisen that require scrutiny

- 3.4. If there is any urgent issue that is brought to the Committee's attention, it should consider the prioritisation process (Appendix C) and the Effective Scrutiny Guidelines (Appendix D) before deciding on its priority.

Whether a committee meeting is the most effective forum for scrutinising the issue

- 3.5. When scrutinising an issue of interest, the Committee should consider if there are any alternative methods for receiving information on the issue that would be more appropriate. For example, would a briefing or a written summary be more effective and appropriate for the issue in question?

Whether there is capacity to consider the item

- 3.6. The Committee should consider which work programme items could be removed or rescheduled to make space for the full consideration of more important issues.

Whether the item links to the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy

- 3.7. A new corporate strategy has been developed¹ – which sets out the Council's values, priorities and focus for the next four years (2022-2026). These are categorised under the following headings:

- Cleaner and Greener
- Strong Local Economy

¹ <https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/corporate-strategy>

- Quality Housing
 - Children and Young People
 - Safer Communities
 - Open Lewisham
 - Health and Wellbeing
- 3.8. The work of the Housing Select Committee will relate most closely to the ‘Quality Housing’ priority, which commits the Council to:
- delivering more social homes for Lewisham residents and providing them with safe & comfortable accommodation;
 - improving the conditions in the borough’s housing stock by working with all housing providers to encourage retro-fitting as part of our drive to be carbon-neutral by 2030;
 - developing a Lewisham Rent Repairs Charter that improves the quality and timeliness of repairs;
 - providing more support to renters through further landlord licensing, holding landlords to account and giving a voice to renters across the borough;
 - safeguarding our heritage by preserving and restoring our historic buildings and landmarks.
- 3.9. Actions related to the ‘Cleaner & Greener’ priority are also relevant to the Housing Select Committee’s work:
- tackling the climate crisis through every area of Council policy.
- 3.10. The Committee should consider how its work programme reflects these priorities. The Committee might also consider whether there are suggestions that should be put forward for consideration in the new municipal year.

4. The next meeting

- 4.1. The following items are scheduled for the next meeting. For each item, the Committee should clearly define the information and analysis it wishes to see in officer reports.
- 4.2. The Committee should also consider whether to invite any expert witnesses to provide evidence, and whether site visits or engagement would assist the effective scrutiny of the item.

Agenda item	Review type	Corporate priority
Choice-based lettings	Performance monitoring	Quality Housing- CP2
Temporary Accommodation- Supply and Pressure	Policy review	Quality Housing- CP2
Update on Emergency Housing and Housing Assistance Policy	Performance monitoring	Quality Housing- CP2

5. Scrutiny between meetings

5.1. Below is a list of scrutiny activity, including briefings, information requests, visits and engagement, that has taken place outside of the committee meeting. The scrutiny activity below covers the time period between the last committee meeting on the 12th of September 2023 to the committee meeting on the 28th of November 2023.

Agenda item	Date	Outcome	Corporate priority
Briefing on Building Safety	23 October 2023	The Building Safety Act 2022 came into force from 1 st of April 2023 and introduced new duties for the management of fire and building safety in high-rise residential buildings. A virtual briefing session was held for members to be updated on the new regulations following the Building Safety Act 2022 and on Lewisham’s compliance with them.	Quality Housing
Briefing on the Social Housing Act 2023	23 October 2023	A virtual briefing session was held for members on the Social Housing Act 2023, which received the royal assent in July 2023. This briefing informed members of the new measures that have been introduced as part of the Act, to improve the standards, safety and operation of social housing.	Quality Housing

6. Financial implications

6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee’s work programme will have financial implications, and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

7. Legal implications

7.1. In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the start of each municipal year.

8. Equalities implications

8.1. Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6

April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 8.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 8.3. There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

9. Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. An action plan to achieve this target was subsequently agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (following pre-decision scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee)². The plan incorporates all areas of the Council's work. Items on the work programme may well have climate change and environmental implications and reports considered by the Committee should acknowledge this.

10. Crime and disorder implications

- 10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have crime and disorder implications, and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

- 11.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have health and wellbeing implications, and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

12. Report author and contact

If you have any questions about this report please contact the scrutiny manager:

Nidhi Patil, 020 8314 7620, Nidhi.Patil@lewisham.gov.uk

² See <https://lewisham.gov.uk/TacklingTheClimateEmergency> for a summary of the Council's work in this area.

Appendix A – Housing Select Committee Terms of Reference

The following roles are common to all select committees:

(a) General functions

- To review and scrutinise decisions made and actions taken in relation to executive and non-executive functions.
- To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the executive, arising out of such review and scrutiny in relation to any executive or non-executive function.
- To make reports or recommendations to the Council and/or Executive in relation to matters affecting the area or its residents.
- The right to require the attendance of members and officers to answer questions includes a right to require a member to attend to answer questions on up and coming decisions.
- To consider matters referred to it in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.

(b) Policy development

- To assist the executive in matters of policy development by in depth analysis of strategic policy issues facing the Council for report and/or recommendation to the Executive or Council or committee as appropriate.
- To conduct research, community and/or other consultation in the analysis of policy options available to the Council.
- To liaise with other public organisations operating in the borough – both national, regional and local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working in policy development wherever possible.

(c) Scrutiny

- To scrutinise the decisions made by and the performance of the Executive and other committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions made and over time.
- To scrutinise previous performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives/performance targets and/or particular service areas.
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors personally about decisions.
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors in relation to previous performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over time or in relation to particular initiatives which have been implemented.
- To scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the borough and to invite them to make reports to and/or address the select committee and local people about their activities and performance.
- To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent where the law does not require them to attend).
- To make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

(d) Community representation

- To promote and put into effect closer links between overview and scrutiny members and the local community.
- To encourage and stimulate an enhanced community representative role for overview and scrutiny members including enhanced methods of consultation with local people.
- To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies and/ or Positive Ageing Council so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies and/ or Positive Ageing Council on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the appropriate select committee from ward assemblies and the Positive Ageing Council.
- To keep the Council's local ward assemblies and Positive Ageing Council under review and

to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced.

- To receive petitions, deputations and representations from local people and other stakeholders about areas of concern within their overview and scrutiny remit, to refer them to the Executive, appropriate committee or officer for action, with a recommendation or report if the committee considers that necessary.
- To consider any referral within their remit referred to it by a member under the Councillor Call for Action, and if they consider it appropriate to scrutinise decisions and/or actions taken in relation to that matter, and/or make recommendations/report to the Executive (for executive matters) or the Council (non-executive matters).

(e) Finance

- To exercise overall responsibility for finances made available to it for use in the performance of its overview and scrutiny function.

(f) Work programme

- As far as possible to draw up a draft annual work programme in each municipal year for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Once approved, the relevant select committee will implement the programme during that municipal year. Nothing in this arrangement inhibits the right of every member of a select committee to place an item on the agenda of that select committee for discussion.
- The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that an overview and scrutiny select committee research and/or report on matters of concern and the select committee will consider whether the work can be carried out as requested. If it can be accommodated, the select committee will perform it. If the committee has reservations about performing the requested work, it will refer the matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for decision.

The Housing Select Committee has specific responsibilities for the following:

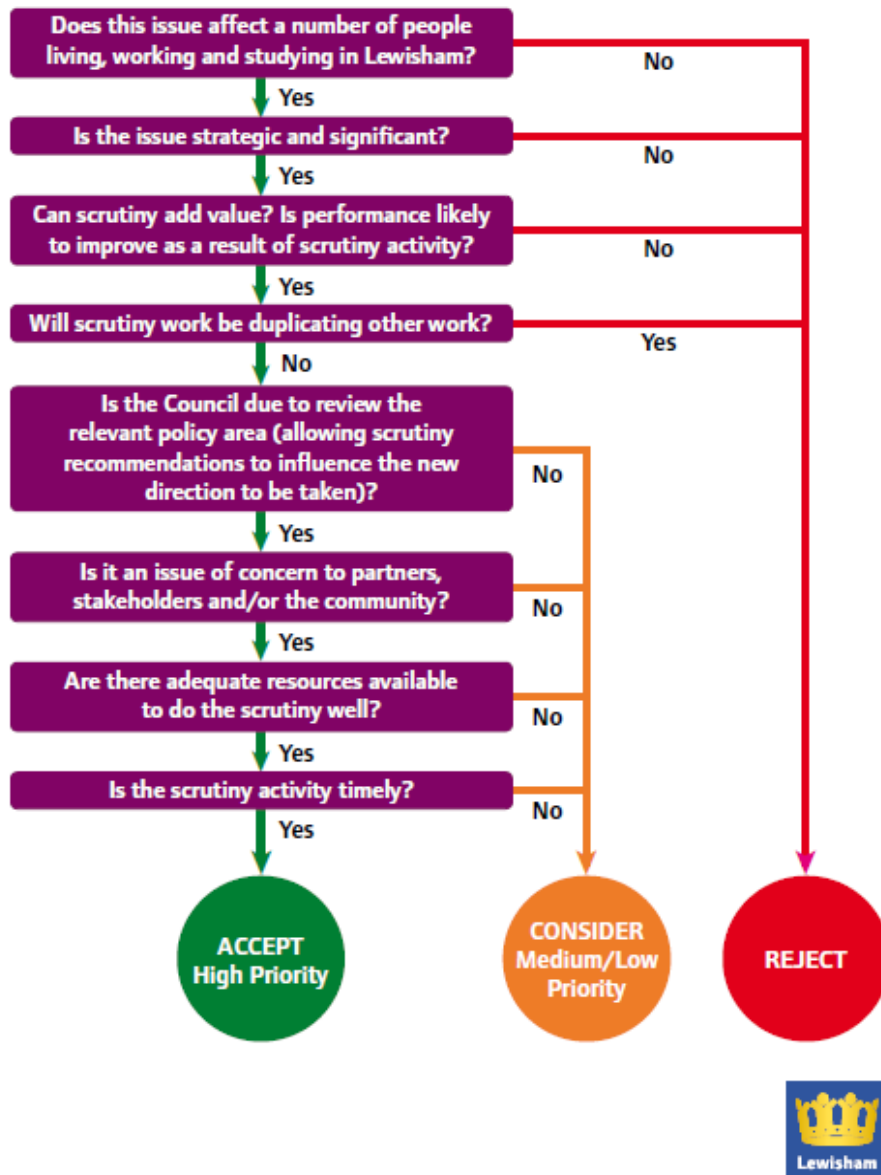
To fulfil all overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the discharge by the authority of its housing functions. This shall include the power to:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of the Council of its housing function
- b) make reports or recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet with respect to the discharge of these functions
- c) make recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet proposals for housing policy
- d) to review initiatives put in place by the Council with a view to improving, increasing and enhancing housing in the borough, making recommendations and/or report thereon to the Council and/or Mayor and Cabinet
- e) To establish links with housing providers in the borough which are concerned with the provision of social housing

Appendix C

The flowchart below is designed to help Members decide which items should be added to the work programme. It is important to focus on areas where the Committee will influence decision-making.

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Appendix D

Effective Scrutiny Guidelines

At Lewisham we:

1. Prioritise

It is more effective to look at a small number of key issues in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of everything falling within scrutiny's remit. We try to focus on issues of concern to the community and/or matters that are linked to our corporate priorities. We only add items to the work programme if we are certain our consideration of the matter will make a real and tangible difference.

2. Are independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. Scrutiny Members are in charge of the work programme, and, for every item, we specify what evidence we require and what information we would like to see in any officer reports that are prepared. We are not whipped by our political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

3. Work collectively

If we collectively agree in advance what we want to achieve in relation to each item under consideration, including what the key lines of enquiry should be, we can work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered. Scrutiny is impartial and the scrutiny process should be free from political point scoring and not used to further party-political objectives.

4. Engage

Involving residents helps scrutiny access a wider range of ideas and knowledge, listen to a broader range of voices and better understand the opinions of residents and service users. Engagement helps ensure that recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

5. Make SMART evidence-based recommendations

We make recommendations that are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes. We recognise that recommendations are more powerful if they are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

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Housing Select Committee: Work Programme 2023-24

Item	Type	Priority	06-Jun-23	12-Sep-23	28-Nov-23	04-Jan-24	07-Mar-24
Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	Constitutional req.	CP2					
Work Programme 2023-24	Constitutional req.	CP2					
Housing Assistance Policy	Pre-decision scrutiny	CP2					
Housing Futures Progress Report	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Emergency Housing	Policy review	CP2					
Regenter B3- Annual Report and Business Plan	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Housing Retrofit Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny	CP2, CP6					
Lewisham Homes coming in-house update (Insourcing; Governance structure)	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Lewisham Homes Annual Report	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Proposal for having co-optees on HSC	Governance	CP2					
Building for Lewisham Programme	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Annual Report on Rent and Service Charges Increases	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Co-optee proposal- Way Forward	Governance	CP2					
Update on Lewisham Homes' transition	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Choice-based Lettings	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Temporary Accommodation- Supply & Pressures	Policy review	CP2					
Update on Emergency Housing and Housing Assistance Policy	Performance Monitoring	CP2					
Repairs Service Update from Housing Providers (incl. Damp & Mould)	Policy review	CP2					
Selective Licensing Scheme (TBC based on response from Secretary of State)	Performance Monitoring	CP2					

Information reports, briefings and visits	Type	Priority					
Site-visit to Gibbes Court, Mayow Road	Visit	CP2	18.04.23				
Meeting with relevant Cabinet Members and Officers regarding provision of support for a Renter's Union	Informal meeting	CP2	14.06.23				
Building safety and new regulatory requirements/ framework training session for Committee Members as Council becomes a direct provider of housing again	Training session	CP2	23.10.23				
Briefing on the Social Housing Act 2023	Virtual briefing session	CP2	23.10.23				
Targets for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy's action plan	Information item	CP2	21.06.23				
Briefing on the Renters Reform Bill	Virtual briefing session and Written briefing	CP2	07.08.23				
Visit to retrofitted homes in Lambeth [SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonization Fund) Innovation NNZRA (National Net Zero Retrofit Accelerator) project]	Visit	CP2, CP6					
Right to Buy update and Estate Regeneration opportunities	Information item	CP2					
Section 106 and CIL	Information item	CP2					
Update on Article 4 direction for HMOs	Information item	CP2					

Corporate Priorities**Priority**

1	Open Lewisham	CP 1
2	Quality Housing	CP 2
3	Children and Young People	CP 3
4	A Strong Local Economy	CP 4
5	Health & Wellbeing	CP 5
6	Cleaner and greener	CP 6
7	Safer Communities	CP 7

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Forward Plan December 2023 - March 2024

This Forward Plan sets out the key decisions the Council expects to take during the next four months.

Anyone wishing to make representations on a decision should submit them in writing as soon as possible to the relevant contact officer (shown as number (7) in the key overleaf). Any representations made less than 3 days before the meeting should be sent to Head of Governance and Committee Services, the Local Democracy Officer, at the Council Offices or emma.campbellsmith@lewisham.gov.uk. However the deadline will be 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

A “key decision”* means an executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;
- (b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

September 2023	Young Mayor's Budget	22/11/23 Council	and		
November 2023	BfL Fairlawn and Ladywell Appropriation for Planning purposes	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Luke Riley, Head of New Initiatives and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
November 2023	Thomas Lane Yard - Appropriation	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Charlotte Harrison, Head of Strategic Regeneration and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
September 2023	Approval to make an Article 4 Direction to withdraw permitted development rights for the change of use from commercial, business and service use (Use Class E) to residential use (Use Class C3)	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	David Syme, Head of Strategic Planning and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
May 2023	Approval to procure School Minor Works Programme 2024 (SMWP 24)	06/12/23 Executive Director for Children and Young People	Akweley Badger, Project Support Officer and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2023	Brent Knoll and Watergate Co-operative Trust - appointment of a Local Authority Trustee	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Suhaib Saeed, Strategic Lead Governors' Services and School Leadership and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2023	Building for Lewisham (BfL) Programme Update	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and Councillor Brenda		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
July 2023	Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited (CRPL) Business Plan	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Kplom Lotsu, SGM Capital Programmes and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
September 2023	Corporate Performance Report Q1&Q2	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
September 2023	Council Tax Base Report 2024/5	06/12/23 17/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet Council	and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
September 2023	Developing a new early childhood offer and integrating Children and Family Centres in the new Family Hub model	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Simon Whitlock, Head of Joint Commissioning • Joint Commissioning FQC and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
August 2023	Gambling Policy 2023-2026	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Richard Lockett and Councillor Will Cooper, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
July 2023	Learning Disability Implementation Plan	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Heather Hughes, Joint Commissioner, Learning Disabilities and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
September 2023	Lee Neighbourhood Plan, recommendations by independent examiner and approval to proceed to referendum	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	David Syme, Head of Strategic Planning and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
April 2023	Millwall FC Lease Restructuring Proposals	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and		
May 2022	On Street Advertising Contract Variation and Extension	Not before 06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
September 2023	Parking Services: Contract Extension	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Paul Boulton, Interim Director of Public Realm and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
May 2023	Permission to award Maximising Wellbeing at Home contracts (Lots 5,6,8,9)	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tristan Brice, Associate Director, Community Support and Care and		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
August 2023	Property Agreement between LB Lewisham and TfL in relation to the A205 Road Realignment Project	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Charlotte Harrison, Head of Strategic Regeneration and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
August 2023	Property Agreement to support the A205 road realignment	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Charlotte Harrison, Head of Strategic Regeneration and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
September 2023	Response to the recommendations of the Disabled People's Commission Report; If not now, then when?	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
July 2023	Sustainable Streets recommendations and next steps - Evelyn	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Martha Lauchlan, Transport Planner and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Climate		
August 2023	Gambling Policy 2023-2026	17/01/24 Council	Richard Lockett and Councillor James-J Walsh, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Communication		
September 2023	Adventure Playgrounds Grant of Leases and Contract Award	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Harsha Ganatra, Joint Commissioner (FQC) and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
July 2023	Approval for s106 monies to go to Deptford Challenge Trust	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Julia Robbins, Developer Contributions Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
June 2022	Approval to appoint operator for concessions contract at Beckenham Place Park Lake	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Peter Maynard, Contract Officer, Green Scene and Councillor Andre Bourne		
September 2023	Building for Lewisham - approval for new homes on Small and Complex Sites	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Monique Wallace, Planning Manager, Strategic Housing and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
April 2023	Grant of Leases for Adventure Playground Sites	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Harsha Ganatra, Joint Commissioner (FQC) and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
November 2023	Period 8 Budget Monitoring	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Nick Penny, Head of Service Finance and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
November 2023	Permission to procure repair and maintenance of Ventilation Plant and controls, and duct Cleaning of former Lewisham Homes properties and other Lewisham properties	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Peter Whittington, Head of Compliance • Assets, Compliance and Safety. and Councillor Will Cooper, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness		
September 2023	Permission to procure the Honor Lee / Rokey House Supported Housing contract. The extension of two additional supported housing contracts	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
March 2023	Public Space Protection Order consultation outcome	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	James Lee, Director of Communities, Partnerships and Leisure and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
September 2023	Council Budget 2024/25	07/02/24	and Councillor Amanda		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
		28/02/24 Mayor and Cabinet Council	De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
January 2023	Annual progress update on the Autism Strategy Action Plan	13/03/24 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
September 2023	Climate Emergency Action Plan update 2023/24	13/03/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Martin O'Brien, Climate Resilience Manager and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
November 2023	Green Space Management and Maintenance Contract	13/03/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Vince Buchanan, Green Spaces Contracts Manager and Councillor James-J Walsh, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Communication		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials

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