

# **Terms of Reference and Governance Arrangements**

**Homes for London**

## **1 Remit**

- 1.1 Homes for London's remit is to support and monitor the delivery of housing (and especially affordable housing), together with housing improvement investment and housing led regeneration in the capital, having regard to the Mayor's London Housing Strategy, London Economic Development Strategy, the London Plan and other Mayoral associated strategies.

## **2 Responsibilities**

- 2.1 In undertaking their Board responsibilities it is expected that Board members will be afforded reasonable access to information and advice as they require from officers in order that they can fully undertake their duties as Board members.
- 2.2 The Board's responsibilities are set out below:

### **The statutory London Housing Strategy**

- In preparing his housing strategy, the Mayor has a statutory duty to consult with London boroughs.
- The Board will be consulted on at each stage of the development of the strategy and any proposed changes to the strategy ahead of the formal consultation process.

### **Overseeing the delivery of the GLA's Housing Investment and Business Plan**

- The board will be involved in, and consulted on, the preparation of the Mayor's housing investment and business plan, and any subsequent major changes to the plan.
- The Board will monitor the delivery of the plan, including the implementation of policy objectives and the achievement of programme and project outcomes.

### **Delivering housing investment programmes**

- The Board's responsibilities will be to oversee all of London's investment programmes devolved to the Mayor.
- The Board will risk assess and advise the Mayor on any substantial or endemic risk relating to the delivery of any programme.
- The Board's views will be sought, prior to decision, where any major changes to investment programmes are proposed.
- The Board's views will be sought, prior to decision, on changes to investment contracts or the termination of such contracts between the Mayor and individual delivery partners.

### **Building out the GLA's land and property portfolio**

- The Board's views will be sought, prior to decision, on options to develop the GLA's land and property holdings where these are brought forward for housing purposes.
- The Board's views will be sought, prior to decision, on any proposals for the acquisition of land and property for housing purposes.

### **Commissioning of new housing services or new partnership arrangements**

- The Board's views will be sought, prior to decision, on proposals for any new GLA housing services or joint partnerships.

## **3 Membership**

- 3.1 Homes for London will be chaired by the Mayor or his/her nominee.
- 3.2 A Vice Chair of Homes for London will be selected by all Board members and will act in the absence of the Chair.
- 3.3 The Mayor is ultimately responsible for determining the number of Board members; however any decisions over changing the membership of the Board will be undertaken within the spirit of section 5 of these terms of reference. Initially the Mayor has determined that the Board will comprise seven members; three Mayoral Appointees and three London Councils' Appointees.
- 3.4 Mayoral nominees to the Board (other than S67(1) appointees) will be recruited and selected in accordance with the "Protocol on Mayoral Appointments" to fulfil the general requirements for clarity and transparency. See Appendix 1 for the person specification.
- 3.5 London Councils will take responsibility for nominating London boroughs' Board members through its Leaders' Committee. Any such representative must be an elected Member.
- 3.6 The Mayor may, subject to consultation with the London borough nominees, appoint independent members to provide advice to the Board. Their role would always be advisory and they would not be entitled to participate in decision making.
- 3.7 At the discretion of the Mayor, a GLA officer will be able to attend as an ex-officio member of the Board.

## **4 Length of tenure**

- 4.1 The Mayor is responsible for setting the length of tenure for Board members in consultation with the Vice Chair.
- 4.2 London Councils Leaders' Committee will have the power to recall all or any of its nominations and replace them with other members at any time.
- 4.3 Borough representatives will step down from Board membership if they cease to be a local councillor.

- 4.4 In addition the Mayor will be able to terminate a member's appointment to the Board, if he is satisfied that the member is unable or unfit for any reason to discharge their functions as a member.

## **5 Voting**

- 5.1 The work of the Board will operate on a consensus model, wherever possible without voting.
- 5.2 Where consensus is not achieved, a matter shall be carried by a majority of votes of the members present at the meeting provided the Board is quorate.
- 5.3 In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair will have a second or casting vote, again subject to the meeting being quorate.

## **Organisational arrangements**

- 6.1 The Board will meet quarterly or as the chair decides.
- 6.2 The Chair or any member with the Chair's agreement (which will not be unreasonably withheld) may convene or request the Board secretariat to convene an emergency or special meeting of the Board.
- 6.3 Reasonable notice (at least five working days) must be given to members of a Board or any other meeting. With this notice, brief details of the business items proposed must be circulated by post, email or fax.
- 6.4 All papers and other items for consideration by the Board must be circulated at least five working days prior to the meeting. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the Chair's agreement, will papers be tabled at the meeting or circulated after this deadline. The Vice Chair will be consulted on any papers being brought to the board in exceptional circumstances
- 6.5 The GLA will provide the secretariat for Board meetings. The secretariat will provide support for the Board by coordinating administrative support and furnishing the Board with all relevant information regarding housing in London.
- 6.6 The secretariat shall record the names of all members and additional attendees present at a meeting in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting shall be prepared by the Board secretariat and shall be submitted for approval as to their accuracy to the next meeting. The minutes shall be signed by the Chair and, if so signed, shall be taken as conclusive evidence of the facts therein stated.
- 6.7 No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Board unless at least four members are present including the Chair.

## **7 Committees and Sub-Committees**

- 7.1 With the approval of the Chair and in consultation with the Vice Chair the Board may establish any sub committee, working group or other forum to assist it to meet its Remit.

- 7.2 Any such sub committee, working group or other forum set up by this Board shall include one or more Board members. With the consent of the Mayor any such group may also co-opt onto it any independent person with the relevant expertise on the issues within the remit of these groups.
- 7.3 The remit and terms of reference for any such sub committee, working group or other forum committee or sub committee shall be approved by the Board.
- 7.4 Unless otherwise directed by the Board, and set out within the terms of reference of the body concerned, the quorum for a committee or sub committee shall be two members.
- 7.5 All non members who are appointed as members of the Board, sub committee, working group or other forum are expected to comply with the terms of reference in the same way as if they were members.
- 7.6 A London Borough representative of Homes for London will be invited to join the GLA's Housing Investment Group, reporting to its Investment and Performance Board.

## **Transparency**

- 8.1 The Mayor is committed to openness in his administration and is committed to making the work of this Board (and any sub committee, working group or other forum set up by this Board) transparent. To achieve this, access to information will be available in line with Mayoral policy.
- 8.2 Agendas for the Board and any of its Groups will be posted on the GLA's website at least two clear working days before the meeting to which they relate.
- 8.3 Papers will be released with the agenda except in those cases where information in the papers *may* be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). These papers will be classed as reserved papers.
- 8.4 The main exemptions that are likely to make information reserved relate to:
- commercial sensitivity
  - information provided in confidence
  - personal data
  - legal professional privilege
  - information intended for publication at a future date
  - prejudice to the free and frank provision of advice and exchange of views
- 8.5 Reserved papers can still be requested under the FOIA, at which stage the GLA will consider these requests on a case by case basis (taking into consideration such factors as timing and the public interest test).
- 8.6 The meetings themselves will not be public to reflect the accountability arrangements Parliament has put in place for the GLA, that is the Mayor is answerable to the Assembly through Mayor's Question Time only after he has taken decisions.
- 8.7 Summary minutes of the meetings of the Board and its Groups will be agreed in consultation with the Vice Chair within two weeks of any meeting taking place. These

will be posted on the GLA's website within two weeks of the meeting to which they relate.

## **9 Code of Conduct**

- 9.1 The Board will adopt the "Seven Principles of Public Life Code of Conduct", as advised by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. [http://www.public-standards.gov.uk/About/The\\_7\\_Principles.html](http://www.public-standards.gov.uk/About/The_7_Principles.html)
- 9.2 This code of conduct will apply to co-opted members as well as those appointed.
- 9.3 All Board members that are not GLA members of staff appointed under section 67(1) of the GLA Act will be required to agree to comply, when acting in their official capacity as a member of the Board, with the provisions relating to conduct and any other relevant provisions of the GLA Group's Corporate Governance Framework Agreement (as amended from time to time).
- 9.4 Board members that are members of staff appointed under section 67(1) of the GLA Act will be required to agree to comply with provisions relating to conduct and any other relevant applicable provisions of the Protocol on Mayoral Appointments (as amended from time to time).
- 9.5 All members of the Board will be required to register their interests in accordance with the GLA's existing (and any subsequent and replacement) regime for the registration of interests.

## **10 Conflicts of Interest**

- 10.1 In any situation where a Board member has a material interest, whether a personal interest or (s)he represents an organisation with such an interest (including interests held by immediate family members), then (s)he must make this clear to the Board. In addition, the Board member may not speak or vote on the matter and may, if the meeting decides, withdraw from the meeting for that item.
- 10.2 To aid this process, declaration of interests should appear as a standing item at every Board meeting

## **11 Other issues**

- 11.1 The Mayor reserves the right to amend these terms of reference in consultation with the Board. Board members will be given notice of any such amendment and the opportunity to comment at a Board meeting.