

# Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

## Agenda

Tuesday 7 March 2017

7.00 pm

Courtyard Room - Hammersmith Town Hall

### MEMBERSHIP

Administration:	Opposition
Councillor Daryl Brown Councillor Adam Connell Councillor Alan De'Ath (Chair)	Councillor Lucy Ivimy Councillor Harry Phibbs

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Ainsley Gilbert  
Committee Co-ordinator  
Governance and Scrutiny  
☎: 020 8753 2088  
E-mail: ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk

Reports on the open agenda are available on the Council's website:  
[www.lbhf.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy)

Members of the public are welcome to attend. A loop system for hearing impairment is provided, along with disabled access to the building.

Date Issued: 27 February 2017

# Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

## Agenda

7 March 2017

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
* See note below.	
3. MINUTES	1 - 5
4. GREENING OUR ESTATES	6 - 12
5. UPDATE ON THE STOCK TRANSFER	13 - 17
6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME	18 - 21

The next meeting will be held on 26 April 2017 in the Courtyard Room at Hammersmith Town Hall. The meeting will start at 7:00pm.

Members and residents are invited to submit suggestions for the work programme, either at the meeting or by email to

[ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk)

---

*\* If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.*

*At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.*

*Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.*

*Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Audit, Pensions and Standards Committee.*

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

## **Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes**



**Tuesday 17 January 2017**

### **PRESENT**

**Committee members:** Councillors Daryl Brown, Adam Connell, Alan De'Ath (Chair) and Harry Phibbs

**Other Councillors:** Wesley Harcourt, Lisa Homan, Andrew Jones and Max Schmid

**Officers:** Kath Corbett, Kim Dero, Hitesh Jolapara, Mark Jones, Andrew Lord and Glendine Shepherd.

### **33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillor Ivimy.

### **34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **35. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016 were agreed to be accurate.

Referring to his request for a regular report to the PAC on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Housing Department, Councillor Phibbs explained that he had been told that the council was considering publishing performance data on its website. He asked that officers let him know if this was happening, and asked that data about scaffolding use be included.

## **36. 2017 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

Hitesh Jolapara, Strategic Finance Director, gave a presentation on the Council's budget. He explained that some forecasters had predicted that the economy would grow less strongly than previously expected. The outlook for public finances was also weaker, with borrowing already exceeding targets. Public sector spending had risen slightly, but funding for Local Government in London had fallen significantly.

Hammersmith and Fulham faced growth, including unfunded growth from government, of £2.9m and inflation of £5.6m, as well as reduced income, with government grant falling by 20%. These would be balanced by savings of £14.4m, and a balanced budget of £154.5m was proposed. Developer contributions of £2 million would again be used to fund services. A general reserve of £19m was expected to be retained whilst 20% of the £86m earmarked reserves would continue to be used to fund specific projects such as invest to save projects.

No increase in council tax was proposed, nor was the Social Care Precept to be applied. Fees and charges in Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Adult Learning & Skills, Parking, Libraries and Housing would be frozen. An inflationary increase of 1.8% would be applied to some environmental services fees, whilst charges for commercial services would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Hitesh Jolapara concluded his presentation by noting that if the council took no action it was predicted that the gap between resources and expenditure would grow significantly; pressure on budgets was expected for the foreseeable future.

Kath Corbett, Director for Finance and Resources – Housing, explained that the Housing department had a very relatively small general fund budget as most of its activities were funded through the Housing Revenue Account. Most income was from rent charged for temporary accommodation, and much of the expenditure was related to procuring this accommodation.

Savings were proposed in the Temporary Accommodation service with a full review to take place and a greater emphasis on both preventing homelessness and acquiring properties on longer term leases to minimize rent increases charged to the council. A small saving was also proposed in the Adult Learning and Skills Service, although much of the saving was expected to be funded through increased income. Growth of £0.23m was proposed to fund the H&F Link team which worked to assist residents and reduce the number of people being made homeless. It was estimated that the service would reduce demand by £0.662m in 2017/18 and so the growth was well justified. The Housing department faced a number of risks, which totalled £10m in 2017/18. Many of these related to welfare reform, as well as increased rent for temporary accommodation.

The Chair thanked officers for their presentations and invited questions.

Councillor Phibbs asked where funding for the Arts Officer had been found. Mark Jones explained that the half of the post was being funded by Hammersmith BID with the remaining half funded by S.106 money. The main purpose of the post was to deliver the council's Arts Strategy.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether the council would overspend for 2016/17. Hitesh Jolapara explained that the forecast was currently for a £1m overspend, but that officers were working to mitigate this and that a contingency had been put in place to cover the overspend. Councillor Schmid, Cabinet Member for Finance, noted that the budget forecasts for the same time in 2015/16 had also projected an overspend, but that by the end of the financial year this had been dealt with. Councillor Phibbs asked how left over money from an underspend was used. Hitesh Jolapara explained that it was either spent on projects identified by the administration or added to the reserve.

Councillor Phibbs noted that fewer new homes had been started in the borough in recent years and asked whether this meant that new homes bonus would reduce. Hitesh Jolapara explained that the funding was based on the amount of additional council tax collected from new properties and was arranged over 6 years so there was not expected to be a significant reduction in the next few years.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether the Council's external debt was forecast to reduce. Hitesh Jolapara said that the Council's debt was continuing to reduce; at present it was £38.37m and this would reduce to £37.1m by April 2018.

Councillor Connell noted that the government had allocated additional funding for Adult Social Care to local authorities. He asked how much had been given to Hammersmith and Fulham. Hitesh Jolapara said that £900,000 had been given to the council. Councillor Connell said that this was not enough to meet the borough's needs. He felt that government had placed many unfunded burdens on local councils and that this was a threat to the council's ability to deliver the services its residents deserved.

Councillor Connell asked how business rates were to be reformed. Hitesh Jolapara explained that from 2017/18 the Greater London Authority would receive an additional 17% of business rates, with the government proportion reducing by the same amount. Local councils would continue to receive 30% of business rates. Discussions about further 'devolution' of business rates continued.

Councillor Connell noted that the cap on welfare payments was to be reduced and asked whether the risk of homelessness was expected to increase. Kath Corbett explained that there would be an increased risk of homelessness and also an increase in the number of people in temporary accommodation who could not afford their rent; there would therefore be a double impact on the council.

Councillor Connell asked how the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) affected the council's ability to procure accommodation. Kath Corbett explained that

there was a big gap between the LHA and prices outside of social housing stock. It was possible to procure properties in some areas outside of the borough but only in some cheaper areas. Officers spent much time trying to find affordable properties. Councillor Phibbs asked what proportion of people the council helped were placed outside of the borough. Glendine Shepherd, Head of Housing Solutions, said that around 60% were placed outside of the borough; most of these were in neighbouring boroughs. She said that the reduction in the welfare cap would increase the proportion placed outside of the borough as properties in Hammersmith and Fulham would become less affordable.

Councillor Phibbs asked for additional detail on how savings would be made by the temporary accommodation service. Glendine Shepherd explained that the service would be doing more work to sustain tenancies, as well as looking to move to an appointment based system. The council would also be trying to secure better value from properties. Councillor Phibbs asked what the council could do if there was a dispute between a resident and a landlord. Glendine Shepherd said that the general approach was to make contact with the landlord and negotiate with them to try to keep tenants in properties.

Councillor Phibbs asked when Bed and Breakfast accommodation was used. Glendine Shepherd said that this was generally used for younger claimants. The Homelessness Reduction Bill would mean that more short term accommodation would be needed and the council was trying to secure additional temporary accommodation, hopefully on long leases as this reduced cost. Councillor Homan said that she was very proud of officers work to keep families out of Bed and Breakfast accommodation; there had been no family placed into this type of temporary accommodation for over 18 months. She felt that officers were also doing well to secure good value accommodation and prevent residents falling into debt arrears.

A resident asked whether the Council was prioritising its own residents. Glendine Shepherd explained that applicants had to prove a local connection, having lived in the borough for 5 out of 7 years. The Chair asked how people who did not have a local connection were assisted. Glendine Shepherd explained that they were assessed and then referred to their home local authority.

Councillor Phibbs noted that the forced sale of high value voids was included as a budget risk. He asked whether the receipts being given to housing associations would lead to an increase in housing stock in the borough. Kath Corbett explained that Hammersmith and Fulham lacked many suitable sites for housing association development and was an expensive place to build new affordable homes. She noted that there was also a significant time lag between the sale of an existing property and the completion of a new home.

### **37. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor Phibbs asked that an item be brought to the PAC regarding garages on HRA land as he was concerned that there were too many vacant garages. Councillor Homan said that a review of the issue was currently being

undertaken and that a report could be brought to the PAC in due course. Kath Corbett noted that the 2017/18 budget included a significant increase in the income from garages as it was anticipated that more would soon be let.

Councillor Phibbs asked that an item be brought on communal heating charges as the current charging system allowed residents to be wasteful. Kath Corbett said that new communal heating meter regulations were anticipated and that a report could be brought after they had been released by the government.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm  
Meeting ended: 8.15 pm

Chair .....

Contact officer: Ainsley Gilbert  
Committee Co-ordinator  
Governance and Scrutiny  
☎: 020 8753 2088  
E-mail: ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk

# Agenda Item 4

<b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b>  <b>ECONOMIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND THE ARTS POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>7<sup>th</sup> March 2017</b>	 hammersmith & fulham
<b>GREENING OUR ESTATES</b>	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Lisa Homan</b>	
Open Report.	
<b>Classification - For Policy and Accountability Committee Review and Comment</b>	
<b>Wards Affected: All</b>	
<b>Accountable Director: Nilavra Mukerji, Director for Housing Services</b>	
<b>Report Author:</b> Sharon Schaaf, Head of Estate Services	<b>Contact Details:</b> 020 8753 2570 <a href="mailto:sharon.schaaf@lbhf.gov.uk">sharon.schaaf@lbhf.gov.uk</a>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Hammersmith and Fulham's ambition is to be the best and greenest borough. To help achieve this ambition, the housing service has developed and implemented a number of key initiatives that help improve local air quality, management of surface water, the quality of our green spaces, and enhance biodiversity on our estates.
- 1.2. This report provides an overview of projects undertaken towards achieving this ambition, and outlines the opportunities available to roll out further environmental improvements.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Committee notes and comments on the environmental improvement works undertaken by the housing service on Hammersmith and Fulham housing estates.
- 2.2. Committee notes this report focuses on specific strategies that deliver environmental benefits through greening of estates, does not cover other initiatives such as efforts to reduce our carbon footprint through our asset management programme, and provides a brief overview on initiatives to improve recycling & re-use.



### **3. 'GREENING' INITIATIVES COMPLETED TO DATE**

- 3.1. Hammersmith and Fulham has provided residents with a dedicated 'improvement' budget for environmental improvement projects of their choice for over 15 years, with the works delivered by Groundwork London. The budget was historically managed by project teams under various names – Minor Estate Improvement and Housing Estate Improvement Funds. This budget is currently awarded through our residents' 'Neighborhood Improvement Fund' panel.
- 3.2. The first H&F/Groundwork project where green roofs, rainwater gardens, food growing and swales were introduced was in 2012/13 at Flora Gardens. Other joint projects have taken place since 2012 with wildflower planting, food growing and fruit tree orchards of varying size introduced at a number of housing estates and sheltered housing schemes. Some of these projects have led to the creation of protected habitats. We've also installed a small number of bug hotels, bird houses and bat boxes.
- 3.3. In 2013/14 we commenced a large scale project on three estates, partly funded by the European Union - Life+. The scheme has demonstrated the strategic opportunity for climate change adaptation of open spaces on housing estates, increased the functional green infrastructure there, and improved local strategic flood risk interventions. This project has received national and international interest, also achieving a prestigious Landscape Institute Award in 2016, as well as additional funding from Thames Water to develop the scheme further. The success of the EU Life+ project can be attributed to the involvement of all stakeholders – residents, in house service providers, and good inter department co-operation as well as the quality of the architects and contractors who delivered the project.
- 3.4. As part of the same project, we installed a green roof whilst the planned flat roof renewal took place at Richard Knight House. As well as the environmental benefits identified, a further anticipated benefit of the green roof is extending the lifespan of the roof beyond normal timescales. Subject to available funding for the green roof costs, there is scope to adopt this approach to all programmed flat roof renewal for residential blocks, and to upgrade all of the outbuildings on estates to achieve additional green surface in the borough.
- 3.5. The measurable outputs of the EU life+ project are:
  - 2,500m<sup>2</sup> of enhanced green infrastructure
  - 25% increase in permeable surfaces
  - 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of water retention capacity
  - 600 trees planted
  - 600m<sup>2</sup> of green roofs
  - 400m<sup>2</sup> of food growing capacity
  - 10 rain water harvesting systems

- 3.6. Other residents have been enthused by the project, leading to further bids in 2015/16 through our resident led 'Neighborhood Improvement fund', to install more green roofs and for food growing – (including a large allotment at one estate that includes a bee hive). These projects are ongoing.
- 3.7. 2016/17 projects with an environmental angle are the improvement of an open space on West Kensington estate to create natural play and a community orchard, and garden improvement with food growing focus at Askham Court. The bids for 2017/18 are due to be considered in March 17.
- 3.8. We are developing a joint strategy to manage trees in estates and parks, and recently secured funding from the GLA to plant 32 trees on Wormholt and Bayonne estates, to complete the planting before the end of March 2017.
- 3.9. We have ceased using the potentially harmful weedkiller, glysohate in our parks and open spaces. Going forward we will use a chemical-free hot foam system to help reduce weed growth on estates.
- 3.10. Our grounds maintenance contractor idVerde (Quadron) composts all green waste where they are able. Residents have been encouraged to plant shrubs, herbs and flowers on their home estates in discussion with their own resident association. Together we've held 'Plant a Bulb' events, encouraging children to participate in gardening and hopefully develop a sense of ownership and achievement while creating a more pleasant space.
- 3.11. Officers from waste management and housing have collaborated over several years to improve recycling opportunities on estates, working together to introduce bring banks on block landings, and direct recycling through the chute refuse systems.
- 3.12. A more recent initiative has seen the creation of a repurpose/recycling hub on the White City estate known as The Loop. This has been effective in reducing bulk waste sent for incineration, provided good quality low cost furniture items for borough residents as well as volunteering and work opportunities for residents. Our ambition is to take this project forward and use the success of the White City scheme as a model for other estates subject to available funding.

#### **4. LOCAL CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

- 4.1. A 1988 study of the borough's wildlife habitats identified a total of 225 hectares of green space in the borough that constitutes 14 percent of the total surface area of the borough. A breakdown of this into different habitat types shows that over 60 percent of green space in the borough (150 hectares) comprises formal parkland, sports pitches, and amenity grassland. Of the remainder, the majority is grassland (30 hectares) and herbaceous communities (18 hectares).

- 4.2. Resident led focus groups now influence strategy and policy. H&F's Air Quality Commission (established in Jan 2016) has produced a report recommending the further development of an Urban Ecology Plan to drive greening policy and practice across the borough. Other recommendations are to incorporate arboricultural policies into the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), stagger street tree pruning to one in every three trees every three years, and increase tree, hedge and grass planting on Council-owned land and highways.
- 4.3. The resident led Biodiversity Commission was set up in January 2017 to examine ways of maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity of the borough. It will produce a report of findings and recommendations for action by central government, the Council, business, industry, organisations and residents.
- 4.4. There is further potential to improve local biodiversity, surface water management and air quality through improvements to both the ground level surfaces, and also to the estimated 45,000sm footprint of flat roofed buildings on housing estates.
- 4.5. Our housing estates have both hard and soft landscaping, with the soft landscaping included in the calculations above. The large and small estates have some 4000 trees of varied species and sizes.

## **5. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 5.1. There is a raft of legislation that governs environmental issues, all of which inform H&F's Local Plan (LP) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and departmental strategies. Example relevant legislation follows -
- 5.2. Section 40 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 makes local authorities responsible for conserving biodiversity; the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 provides protection for a range of species and habitats; the Government's Biodiversity 2020: 'A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' sets out the ambition to halt the overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020 with a longer term ambition to move to a net gain position; the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 requires us to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy; the National Planning Policy Framework requires that the local authority planning system both contributes to and enhances the natural and local environment.
- 5.3. The council's draft Local Plan sets out a number of planning policies to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure in the borough including:
  - Maximising the provision of gardens, landscaping and green/brown roofs;
  - Protecting gardens and encouraging planting in back and front gardens;
  - Seeking retention of existing trees and provision of new trees

- Adding to the greening of streets and the public realm.

## **6. FUTURE PLANS AND OPTIONS**

- 6.1. For future years, as part of planned maintenance and regeneration programs, we will where possible include low cost interventions that contribute to delivering further greening improvements, and develop future funding strategies. To demonstrate how this works, the masterplan for the estate improvement strategy of Aintree Estate was reviewed using the logics tested on the EU Life+ estates and resulted in changes to incorporate more permeable surfaces, drought tolerant planting etc. Using the key themes below will help us prioritise and develop further initiatives.

### ***Improving Air Quality***

- 6.2. The council is to consult residents and stakeholders on a new five-year 'air quality action plan', in line with our Air Quality Commission's recommendations. The agreed document will include an action plan with responsibilities for all council departments.
- 6.3. The Mayor of London has a target to increase the current estimated tree canopy cover in Greater London from 20% to 25%. In inner London the canopy cover is less so those large mature trees we do have within the estates are especially valuable and should be retained. In line with Greater London Authority policy, any tree lost should be replaced following the principle of 'right place, right tree, and wherever appropriate, preference should be given to planting large-canopied species.
- 6.4. Housing can contribute to achieving this target through the roll out of further improvements to green space and green roof schemes, and replacing all trees removed due to disease or failure. We should also only reduce the canopy of trees to address a statutory nuisance or health and safety risk as it is the large trees, on account of their greater biomass and canopy cover that provide increased environmental benefits.
- 6.5. A realistic assessment of the contribution trees provide should include these factors, together with criteria such as species and habitat diversity. Measuring benefits and outcomes solely in terms of tree numbers can be misleading.
- 6.6. Housing has invested year on year in increasing tree stock with for example 1000 'whips' planted in 2011/12 across the borough, of which our current estimate is that 20% survived and established. 150 'whips' were planted on Field Road estate in 2013/14, 2014/15 participating in the Mayor of London's street tree initiative and planted new trees on 10 housing sites. 2015/17 600 trees planted through EU Life+ project. These planned strategies are in addition to any trees replaced following removal if appropriate.

### ***Improving surface water management***

- 6.7. We have tested Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes (SUDs) as both small and large scale interventions, and subject to funding, we could deliver further SUDs schemes on most estates during planned maintenance or as unique projects.
- 6.8. A bid has been made to the Counters Creek Storm Relief Sewer S106 fund to introduce SUDs schemes on housing estates within the Counters Creek catchment area. If the Counters Creek scheme progresses by April/May 17, our funding bid would be considered by Committee later this year for decision around November, with successful bids achieving s106 payments in Q4 2017/18.

### ***'Greener' gardening and improving bio diversity***

- 6.9. We will undertake further discussions and consultation with residents in the coming year, to do more wildflower and long grass planting, which would both increase biodiversity and the habitat value of the amenity grass on housing land. These are low cost interventions that could be achieved through existing budgets, also involving the local community in the seeding and planting events.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1. Consultation is due on our Local Plan, Air Quality Action Plan and Urban Ecology Policy.
- 7.2. Housing residents and/or their representatives could be involved in developing the individual improvement plans for their own estates.
- 7.3. Service providers (e.g. Mitie, Quadron) will also be involved in developing estate plans.


## **8. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. All projects already undertaken and in progress by the Housing & Regeneration department are funded from existing budgets.
- 8.2. The financial implications of any opportunities to roll out further environmental improvements will be considered by finance officers and presented for approval as the projects are bought forward for approval.
- 8.3. Finance officers will support the financial management of the delivery of the SUDS schemes (referred to in paragraph 6.8) should the bid for funding of £500k from Section 106 be approved.

- 8.4. Implications verified/completed by: Danny Rochford, Head of Finance, HRD, 020 8753 4023.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000**  
**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description of Background Papers</b>	<b>Name/Ext of holder of file/copy</b>	<b>Department/ Location</b>
N/A	None		

<p><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p><b>ECONOMIC REGENERATION, HOUSING &amp; THE ARTS POLICY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>7 March 2017</b></p>	
<p><b>UPDATE REPORT ON THE STRATEGIC HOUSING STOCK OPTIONS PROGRAMME</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Director of Finance and Resources</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification:</b> For Policy &amp; Accountability Review &amp; Comment <b>Key Decision:</b> Yes</p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected:</b> All</p>	
<p><b>Accountable Director:</b> Kath Corbett, Director of Finance and Resources</p>	
<p><b>Report Author:</b> Dorothy Sturzaker, Project Manager (Governance and Finance)</p>	<p><b>Contact Details:</b> Tel: 020 8753 5892 Dorothy.Sturzaker@lbhf.gov.uk</p>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates on the Stock Transfer Programme following on from the decision taken by Cabinet on 7 December 2015. It describes how the benefits realised from the programme have been embedded in the Housing Service.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Committee note the report

## 3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 7 December 2015, following the recommendations of the Residents' Commission on Council Housing, Members agreed to pursue stock transfer to a new, locally-based not-for-profit Private Registered Provider constituted on the community gateway model. Members also noted that the stock transfer would be subject to, 'the availability of funding and the negotiation of a satisfactory financial settlement,' with Government.
- 3.2 Three other stock transfers<sup>1</sup> have taken place since that report, all in March 2016. All these transfers received Government funding.

<sup>1</sup> Gloucester, Durham & Salford

- 3.3 However, Government has now made it clear that there is no funding to support any more stock transfers.
- 3.4 The Council has with its advisors and the Shadow Board extensively explored all other options to finance a stock transfer, and has concluded it is not possible to produce a financially viable business case which also satisfies residents objectives.
- 3.5 It is not therefore possible to make an Offer to Residents as part of a Transfer Ballot. The stock transfer programme has been closed. The programme delivered a number of additional benefits which have now been handed over to the Housing Service, these are described further below.
- 3.6 The Council remains committed to safeguarding Council Homes via a resident-led new Defend Council Homes unit supported by the Housing, Growth, and Strategy service.

#### **4. BENEFITS**

- 4.1 Both the Residents Commission on Council Homes and the Stock Transfer Programme delivered a number of important benefits in addition to the core project objectives. These are set out below.
- Our stock condition survey for Council Homes was already due for a fundamental review. As part of the work of the Residents Commission on Council Homes a new Stock Condition Survey was carried out. This has been used to plan investment in residents' homes to ensure that they are maintained to a reasonable standard over the next 40 years and that those homes in most urgent need of investment are given a higher priority.
  - The Residents Commission on Council Housing produced a "Blueprint for the Housing Service", based on the evidence and experiences they gathered at the 12 public hearings. These principles have already made a huge impact on how we work, supporting our ethos of 'doing-with not-to'. The principles strongly informed our Service Improvement Programme for Housing, and have been a catalyst for our work to deliver a more resident led housing service.
  - Our new Resident Involvement Strategy launched at the Residents Conference back in June, ensures that the Blueprint principles are at the heart of the work we do. We have provided a few examples.
    - The Residents Reading Group has been invaluable in helping to ensure our documents are easy to read and written in non-Council speak!



- The Caretaking Review Group and Repairs Working Group have looked at various aspects of these key services, working with both Council and contractor teams to identify improvements.
  - The Communications Group used the style and approach from the Housing Commission, to review the council's and Mitie's approach to communication with residents. This valuable work will help shape our approach to service delivery going forward.
  - The Investment Group has worked with Tenants & Residents Associations across the borough, to help residents do more to improve their own estates.
  - The Inclusion Group has taken up the challenge of promoting more digital inclusion, with a number of pilots underway, and potential partners being sourced.
- Both the Residents Commission on Council Housing and the Stock Transfer programme resulted in a significant increase in resident engagement, through a number of opportunities for consultation, including the door knocking exercise. It provided the Council with a unique opportunity to get to know residents better, and engage them about the services they receive, and their local area. This more qualitative feedback has helped us further understand how we can shape and improve services going forward, and how to further involve residents to help raise standards.
  - The additional resident engagement throughout the process, especially the door knocking, enabled us to pick up on and resolve a lot of long term repairs issues.
  - The door knocking survey has enabled us to update residents contact details and demographic information where this was necessary. This will allow us to better support and serve our residents going forward, and improve our communication with them..
  - The work from the financial and feasibility studies, especially that carried out while trying to come up with a self-funded business case as part of the stock transfer programme, has been used to improve the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan going forward. It has helped us bring forward £12m of repairs we'd previously postponed as a result of the 1% rent cut. It's also helped us plan how we will provide additional new genuinely affordable homes for the future.

- The detailed corporate impact assessment has ensured an in depth review of the recharges between the HRA and General Fund.
- The Shadow Board was formed to act as the champion of residents' rights and security over the course of the Pre-Ballot period. Their role will be passed to the new Defend Council Homes unit led independent resident-led resource, whose remit will be to look at ways of giving Council residents greater ability to enforce their rights and protect their homes.

## 5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In December 2015, Cabinet approved for the pre-ballot phase of the Transfer Programme, a budget of £617k for 2015/16 and £778k for 2016/17 for the General Fund ("GF") and £80,000 for 2015/16 and £125k Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") for 2016/17.
- 5.2 The total budget for the pre- ballot stage was £1,395k for the GF and £205k for the HRA. Actual expenditure on the programme is much lower: £904k for 2015/16 and 2016/17 of which £802k was GF and £103k was HRA. Details are set out below:

Type of Expenditure	GF	HRA	HRA & GF
	2015/16 & 2016/17		2015/16 & 2016/17
	Total Spend	Total Spend	Total Spend Transfer Programme
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Legal Advice	103		103
Financial Advice	138		138
Communication Advice	99		99
Surveys and Door Knocking	76		76
Specialist Project Staff	308		308
Catering for the Shadow Board/RHAG	3		3
Newsletters	34		34
TPAS		103	103
Other - Recruitment of the Shadow Board	9		9
Other - Independent Advisers to the Shadow Board	32		32
<b>Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>904</b>

5.3 Implications reviewed by: Kath Corbett, Director of Finance and Resources.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000**  
**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description of Background Papers</b>	<b>Name/Ext of holder of file/copy</b>	<b>Department/ Location</b>
1.	None		

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2016/17

7 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 Small Hall, HTH, 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Arts Strategy	Donna Pentelow	To review the Council's proposed Arts Strategy.

5 <sup>th</sup> July 2016 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Libraries	Mike Clarke/Sue Harris/Helen Worwood	To consider the priorities of the service.
Update on the Resident Involvement Structure	Nilavra Mukerji / Daniel Miller	To receive an update on the Council's work to establish a structure consisting of a number of panels and groups designed to provide Council Tenants and Leaseholders with greater decision making powers and increased involvement

6 <sup>th</sup> September 2016 Clem Attlee Residents Hall, 6:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Older Persons Housing Strategy and Sheltered Accommodation	Nilavra Mukerji	To consider the new Older Persons Housing Strategy review the Council's provision of sheltered accommodation and support for older residents.
The development of new KPIs for Mitie	Nilavra Mukerji	To review the development of new Key Performance Indicators for the housing contractor Mitie. The new KPIs will more accurately monitor residents' key priorities

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2016/17

**1<sup>st</sup> November 2016**

**St John's Church, Vanston Place. 7:00pm.**

ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Update on High Street Revitalisation	Antonia Hollingsworth / Jo Rowlands	To scrutinise what the administration has done over regeneration of North End Road and Bloemfontein Road and to discuss future plans and proposals for the two areas. For the North End Road Action Group (NERAG) to report on their work over the last year and a half. To consider what action has been taken to tackle the problem of empty shops.
Social Lettings Agency	Jo Rowlands / Labab Lubab	To consider the benefits of a Social Lettings Agency working in the borough.
Libraries	Mike Clarke/Sue Harris	To consider an update on the work being done by officers following on from the meeting on 5 July 2016.

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

**Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.**

ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Financial Plan for Council Homes	Kath Corbett	To review the HRA budget before approval by Cabinet in early January 2017
Scaffolding	Nilavra Mukerji / Kath Corbett / Paul Monforte	To explain the Council's policy on the use of scaffolding in relation to social housing maintenance.

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

**Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.**

ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The draft Budget 2017/18	Mark Jones/Danny	To review the 2017/18 budget for the departments

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2016/17

	Rochford/Paul Gulley	covered by this committee.
--	----------------------	----------------------------

7 <sup>th</sup> March 2017 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Greening our Estates	Nilavra Mukerji	To consider how the council is promoting biodiversity and greener environments on its housing estates, for example by supporting kitchen gardens and green walls/roofs. The report is to cover the council's policy for replacing and maintaining trees.
Update on the Stock Transfer	Kath Corbett	To provide the committee and residents with an update on the progress made against the recommendations of the Residents Commission on Council Housing.

26 <sup>th</sup> April 2017 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Adult learning	Jo Rowlands / Eamon Sconlon	To review the adult learning curriculum delivered by the Council, to consider the results of the recent Ofsted inspection and to understand the impact of government reviews of learning outside of schools.
Digital Inclusion Projects on Council Estates	Nilavra Mukerji	To provide the committee an overview of the project.
Tackling worklessness	Jo Rowlands/ Glendine Shepherd	To assess the impact of the Government's welfare reforms and the measures undertaken by the Council to help people back into work, including the OnePlace project with JobCentre+

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2016/17

<b>Potential Future Items</b>		
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>REPORT BRIEF</b>
The Council's home energy strategy and measures to tackle fuel poverty	Nick Austin/Justine Dornan	To review the work of the Council to make homes as fuel efficient as possible and how vulnerable residents will be protected during the winter
Economic Growth Strategy 2016-26	Jo Rowlands	To discuss the new Economic Growth Strategy
Housing for disabled people	Jo Rowlands	To consider the proposed actions for meeting the housing needs of disabled people
Housing for refugees and asylum seekers	Jo Rowlands	To provide an overview of what the Council does to provide housing for refugees and asylum seekers, and the rules and funding streams relating to these.
Low Cost Home Ownership	Labab Lubab	To consider what schemes are available, how they are performing and what the Council has been doing to try to get more people into homes they own.
Tenants and Residents Halls	Nilavra Mukerji	To discuss how the council are trying to get tenants and residents halls used more.
Performance Data for the Housing Department	Nilavra Mukerji / Kath Corbett	To scrutinise the performance of Housing Services against key targets.
Arts	James Fitzgerald	To consider an update on progress made against the Arts Strategy.
Garages	Nilavra Mukerji	To consider efforts made to improve lettings rates and to investigate whether the Council is using its garages on Housing Revenue Account land effectively.
Communal Heating Charges	Kath Corbett	To consider whether improvements could be made to the way in which residents with communal heating are billed.