

Subject: London Housing Strategy

Report to: Housing Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 11 November 2014

This report will be considered in public

1 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the background for the Committee's discussion of the London Housing Strategy.

2 Recommendation

2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to invited guests on the London Housing Strategy.**

3 Background

3.1 Following consultation, the Mayor published a new London Housing Strategy in April 2014.¹ The Strategy contained outline proposals for a range of significant initiatives, notably seeking to increase the supply of new homes in London and to improve quality standards in the private rental sector. Six months on, many of these proposals have been taken forward. Notably:

- The London Rental Standard was launched in May 2014 with the aim of raising professional standards in the private rented sector, by promoting longer tenancies and tackling rogue landlords; and
- The deadline for bids for the Housing Zone designation passed on 30 September 2014 and an announcement on successful bids is expected in November, although early bids have been following a fast-track timetable. The Mayor is combining £200m of his housing funding with match-funding from the Treasury to try to unlock or accelerate housing supply.

4 Issues for Consideration

4.1 The Committee may wish to examine progress on the Housing Zones and the London Rental Standard, as well as follow up on recommendations from a number of Committee's recent reports and meetings, which are particularly relevant to delivery of the Housing Strategy.

4.2 The Committee published its report *Rent reform: Making London's private rental market fit for*

¹ [Housing in London, GLA, April 2014](#)

purpose in June 2013.² The report included recommendations on quality, availability, affordability of accommodation as well as extending length of tenancies, behavior of landlords, and empowering of private rented sector tenants.

- 4.3 The London Housing Strategy identifies that there is a need to promote new entrants into London's house building market. Like the Mayor, the Committee is concerned that a small number of large developers dominate the house building industry in London. In July 2014, the Committee called on the Mayor to encourage diversity in London's house building industry, in particular, by facilitating access to surplus public land for new and small developers.³ The Mayor's response to the Committee agreed with the need to support small and new developers, but did not agree with the Committee's proposed actions, such as parceling surplus public land into smaller sites and developing a framework to facilitate their involvement.⁴
- 4.4 In 2013, the Committee heard from a number of experts on the subject of overcrowding and under-occupation in London's homes. The Committee therefore welcomes the increased attention on this issue in the April draft of the Housing Strategy, including commitments to review and promote good practice in addressing overcrowding and plans to expand the Housing Moves and Seaside and Country schemes.
- 4.5 A panel of guests has been invited to discuss these issues with the Committee, including:
- Jamie Ratcliff, Assistant Director – Programme, Policy and Services, Housing and Land, Greater London Authority; and
 - Representatives of other external organisations, details of whom were being finalised at the time the agenda goes to press.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct GLA financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report: None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
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List of Background Papers: None

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² [Rent Reform: Making the Private Rented Sector Fit for Purpose \(June 2013\)](#)

³ [Letter to the Mayor – London Development Panel and Diversity in the House building Industry \(July 2014\)](#)

⁴ [Response from the Mayor - London Development Panel and Diversity in the House building Industry \(September 2014\)](#)