

Mayor and Cabinet			
Report Title	Response to the Housing Select Committee's Housing Delivery Review	Item No	
Contributors	Executive Director for Customer Services, Head of Law		
Class	Part 1	Date	27 June 2018

1. Purpose of paper:

- 1.1. At its meeting on 31st January, Housing Select Committee held discussions on the Housing Delivery Review draft report. The committee agreed recommendations therein and agreed that the draft report was to be considered the final report of its review.
- 1.2. Housing Select Committee also agreed to present the report and recommendations to Mayor and Cabinet.
- 1.3. This paper sets out the actions that officers propose to take in response to the recommendations.

2. Policy Context:

- 2.1. The proposed recommendations support the achievements of the Sustainable Community Strategy policy objectives:
 - Ambitious and achieving: where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.
 - Empowered and responsible: where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to tolerant, caring and supportive local communities.
 - Healthy, active and enjoyable: where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being, supported by high quality health and care services, leisure, culture and recreational activities.
- 2.2. It will also help meet the objectives of the Lewisham Housing Strategy in which the Council commits to:
 - Helping residents at times of severe and urgent housing need
 - Building the homes our residents need
 - Greater security and quality for private renter
 - Promoting greater quality in the social and private rented sectors

3. Recommendations:

- 3.1. It is recommended that Mayor and Cabinet approve the actions laid out below in response to the recommendations of the Housing Select Committee's Housing Delivery Review. Officers also recommend that this is reported to Housing Select Committee.

4. Response to the recommendations:

- 4.1. The committee's recommendations together with the proposed response from officers are set out below

Recommendation 1: Land

The committee notes the wide range of benefits of community-led housing, particularly in terms of affordability, quality and density, community engagement, and training opportunities, and recommends that officers create a register of sites in the Borough that would be appropriate for community-led development. As well as all pockets of land, this could also include empty properties which may be appropriate for self-help housing schemes

Response to recommendation 1

As part of planning for the delivery of the new administrations priorities - including the delivery of 1,000 new social homes and a new generation of Council homes for private rent - officers are currently compiling a pipeline of all potential development opportunities. As part of this, it will be possible to highlight places that may potentially support community-led development. To complete this exercise, it will be necessary to balance the competing priorities of meeting the objective to build new council homes and that of creating a number of community-led housing sites, as there is only a limited supply of land and development sites.

Recommendation 2: Working in Partnership

The committee notes the examples of community-led housing organisations successfully working in partnership with larger organisations, private developers and housing associations, to provide further community-led housing and recommends that officers explore the possibility of including community-led housing as part of future large-scale developments in the Borough. The committee appreciates that any development would have to align with the council's key strategic priority of housing those most in need

Response to recommendation 2

Officers will consider the benefits and opportunities that this approach might bring, along with the challenges of combining community and private sector led development. There is one example site in London, at St Clements in Tower Hamlets, and officers will use this example to test the potential of replicating it in Lewisham.

Recommendation 3: Advice and support

The committee notes the difficulty community groups often face accessing start-up advice and support and recommends that the council works with local partners to identify and reach out to other groups interested in community-led development in order to raise awareness of the help and support that is available. The committee recommends that the council and local partners work together to hold an event for interested groups in order to raise awareness of the community led housing process generally as well as help and support available. The committee recommends that this information is also made available on the council's website.

Response to recommendation 3

The Council is the only local authority in the UK working with two separate community land trusts. It is also working closely with the GLA which has recently created a Community Housing Hub to support community-led development. One of the CLTs, RUSS, will be establishing a "school of community housing" as part of its development. Officers will work in partnership with both CLTs and partners at the GLA to consider how this form of advice is currently provided and how it can be amplified. It may be, for instance, that the CLTs themselves are better placed to hold events and raise awareness, in partnership with and supported by the Council.

Recommendation 4: Joint ventures

The committee recognises the benefits of the joint venture approach to housing development, as demonstrated at the Besson Street development in New Cross, in terms of providing high-quality, affordable rented housing for Lewisham residents and in terms of providing a revenue stream for the Council. Given this, the committee requests more information about the potential for further similar developments in the Borough and an analysis of the expected "living rent" levels at the Besson Street development in the long term.

Response to recommendation 4

In line with the response to recommendation one, officers are considering potential sites for all forms of new affordable housing delivery, and this includes future potential locations for joint venture developments in the same manner as at Besson Street. This can be reported back to Select Committee as part of a wider response to the first recommendation.

The current London Living Rent levels in the Telegraph Hill ward, where Besson Street is located, are outlined in table 1.

Table 1 – current London Living Rent levels relevant for Besson Street

One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four bed	Five bed	Six bed
£1,005.13	£1,116.81	£1,228.49	£1,340.17	£1,451.85	£1,563.53

These will vary in line with changes to average local household incomes in the manner set out by the GLA. As part of a final response to Select Committee officers will project the rents forward over future years to demonstrate how the rents will increase in the future.

5. Financial implications:

- 5.1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the actions that officers propose to take in response to the recommendations of the Housing Delivery Review undertaken by the Housing select committee.
- 5.2. Whilst there are no specific financial implications arising from the report itself, future financial planning in relation to the issues noted in the report such as the delivery of 1,000 new social homes and a new generation of Council homes for private rent will need to be undertaken and reported on individually as the schemes progress.
- 5.3. The Council's current 30 year financial model for the Housing Revenue Account includes provision for up to 500 new units, for social rent purposes, at an average cost of £190k each (adjusted annually for inflation) over the first 10 years of the model. The delivery of Council owned social units, outlined above, will be met from this provision.
- 5.4. This model is currently undergoing a refresh to establish the available resources going forward after the delivery of the 500 home commitment.

6. Legal implications:

- 6.1. The Constitution provides for Select Committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider the report and the proposed response from the relevant Executive Director; and report back to the Committee within two months (not including recess).
- 6.2. In addition, the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following 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.

It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed above.

The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The Mayor must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled “Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of 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: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice>
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-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: A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#)

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:
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

7. Equalities implications

7.1. There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

8. Crime and Disorder implications

8.1. There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

9. Environmental implications

9.1. There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

1.1. For further information please contact Jeff Endean, Housing Strategy Manager, on 020 8314 6213.