

Subject: Strategic Issues for Social Housing in London

Report to: Housing Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 27 February 2018

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the background information for a discussion with invited guests on the strategic issues for social housing in London.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to the invited guests on strategic issues for social housing in London.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Following the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, social housing providers faced a range of urgent challenges, such as rehousing residents and dealing with immediate issues of fire safety. However, a tragic incident of this kind also has far wider implications. This meeting will discuss a range of these wider implications and issues for social housing.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The cost of immediate essential fire safety measures has been substantial, and it is not clear how they will be financed. This may then have significant implications for providers' development plans, both in terms of the number of homes they can finance, how quickly they can do so, and any new quality standards they may seek to meet.
- 4.2 There may be cost implications for planned refurbishment of existing stock. Changes may need to be made to asset management programmes as a result. And since many estates and developments are designed as mixed tenure, or have become mixed through the Right to Buy, there may be significant issues with oversight and control of refurbishment in these estates.

- 4.3 Mechanisms are available to residents to raise concerns and hold their landlords to account on issues of property standards and management. However, in light of what we know following the Grenfell Tower fire, they are likely at least to need reviewing.
- 4.4 In the Mayor's draft Housing Strategy he calls on the Government to appoint an independent social housing commissioner. A Government green paper on social housing is also expected in the spring 2018.
- 4.5 The following guests have been invited to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion:
- Sue Foster OBE, Strategic Director Neighbourhoods and Growth, London Borough of Lambeth;
 - Pat Hayes, Managing Director, Be First;
 - Chyrel Brown, Director of Resident Services, Hyde Group;
 - Andy Bates, JMB Manager, Leathermarket JMB;
 - Kym Shaen-Carter, Development Manager, Igloo (To be confirmed).

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 financial implications to the Greater London Authority arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Pauline Niesseron, Assistant Scrutiny Manager
Telephone: 020 7983 4843
Email: pauline.niesseron@london.gov.uk