

Subject: Responses to Planning Committee report *Localism in London: What's the Story?*

Report to: Planning Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 18 March 2015

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report summarises the responses to the Committee's final report on the Localism Act 2011 in London: "*Localism in London: What's the Story?*"

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **That the Committee notes the responses to the final report on the review of progress in London since the introduction of the Localism Act in 2011.**
- 2.2. **That the Committee builds in further follow up and monitoring of the issues raised in Appendix 1 to this report in the development of its future work programme.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The Committee's report '*Localism in London: What's the Story?*' reviewed the implementation in London of a number of measures contained in the Localism Act in 2011. The report was formally agreed by this Committee on 22 January 2015. The full report can be found on the Committee's web page here: <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/publications/localism-in-london-whats-the-story>
- 3.2. Key findings of the report were:
- That the legislation was designed primarily for smaller, more homogenous areas than can be found in London;
 - That London's complex network of mixed communities with diverse interests seems to make even defining neighbourhood areas a difficult and time consuming process; and
 - That the use of new rights for individuals and communities to take over community assets in the Localism Act appears to be more widespread across London.

- 3.3. The report sought views in response to the following questions:
- Are the requirements for designating neighbourhoods, in terms of boundaries, membership and competing interests, simply unworkable in London?
 - How can we overcome the barriers to getting a forum recognised?
 - Do affluent communities with access to professional expertise to drive the formation of neighbourhood forums have an advantage over those with less capacity or history of community organisation?
 - To what extent are financial considerations and the budget pressures on local authorities slowing down the progress of neighbourhood planning in London?
 - Would greater promotion for neighbourhood planning in London's opportunity areas both further the aims of localism and regeneration and boost a sense of legitimacy and support in these areas?
 - Why are there so few listed assets in some boroughs?
 - Are boroughs interpreting the legislation consistently?
 - Given London's city wide communities, is the legislation supportive of recognising assets on the basis of communities of interest rather than communities of locality?

4. Issues for Consideration

Feedback

- 4.1. Written responses to the report and updates on the progress of measures contained in the Localism Act have been received from six individuals and organisations:
- AECOM;
 - Department of Communities and Local Government;
 - Ham and Petersham Neighbourhood Forum (Andrew Rogers);
 - Seona Lightfoot;
 - The Africa Centre; and
 - The Pinner Association (Dr Ruth Boff).
- 4.2. **Appendix 1** contains a summary of those responses as well as respondent's questions and recommendations for the Committee. The Appendix also includes an update on progress from the Department of Communities and Local Government

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 financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report: Appendix 1- Summary of Responses to Localism Report

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

Planning Committee report, *Localism in London: What's the Story?* (November 2014)

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