

## **THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

At a meeting of the **CAMDEN TOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held on **WEDNESDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 2024** at 6.00 pm in the Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Crowndale Centre, 218 - 220 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

### **REGISTERED DMC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Fran Heron (Chair)	Amphill Square TRA
John Wood (Vice-Chair)	Walker House TRA
David Perris (Vice-Chair)	CASP
Paul Tomlinson	Amphill Square TRA
James Mansfield	Bridgeway TRA
Brian Gardiner	Churchway TRA
Wolfram Westendorf	Godwin and Crowndale TMO
Rienzi Trento	Ossulston TRA
Pat McNicols	Regents Park TRA
Anne Byrne	Three Fields TRA

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Councillor Sagal Abdi-Wali	Cabinet Member for Better Homes
Councillor Edmund Frondigoun	Observer
Councillor Shah Miah	Observer
Tom Young	Better West Kentish Town
Chris	Albert Street
Richard Caylor	Bayham Place
Mohammed Lukman (Sub)	Godwin and Crowndale TMO
Stephen Kelly (Sub)	Three Fields TRA
Carol Millard (Sub)	Regents Park TRA
Sylvia Temple	Levita House resident
Jessica Rahman	Ossulston resident
Herman Tribeling	Levita House
Tyler Inberg	Somers Town Big Local

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Stanton La Foucade	Tenant Participation Co-ordinator
Ramona Damiean	Neighbourhood Housing Manager
Olivier Goma	Neighbourhood Manager
Deane Jean-Marie	Property Services
Cait MacDermott	HRA Strategy Advisor
Michael Webb	Head of Finance (Supporting Communities)
Katie Hawthorn	Housing Change and Transformation Manager
Tariq Maklad	Complex Repairs Operations Lead
Mahie Melad	Senior Tenant Participation Officer
James New	Green Space Project Officer

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Camden Town District Management Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. REGISTRATION OF TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS AND CO-OPTION OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The DMC considered the list of registered tenant and resident associations (TRAs) provided by the Tenant Participation Service listed at Appendix A to the agenda and those TRAs whose registration had lapsed, which were listed at Appendix B.

The DMC was advised that Zain Alam was no longer an Amptill Square TRA representative as he had now left the area. Also CASP had held its AGMC on 31<sup>st</sup> October 24.

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the 'A' and 'B' lists be noted.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Steve Adams.

### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Holmes Road Depot**

The meeting agreed to discuss this information paper with the details of the discussion contained under the agenda item heading.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were none.

### **5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

The Chair agreed to accept the paper regarding Service Standards Workshop Invitation as late and urgent as the workshop would be held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024, and this would be the only meeting of the DMC before that date.

## **6. MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

## **7. CAMDEN TOWN DMC ACTION POINT UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the action points as set out in the papers.

### **Garden Roofs**

It was noted that John Wood would be forwarding the information on garden roofs that were not being maintained by the Council in the near future.

### **Contractor works**

Giving the striking financial differential between the works allocated between contractors and the DLO, the meeting was advised that officers had been asked to provide a breakdown of the overall budgetary figures regarding the works provided by the DLO, contractors and sub-contractors in relation to capital and repairs works.

## **8. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2025/26**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Finance.

Cait MacDermott, HRA Strategy Advisor, took the meeting through the report and she along with Michael Webb, Head of Finance (Supporting Communities), gave the following key responses to questions:

- There was still a projected overspend being identified in the current year's HRA and officers had identified a further £730,000 worth of savings that would need to be made to meet this shortfall. These included;
  - 1) **Leaseholder income £300k** - this would involve adjusting the budgets to the actuals as the HRA budget process was a few months before the leaseholder estimates process, but officers were also continuing checks to see that all valid costs were passed on;

- 2) **Reduced bad debt provision £100k** - new software had been helping with rent arrears collection so the savings target was being increased;
  - 3) **Increase commercial property income £60k** - this had been achieved in 2024/25 so it was being added into the budget;
  - 4) **Property Management £140k** - Removal of some vacant non-front line repairs staff posts from the budget with no impact to services; and
  - 5) **Repairs £130k** - Improve efficiency to reduce repairs costs.
- Further details in relation to the proposals for the heating pool budget for 25/26 would be identified in the report going to the HRA budget and Rent setting meetings taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
  - It was proposed that Communal Lighting Charges would be frozen and not increased for 2025/26 due to the forecasted reduction in the cost of electricity. This service charge was not being reduced due to the on-going maintenance charges. Officers agreed to provide information regarding the use of movement sensor lighting to replace the existing fixed communal light that was on all year round, along with the use of solar panels.

**ACTION BY: Director of Property Management**

- Officers agreed to provide further information on the how much the Communal M&E Maintenance Budget had brought in revenue since it had been brought in; what the overall cost of the Housing Transformation Programme was; the current level and amount of rent arrears; and a breakdown of the Housing Management Services budget head.

**ACTION BY: Director of Property Management/Director of Housing/Michael Webb and Cait MacDermott**

- The Council's 2022/23 Statement of Accounts was being considered by the Council's Audit and Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- Officers had undertaken an internal exercise regarding the actual income and costs regarding the 2023/24 service charges, and found that income was almost meeting current costs, not over-recovering.
- The Council was now proposing to undertake a rolling stock conditions survey to determine the state of its housing stock.

The DMC expressed its concern regarding missed contractor appointments, and the cost this had on the Council and the individual tenant or resident.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted

## **9. HOUSING TRANSFORMATION**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Housing

Katie Hawthorn, Housing Change and Transformation Manager, took the meeting through the report and she along with Councillor Sagal Abdi-Wali, Cabinet Member for Better Homes, and Tariq Maklad, Complex Repairs Operations Lead, gave the following key responses to questions:

- Tenants would be able to track the progress of reported repairs through the new system that the Council would have in place.
- Officers undertook a full and extensive procurement process before a contract was let. This was followed up through a regular review of the contractor's performance based around the contractor's delivery of key performance indicators (KPIS). If it was shown that a contractor was not meeting their KPIS then the authority would work with them to support them through improving their performance. Should this not succeed the Council could then terminate the contract, this had happened a number of times in the past. The authority had experienced managers who would review works being delivered, this was supported with specialist advisers when necessary. Only once the works had been completed to the required KPI would funds then be released to the contractor for undertaking the works.
- Officers would provide information regarding the performance of APEX in relation to its management of the Council lift repairs contract.

### **ACTION BY: John Stow**

- Lifts were challenging and complex systems to keep going and fix when they went wrong. They required specialist staff to repair, the parts were often difficult to procure and subject to other supply chain challenges, and the Council wasn't able to have spare parts available due to the life cycle of the parts. Often older lifts were more reliable and easier to fix due to having less complex mechanisms. These challenges were being faced by all the lift providers. Due to specialist nature of the work the Council had found, following an assessment, that this was not a service that it was cost effective to bring in-house. The Council was considering bringing in-house the servicing of its heating systems.
- In preparing for and currently seeking to meet the Regulator of Social Housing's and Housing Ombudsman requirements, the Council had set up a number of panels that allowed the authority to work with tenants and residents to identify issues of concern, measure and improve service performance, and assess and advise on its handling of complaints. The proposed Service Standards Work Shop would be another part to this regulatory compliance process. Information in relation to the issues raised and discussed at these meetings was available to view on the Council's website. Officers agreed to provide an update on the work of the housing panels.

**ACTION BY: Scot Reid**

The DMC welcomed the approach being followed by the Council in relation to Domestic Violence and Abuse.

The DMC also expressed its concern regarding tenants and residents struggle to contact staff. They felt the phone service didn't meet their needs, as it was too complex and didn't lead to a person answering a call. The DMC also felt that too many people were not able to use the website or other electronic means to contact the Council, and even when they did officers didn't respond quickly enough, understood the issue, contractors didn't turn up to appointments, and many tenants and residents would not be able to use the Council's digital systems to track their repairs.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted

The meeting adjourned at 7.45pm for 15 minutes. The meeting reconvened at 8.00pm

**10. CAMDEN TOWN DMC BUDGET**

Consideration was given to the report of the Tenant Participation Co-ordinator.

**Bids**

**Amphill TRA**

The DMC gave consideration to the bid from Amphill TRA, to fund the supply and installation of 7 Gerda locks and 7 MDP lockable fire switch box, at a cost of £6,000.00. The bid was discussed and approved by the DMC.

**Walker House TRA**

The DMC gave consideration to the bid from Walker House TRA, to fund the supply of 2X park benches, at a cost of £3,000.00. The bid was discussed and approved by the DMC.

**Ossulston TRA**

The DMC gave consideration to the bid from Ossulston TRA, to fund a new planter and community garden project for Levita House North Yard, at a cost of £18,212.00. The bid was discussed and approved by the DMC.

## **General**

The DMC felt strongly that contractors should be required to make new and replace anything they broke or changed when undertaking works on an estate.

**ACTION BY: Director of Property Management**

Also DMC representatives were reminded to put in bids to fund appropriate schemes before the March deadline.

## **RESOLVED –**

THAT the bids and action outlined above be approved

**ACTION BY: Tenant Participation Officer**

## **11. LOCAL ISSUES**

### **Traffic Management Order (TMOs) – Amphill Square Estate**

The Chair expressed her concern regarding the way TMO process had been applied to the Amphill Square Estate. She outlined the poor consultation process, the incorrect advice to tenants with cars about where they could park during the installation process, the fact that Parking Services had not been advised of these arrangements (leading to tenants being given parking tickets), the lack of a joined up Council services approach to the whole project, numbers being marked in the car parking area then removed, removal of the numbers whilst car were in situ, all this led to her belief that the contractor was not fit for purpose. She asked that appropriate Housing Managers meet with tenants and residents at Amphill to discuss the TMO programme for that estate.

**ACTION BY: Michael Wood**

The DMC was advised that TMOs were being used to enable the Council to be able to enforce parking issues on estates, as currently it lacked the formal legal powers to do this. This programme would be rolled out across the borough.

### **The Combe Estate**

The DMC was advised that leaseholders and tenants were required to seek the authority of the Council before undertaking any alterations to their homes. The outcome regarding the cause of the structural issues leading to the estate evacuation were still being investigated and would be reported in due course. Tenants were also advised to report any alterations to homes that they were aware of. Alterations to homes would be picked up as part of the voids turnaround process and appropriate action undertaken when necessary.

### **Video Doorbells**

The DMC were advised that the use of video doorbells by tenants would be considered on an individual basis. When necessary tenants and residents would be advised to have them removed from their door.

### **Mobile CCTV camera units**

The DMC asked to be provided with an update in relation to the use of the mobile CCTV units that Camden Town DMC had purchased, the list of estates on the current CCTV installation programme, and whether they could be used on the Churchway Estate.

#### **ACTION BY: Natasha Dickinson**

The DMC was advised that though it had purchased the mobile units they could not direct where they would be located, this was the responsibility of the Community Safety Team and they could and would be located anywhere they deemed appropriate across the borough.

### **Voids**

The DMC was advised that the Chair was working with officers to ensure that valuable and accurate information was made available at each DMC meeting regarding the position on Council Voids.

The DMC specifically requested information on held properties be supplied and included in all future void reports.

The DMC noted that currently the Council was losing approximately £3M every year due to the number of void properties and the time they took to get back into use

### **Caretaking**

The DMC was advised that though the management of the caretaking areas was now going down to 3, there would still be 5 district housing areas. If TRA representatives had issues with a caretaker's performance then they should raise them in the first instance with the respective supervisor. If they were not satisfied with the outcome then they should raise the issue as a formal complaint.

## **12. UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet Member for Better Homes.

Councillor Sagal Abdi-Wali, Cabinet Member for Better Homes, took the meeting through the report and she along with Stanton La Foucade, Tenant Participation Co-ordinator, then gave the following key responses to questions:



- Leaseholder Services would be able to advise how to set up a formal leaseholder group should any leaseholder wish to do so.
- The Council had in place processes regarding asbestos in its housing stock, and this was regularly checked before any works were undertaken on a home or when the home became vacant.
- Tenant representatives were able to put in Freedom of Information requests regarding the number of leaseholders that lived on an estate.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted

**13. PROPERTY SERVICES AND HOUSING MANAGEMENT - REPAIRING AND LETTING OUR PROPERTIES**

This report was made available to the DMC for information purposes.

**14. KPIS/DASHBOARD**

This report was made available to the DMC for information purposes.

**15. CCTV PROGRAMME**

This report was made available to the DMC for information purposes.

**16. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE REGENERATION STRATEGY FOR REGIS ROAD**

This report was made available to the DMC for information purposes.

The Chair allowed Tom Young, Architect, to outline his concerns regarding the proposals for the Holmes Road Depot in relation to the future of the depot, the future of the DLO, the lack of consultation involving the staff and community representatives (including the DMCs), and the important role the DLO could play in shaping the workforce for the future.

Councillor Sagal Abdi-Wali, Cabinet Member for Better Homes, advised the meeting that no proposals had yet been finalised regarding the future of the depot, and staff were being formally involved in the future development of the Depot. The conditional land sale agreement required Yoo Capital (the developer), to re-provide the Council's existing Holmes Road and Regis Road facilities including the 25 homes attached to the Depot, which could still be on the site. A formal consultation was

now open and the DMC and TRA representatives could feed into the process. This would involve an exhibition and drop in sessions. Details of consultation arrangements and events would be provided to the DMC.

**ACTION BY: Mahie Melad**

The DMC were concerned about the overall proposals along with the short consultation time-line and asked that a public meeting be held involving appropriate officers and Camden Town and Kentish Town DMC representatives.

**ACTION BY: Director of Economy,  
Regeneration and Investment and  
Director of Property Management**

**RESOLVED-**

THAT the action identified above be endorsed.

## **17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

### **Service Standards Workshop Invitation**

Consideration was given to the report of the Housing Lead Policy and Change.

It was noted that the Housing and Residents Property Panel had held a discussion around developing a wish list of what tenants and residents wanted service standards to look like. The workshop in December would discuss the proposed service standards arising from this discussion.

The DMC determined that they make an appointment to the workshop that would review the initial set of service standards, recommend any improvements and also feed into the proposed annual learning cycle.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT Pat McNichols be appointed at the DMC representative to the Service Standards Workshop for 24/25 with John Wood as the substitute.

**ACTION BY: Lydia Roberts**

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

**CHAIR**

**Contact Officer: Gianni Franchi**

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**MINUTES END**