

TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL

To: Councillors Lynne Hale, Maddie Henson, Oliver Lewis, Dudley Mead, Michael Neal, Joy Prince and Manju Shahul-Hameed

A meeting of the **TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL** will be held on **Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 6:30pm**, in **The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**.

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26 September 2016

AGENDA - PART A

1. Disclosure of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality in excess of £50. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Committee Manager at the start of the meeting. The Chairman will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of the meeting. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. Apologies for absence

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 (Page 1)

To approve the minutes as a true and correct record.

5. Update on Village Waste Collection and grounds maintenance

Verbal report from Tom Lawrence (Service Manager)

6. HRA update – Impact of rent reduction & Housing Act

Presentation from Elaine Wadsworth (Head of Housing Strategy & Commissioning)

7. Brick by Brick - What is it? What housing will it develop & where? How will this affect council tenants and leaseholders?

A verbal report (TO BE CONFIRMED)

8. Scrutiny Update

A verbal report from Yaw Boateng (Scrutiny Panel)

9. Elections

- Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- Elections to other groups:
 - a) Croydon Congress
 - b) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance
 - c) Election to London Tenant Federation (x2)
 - d) Election to ARCH

10. Feedback

- a) London Tenants' Federation – Michael Hewlett
- b) ARCH – Michael Hewlett
- c) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance (CVSA) – Guy Pile-Grey
- d) Croydon Congress – Marilyn Smithies
- e) All Ages Inter-generational update – Sian Foley
- f) Youth Provision and Communities Fund - Sian Foley

**11. FOR INFORMATION ONLY:
Resident Involvement Activity Report (Page 9)**

The report of Chris Stock (Resident Involvement & Scrutiny Manager) is attached

AGENDA - PART B

None

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 in The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

Present: Michael Hewlett (Chair), Marilyn Smithies (Vice-Chair), Syed Ahmed, Peter Cooper, Bernard Daws, James Fraser, Sheila Howard, Julian Paine, David Palmer, Guy Pile-Grey, John Piper, Stephen Pollard, Jamil Tarik, Laurence Taylor, Kim Wakely, Colin Wood

Councillors: Lynne Hale, Maddie Henson, Oliver Lewis, Michael Neal and Joy Prince

Observers: Tim Nash (Resident Involvement Co-Ordinator), Hayley Lewis (Head of Communications & Engagement), Mark Meehan (Director of Housing Need), Paul Ratcliffe (Head of Community & Street Safety), Bob Richardson (Head of Planned Maintenance and Improvements), Stephen Tate (Director of District Centres & Regeneration), Elaine Wadsworth (Head of Housing Strategy & Commissioning)

Absent: Councillors Manju Shahul-Hameed and Dudley Mead, Aishnine Benjamin, Yaw Boateng, Marion Burchell, James Cassidy, Sylvia Fletcher, Jim Mansell, Peter Mason, Edita Meir, Paul Phillips, Sharon Swaby and Maureen Symes

Apologies: Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed, Edita Meir, Peter Mason, Sharon Swaby, Colin Alexander (Head of Income and Lettings), Leonard Asamoah (Head of Housing Solutions), Ken Constantine (Sustainable Communities Manager), Sian Foley (Head of Service Development), Yvonne Murray (Head of Tenancy and Neighbourhood Services), Jo Negrini (Acting Chief Executive and Executive Director for Place), Margaret Padmore (Tenancy Manager), Judy Pevan (Service Manager, Stock Investment), Lorraine Smout (Head of Responsive Repairs) and Chris Stock (Resident Involvement & Scrutiny Manager)

A14/16 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting.

A15/16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Michael Hewlett, welcomed all to the meeting.

**A16/16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3RD
FEBRUARY 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 2016 were agreed as a true record of the proceedings.

A17/16 VILLAGE WASTE COLLECTION - UPDATE

Barry Lambton (Green Spaces Manager) was due to give a verbal presentation but was not present.

Several issues were raised by the panel

- Bins not being emptied
- Village system not working - bins not being emptied regularly - in hot weather food bins are smelly
- Problem of rats with black bags being left on the ground
- Food waste collection missed and reported but still waiting - not acceptable
- 4 bins but only 2 emptied - 2 weeks later and still not emptied
- Michael Hewlett commented that there are only 2 inspectors for the borough and they are not on top of the issue. Need to question what they are doing

Stephen Tate will take up the matter with Barry Lambton and Steve Iles to bring to the next meeting.

A18/16 THE COUNCIL WEBSITE

Hayley Lewis (Head of Communications & Engagement) attended to find out more about issues and respond to feedback from residents regarding their experiences with the new website. (Email: Hayley.Lewis@croydon.gov.uk)

Issues highlighted were:

- Too many clicks on the page – pages disappear and it is difficult to get back to them
- A lot of information is out of date

Hayley Lewis responded: Email issues direct, giving page URLs and they will be investigated. If emailed, they can be updated immediately.

- The website is not user friendly, particularly for first time users. Mentions 'addressing issues to Taberner House'! Some information goes back to 2009/10/11 but does not show 2015 and 2016
- Monotonous and very slow. Login difficult first time. Software needs updating - 'do it online' is not always working. Need to make processes very easy and quick

Hayley Lewis responded: The main website was launched last January. If it crashes we need to know. Page load speed - new software faster - 3 seconds for desk tops; laptops and mobiles a bit longer. Worked hard with residents and businesses - cannot please everyone. Overwhelming feedback is positive - no clutter, text not pictures were what was requested. A lot more video content - 'how to..'

- Best thing is 'My Account'. Much improved - pay rent quickly and get immediate print out. Reporting online - cannot report for communal bins - no facility - only personal address

Hayley Lewis responded: For communal issues, we are dealing with it now.

- 'My Account' has no facility for resetting your password - no 'forgotten password' button

Hayley Lewis responded: People are in different places digitally. We now have Digital Champions who are in the Digital Zone in Access Croydon on Fridays. They help residents with IT problems on their devices or showing how to access the Council and other websites on a laptop.

A19/16

2016/17 STOCK INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Elaine Wadsworth (Head of asset management and involvement) gave a summary of the report:

- Role - to work out how best to spend the budget – there are targets and objectives for properties
- Bob Richardson works with the contractors to ensure the Council gets the best deals
- Capital Programme for large planned work
- Invest in stock to maintain properties to a good standard
- Industry standards in place to ensure good maintenance
- Boilers - aim to replace all within 15 years by March 2022
- Improvements - loft insulation, more efficient boilers
- Decorations programme - older or disabled - programme to help them carry out internal decorations
- Targets:
 - Decent Homes Standard - energy efficiency, safety - achieved and aim to keep ticking over
 - Fire safety
- Losing £3million from HRA budget
- General building works programme - saving £2million p.a.
- Fire safety programme - coming to the end of the current schedule
- Rewiring - aim for every 30 years

She and Bob Richardson (Head of homes and school improvements) responded to questions.

- Leaseholder - St Marks Road - notified of external redecoration work in 7 or 8 areas - worrying to get letter as it looked an expensive operation - cost of scaffolding extortionate. As a result of phoning Council to have chat, a visit from Chris Egan? (surveyor) was arranged. Now looking forward to redecoration - possibly late summer. Will increase value of properties.
- Michael Hewlett - disappointed tenants not consulted on redecoration programme. Tenants have priorities different from officers. 16-17 budgets fully spent. Now allocating work to 17-18 budget but Longheath Gardens Estate is in a dreadful state. We have put in a serious complaint because it is not satisfactory.

Elaine Wadsworth: We have been procuring new contracts which have taken longer than expected and we are late bringing the issue to TLP. Service Improvement Group – looking at savings. We will consult with the group and bring TLP back into the process in future years. We will be asking people which services people value. Longheath Gardens - getting surveyor in to look at the issues. We have made an allowance of £750,000 towards the first of the major projects.

Bob Richardson: We have useful information from research which was commissioned through a consultant. We want to ensure money is spent correctly and have got to look at other areas and prioritise. We are trying to balance setting out the right work against all the other pressures, in order to make the decision to start - looking at in excess of 12 months' work at Longheath.

- Michael Hewlett - where else is in a worse situation? What about thermal efficiency - cladding on solid walls?

Elaine Wadsworth: We have done some thermal reviewing. We are looking at what to prioritise for 17-18.

Bob Richardson – We can share the results from the review.

- Cllr Maddie Henson – we have reported Longheath several times – the concrete is breaking away and is a hazard.
- Achieving 100% decent homes standard is good but, if heating is failing or concrete breaking, it is not good enough. 1% rent decrease but losing £3million p.a. The figures do not add up.

Elaine Wadsworth: We were expecting to increase rent and thought we would have more, so that is the basis on which we were working.

- Is there no monitoring system to evidence work carried out? Sub-standard work - how is it scrutinised? Dissatisfied with Chris Egan's survey and response (Fisher Close area)

Bob Richardson: For the external painting there were a number of levels of checks – the contractor prepared a detailed estimate

Random checks were carried out whilst the work was in progress. There was a handover meeting - walking round and noting any outstanding or quality issues. Then the bill was prepared. Usually bills are lower than original estimates. Residents can report if they feel the process has failed and we will look at it in more detail. We write to all residents for feedback. One of the questions is about the quality of the work. We will telephone anyone dissatisfied. We need to fully understand what we are doing wrong. We measure satisfaction which is high at the moment. But it is important to consider those who are dissatisfied.

- (South Norwood) We were very satisfied with Chris Egan. With the previous contract there was a looseness about monitoring.(Mullaley). Some of details in the estimate were wrong - eg painting meterage. There was not a strict system of monitoring
- We were promised deep cleaning of all walls, stairs etc after redecoration but it was not done - why has it not happened? The work was done but cleaning up not.

Bob Richardson: The contractor wrote and said everything completed. I will speak with him and investigate.

- Cllr Michael Neal – Will the baseline go up over the next 3 years? Do you anticipate cutting some services or are we able to save? Will you ensure TLP is involved in all aspects of the Stock Investment programme 17-18?

Elaine Wadsworth: There was a big impact this year. We do not know details of further changes but anticipate reducing services further - e.g. households earning £40k+ to pay market rent. The forced sale of high value council homes will lead to a reduction in the number of properties in stock. Baseline £26.7m rather than returning to £29.7m. We will communicate the issues, explain and get feedback. There are ongoing forums to get out to a wider audience of tenants.

A report on what's to come was requested for the next meeting.

A20/16

FEEDBACK

London Tenants' Federation - Michael Hewlett

- New mayor recognises housing in London is in crisis
- Mayor's Housing Forum to be regenerated

ARCH - Michael Hewlett

- Tenant group working on conference - hosted by Warwick Council in Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa - 22 September

- Croydon can send 5 reps
- Housing Bill now passed - still a lot in skeleton form - executive working on it - will produce detailed notes

CVSA - Guy Pile-Grey

- No meeting but a lot of work has been going on
- CVA secured some funding - deciding which voluntary organisations to benefit - decision in July

Croydon Congress – Marilyn Smithies

On 1 March, a report was received from Councillor Tony Newman (Leader of Croydon Council and Chair of Croydon's Local Strategic Partnership), from the meeting held in November 2015, which considered Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

- The prevention of CSE is a significant cross-cutting strategic priority for the Borough
- The discussions and recommendations put forward on the day have formed the basis of a report to Croydon's Cabinet
- The recommendations will also be considered by Croydon's Local Strategic Partnership and Chief Executives' Group, the Safeguarding Children Board and the CSE and Missing Sub-Group
- Particular issues will also be considered in some depth by the relevant bodies and organisations, such as the Head Teachers' Forum, the Council's Departmental and Executive Leadership Teams, the appropriate Partnership Boards and key local stakeholders
- It is hoped that the discussions that took place on the day and the information in the report will help to change attitudes and behaviours of people and organisations in the Borough and will better equip professionals and the community to take an active role to protect young people
- 11 June 2015 Croydon Congress meeting – the theme was domestic abuse and sexual violence and the aim of the meeting was to change attitudes and behaviours of people and organisations in the Borough and to better equip the community to take an active role with the issue. The reduction of domestic abuse and sexual violence is aligned with the Safer Croydon Community Safety Strategy

Recommendations:

To note the themes and proposals to emerge from Congress, as well as to ensure that they are considered by Croydon's Thematic Partnership Boards and relevant local stakeholders and to identify any additional resources available to support the delivery of the key proposals, some of the key themes and proposals to emerge were:

- To work more with schools, including primary schools, to ensure that young people and their families have a better

understanding of what a 'healthy' relationship is and when and how to speak out, if they are affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence, and to ensure that teachers are trained to recognise the signs and respond accordingly

- To support perpetrators as well as victims, in order to prevent the cycle from repeating itself and to encourage more men to get involved in raising awareness
- To encourage the community to play a more active role, including the promotion of 'safe spaces' in different neighbourhoods and training up community champions or advocates
- To encourage faith leaders and the faith community to have a visibly active role, particularly in raising awareness of the topic and reducing the stigma around a partner leaving an abusive relationship
- To encourage employers in the Borough to put procedures and policies in place to better support their workforces, including the promotion of anonymous help lines and workplace champions in order to give victims a wider range of options for disclosure
- To raise awareness about domestic abuse and sexual violence by taking a more targeted approach to highlight the experiences of different cultural and faith communities and breaking down cultural barriers, especially in such a diverse Borough where those voices are currently very difficult to hear
- To promote the film that was shown at Congress, called 'Leaving' and ensure that it is screened at a variety of settings and is seen by a wide range of stakeholders and partners. This could be by the Council holding its own screenings for partners to attend or by partners themselves purchasing the film and screening it themselves in order to raise awareness, e.g. the Police, Fire Service, Jobcentre Plus, schools and Crystal Palace Football Club
- The next Croydon Congress Meeting will be held on 21 June and will focus on Social Isolation and Loneliness

All Ages Inter-generational Update - Sian Foley (apologies for absence)

- See attached report

A21/16

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY:
RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

This report was circulated with the agenda, for information only.

Due to lack of business, the meeting on 5 July has been **CANCELLED** so the AGM/Elections will be postponed until the October meeting.

Future meetings are all in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Croydon at 6.30pm:

- Tuesday 4 October 2016
- Wednesday 18 January 2017
- Tuesday 4 April 2017

A22/16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Stephen Pollard raised the issue of officers not sending emails with read/receipt.

Mark Meehan explained that officers should be acknowledging within 24 hours. He will look into it.

Colin Wood stressed the critical situation arising over Veolia (Village Waste) but the July meeting is cancelled, so the item will be postponed until the next meeting in October.

Michael Hewlett suggested looking at having a meeting late August/early September

Stephen Pollard suggested inviting a Veolia spokesman.

The meeting ended at 8:10pm



Resident involvement & scrutiny team update

April - September 2016



Activity	What has happened
Service improvement groups	<p>Service improvement groups (SIGs) involve residents looking at the performance of a particular service area in some detail and discussing opportunities for improvement with managers.</p> <p>Tenancy and neighbourhood services The group met in May and the next meeting of the group is set for 27 September.</p> <p>Income and welfare benefits This group met at the end of June. The next meeting of the group is set for 11 October.</p> <p>Leaseholder group last met in March and are due to meet in October.</p> <p>New performance reports were set up focussing on the services of the above two groups and these were discussed in detail at the meetings.</p> <p>For the next round of meetings, a work plan will be developed for the groups looking at the action plans from the housing scrutiny panel and mystery shopping exercises which are relevant to their work areas.</p> <p>Resident involvement group (RIG) This group met in September. Residents looked at the impact assessment for the resident Involvement team and discussed proposed changes to the future work of the team.</p>
Sheltered housing panel	<p>The panel met on 13 July. Amongst the topics discussed were how to welcome new tenants to sheltered housing and this was accomplished by holding a round table discussion. Residents were also updated on the progress of the DUKA project (details below). Residents were also given advice on how to report fly-tipping.</p>
Housing disability panel	<p>The panel met on 4 July. Discussion focussed on parking issues faced by disabled people. There was also a round table discussion to identify issues and consider ways to improve communication between the council and disabled residents. There was also a discussion about the "Say it out Loud" project.</p>
Your Housing, Your Questions	<p>There were no YHYQ events this period.</p>

Activity	What has happened
Housing ID	<p>Membership currently at 476 residents.</p> <p>Members have recently been invited to take part in the library service survey, estate inspections, neighbourhood voice and a focus group for the scrutiny panel's communications study.</p> <p>A survey was conducted in September of those residents who participated regularly in the previous year, asking for their opinions on the activities in which they took part and the support the team provided. The results are currently being analysed.</p>
Surveys	<p>The following surveys have been carried out this period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour – an ongoing follow up telephone survey of tenants who have reported ASB which has then been investigated by their tenancy officer. Views are sought on how the tenant feels the complaint was investigated and if it was resolved to their satisfaction. • Motorised scooter survey – A face to face and telephone survey of residents in some older people's blocks, to ascertain the use of motorised scooters. The council has a legal duty to provide appropriate storage and charging facilities. This survey was undertaken in order for us to provide facilities for residents with the need now, and in the future.
Scrutiny panel	<p>The scrutiny panel is part way through a scrutiny exercise examining the area of communication from the housing service with tenants and leaseholders. Most of the research for the project is now complete and members are about to begin examining the results of the focus group meeting as well as a variety of other surveys and reports. The final scrutiny report will be available later this year.</p>
Housing complaints panel	<p>The complaints panel (HCP) met in April and July.</p> <p>The Contact Centre manager, attended the meeting to present and discuss performance reports regarding the work of the contact centre and Access Croydon. In addition the panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended that the recorded message people hear when they phone the council is made shorter (this has been done) • Heard about the new web chat facility to help customers on the council website • Was informed of the digital zone and digital champions based in Access Croydon to help people learn the basics and gain confidence to use online services • Adverts to recruit new volunteers to the panel have been displayed on the council jobs website and also at Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) • The Complaints team manager presented the performance report from his team. The panel looked at the trends in Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Complaints procedure • The panel had 2 complaints to adjudicate on in August. The panel had to meet twice to consider the complaints and found the process very interesting and informative. In both cases they upheld the position of the council.

Activity	What has happened
	<p>The panel has taken on regular monitoring of the housing scrutiny panel action plan for Contact Centre services.</p> <p>The next panel meeting will take place in October.</p>
Your rent, your say	This group has not met this period.
Neighbourhood voice (NV)	<p>Over 150 NV forms have been completed by 48 residents since the beginning of April, giving valuable feedback on the services delivered to estates throughout the borough.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Voices have continued to identify problems with grounds maintenance & other contractor performance issues.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Voices across the borough continue to give a valuable insight in to services delivered to residents across the Borough. Recent reports have highlighted issues with grounds maintenance and litter clearance. Where service issues have been identified Council officers having been proactive is solving problems. Neighbourhood Voices have also been encouraged to attend joint inspections of their estates with officers.</p>
Mystery shoppers	We are planning to re-run the leaseholder mystery shopping exercise as the results of the shop which took place in February were not comprehensive enough to enable a realistic analysis of the service.
Residents' training	<p>Since April seven residents have taken part in a bespoke training session about chairing and managing meetings.</p> <p>5 residents took part in two separate training sessions delivered at the council offices by Linda Levin. These sessions were available to officers and residents from a wide range of local housing providers.</p>
Involve e-newsletter	<p>The online newsletter was sent out in April, June and September to over 2500 residents.</p> <p>Topics covered included an update on the service improvement groups, Open House going paper-free, the Play Street initiative, changes to the housing register survey and adverts for the housing involvement bus and other events.</p> <p>The next newsletter is scheduled for November.</p>
Housing information bus	<p>The housing information bus visits a different part of Croydon each month. A variety of housing services are represented on the bus to answer a range of questions from service users. The number of visitors has been varied and we have experimented with locations and timings.</p> <p>After a winter break the bus stopped in New Addington in May and Thornton Heath in June and was visited by 22 and 38 residents, respectively. The Thornton Heath stop has been the most popular so far.</p>

Activity	What has happened
	<p>During the summer the bus stopped in Broadcoombe on 26 July (10am-2pm) and made two stops - College Green (10am-noon) & Auckland Rise (1-3pm) on 30 August and was visited by 11 residents.</p> <p>To date, 23 people completed the feedback forms – all of whom found their visit very or quite useful.</p> <p>A final two-stop visit has been arranged for 28 September - Cromwell Rd (10am-noon) & Stroud Green Way (1-3.30pm). The information bus service will cease to be provided by Croydon Care Solutions (CCS) from 30 September 2016.</p>
Additional activities	<p>DukaPC</p> <p>The DukaPC project is being run in association with Doteveryone (formerly Go ON UK), the council, Digital Inc., and Metropolitan Police Cadets.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to offer some of Croydon’s hardest to reach, older residents the opportunity of loaning a free DukaPC laptop (specifically user-friendly) with free connectivity (supplied by Digital Inc.) for a six-month period. Residents can also access user support via the DukaPC contact centre team and will be receiving free local training and support from the Metropolitan Police Cadets.</p> <p>In order to determine the level of interest and to find potential participants, the resident involvement team undertook a basic digital skills survey of residents living in four sheltered housing blocks; Ashwood, Beech and Cedar Houses and Southlands Close.</p> <p>17 residents have taken up the offer and installation was completed in early August, followed by a training event. The resident involvement team are providing continuing support to the residents working in partnership with Doteveryone and DukaPC.</p> <p>STAR survey</p> <p>This biannual tenant survey is being posted to 4,000 randomly selected tenants during September. The survey will be carried out by Acuity on behalf of the council. It should inform us what tenants feel about their housing services and enable us to compare our satisfaction levels with those of other social housing providers. The report should be available in December.</p>