

Subject: Motions

Report to: London Assembly (Plenary)

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 8 February 2018

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Assembly is asked to consider the motions set out which have been submitted by Assembly Members.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Assembly considers the motions submitted by Assembly Members as set out below.**

3. Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Fiona Twycross AM** and will be seconded by Leonie Cooper AM:

“This Assembly notes that 2018 marks 100 years since some women secured the right to vote for the first time in the UK. The Representation of the People Act was passed on 6 February 1918 giving women the vote provided they were aged over 30 and either they, or their husband, met a property qualification. This year is also the 90th anniversary of women gaining equal voting rights to men by the Equal Franchise Act.

The Assembly welcomes the various campaigns and events to celebrate this anniversary and to promote further gender equality; including the Mayor’s campaign #BehindEveryGreatCity that will champion the achievements and contributions of women, from all walks of life, to London.”

- 3.2 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Andrew Boff AM** and will be seconded by Tom Copley AM:

“The Assembly notes with concern that a target for family-sized homes is not included in either the new draft London Housing Strategy or in the new draft London Plan.

The Assembly notes the statement in the London Plan that two-bedroom units should be ‘taken into account’ when assessing needs for family homes. It also notes the assumptions in the Strategic

Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) that 55% of all new homes, and 69% of low-cost rented homes, should be one-bedroom units.

In addition, the Assembly notes the potential for the loss of existing family homes under the Small Sites policy, through the presumption in favour of 'residential conversions' and 'redevelopment of existing properties'.

The Assembly notes that a third of children in social housing and a quarter of children in private rented housing live in overcrowded conditions, and notes the devastating impact that overcrowding can have on children and families. The Assembly is concerned that a failure to provide sufficient family-sized homes, of three and four bedrooms, will make this problem worse and not better.

The Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to urgently review his draft London Housing Strategy and draft London Plan, and revisit the assumptions in his Strategic Housing Market Assessment, to ensure that suitable targets and provisions are made for new family sized-homes of three and four bedrooms, and to prevent the loss of existing family homes."

- 3.3 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Andrew Dismore AM** and will be seconded by Unmesh Desai AM:

"The requirement of the Mayor and Greater London Authority to promote good relations between Londoners belonging to different racial groups, religious beliefs and sexual orientation is as important today as it ever has been. We welcome the Mayor's commitment on this issue and the work that has been done to date.

However, this Assembly is concerned that the conduct of the Senior Coroner for Inner North London, Mary Hassell, is failing Jewish and Muslim residents of Camden, Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets in respect of the particular requirements of those faiths concerning the deceased. According to the Jewish and Muslim faiths it is an important principle that a deceased person should be buried as soon as possible after death, and ideally the day of death. It is therefore customary to make every effort to expedite the burial. Over the past four and a half years bereaved relatives in the jurisdiction of the Senior Coroner for Inner North London have expressed grave concern that increased bureaucracy and inflexible procedures has led to delays and reduced the quality of service to the public, especially those of the Jewish and Muslim faiths.

In addition, the close members of a Jewish family cannot begin the mourning process until after the funeral - known as "sitting shiva". As this does not commence until after the burial the family also suffers from any delay. Concerns have also been raised about insensitive rules imposed by the Coroner for Inner North London such as the refusal to permit the Jewish community to use private mortuaries to watch over and perform traditional cultural or religious practices until burial.

Whilst other coroner's offices, knowing of religious obligations for prompt burials, demonstrate flexibility wherever possible, the Senior Coroner for Inner North London has shown little regard for ethnic or religious sensitivities, and many of her imposed rules, bureaucracy, and unnecessary delays offend traditional and/or religious practices¹. This part of London is amongst the most diverse in the country. Ms Hassell's insensitive behaviour— probably unique in our local public services - flies in the face of harmonious community relations.

¹ [Jewish leaders call for London coroner to be fired over burial delays](#), The Guardian, 19.01.2018
[Jewish leaders call on Inner North London coroner to quit](#), BBC, 19.01.2018
[Coroner criticised over Jewish and Muslim burials](#), ES, 12.01.2018

This Assembly welcomes the Mayor’s comments, supporting the Jewish Board of Deputies in writing to the Lord Chancellor. This Assembly resolves to write to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office, Lord Chancellor, Chief Coroner and Lord Chief Justice expressing our serious concern about the comments, decisions and actions of the coroner; and calls upon the Mayor to do the same.”

- 3.4 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Tom Copley AM** and will be seconded by Leonie Cooper AM:

“This Assembly notes that London has the highest number of private rented sector (PRS) tenants in the country and that private tenants are particularly at risk of fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty has a profound impact on the health of an estimated million households that are unable to sufficiently heat their homes – an estimated 9,000 people in the UK died last winter as a result of living in a cold home². The Mayor’s Draft Fuel Poverty Action Plan for London estimates that between 2011 and 2016 there were 1,300 to 4,000 Excess Winter Deaths in London where the inability to heat homes adequately may have been a contributory factor³. This is unacceptable.

We welcome the government’s announcement that from April 2019 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) will prohibit private landlords from renting properties with energy performance certificates below band E in England and Wales. We also welcome the recent government proposal to remove the existing ‘no cost to the landlord’ exemption and introduce a ‘landlord funding contribution’ component where a landlord is unable to obtain suitable ‘no cost’ funding.

The government intends to introduce a cap of £2500 on the amount any landlord would need to invest on an individual property. However, to ensure this urgent social and environmental work is carried out as soon as possible, a coalition of civil society partners is calling on the government to increase the cap to £5,000 per property. A higher cap would further increase the value of the property and lead to greater savings for residents.

The Assembly notes that the government’s [own assessment](#) warned that the lower cap means only [139,200 households in England and Wales will benefit from better insulation by April 2020. That is 121,000 fewer than if the cap was at £5,000](#). By definition, the properties that can’t reach band E under the £2,500 cost cap will be the worst-performing ones, leaving the most vulnerable unprotected.

The Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to support the £5,000 cost cap in his [Fuel Poverty Action Plan](#), and to write to the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth to urge for the adoption of the higher cost cap to ensure that some of the most vulnerable in London are not left in dangerous and unhealthy homes any longer.”

² [Cold homes caused 9,000 deaths last winter](#), BBC, 21.03.17

³ [Mayor’s Draft Fuel Poverty Action Plan for London](#), August 2017

- 3.5 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Susan Hall AM** and will be seconded by Caroline Russell AM:

“London & Partners have not always been active and full members of the GLA family, and Assembly Members have made their thoughts well known on this issue. This Assembly is still not satisfied with the performance of London & Partners, and believes that more must be done before the Mayor commits further funding to the body.

Previously, this Assembly unanimously called on London & Partners to abide by the principles of the GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework; to publish a register of gifts, expenses and hospitality for all board members and senior staff; proactively disclose information and to respond to requests for information as if they were covered by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and to provide the Assembly’s Budget and Performance Committee with a full business plan during the course of its annual scrutiny of the Mayor’s budget.

Due to the current financial position and previous concerns about London & Partners; this Assembly agrees that the 2018/19 London & Partners budget should be kept at the same levels as detailed in the 2017/18 budget.”

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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