

## **THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

At a meeting of the **KENTISH TOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2024** at 6.30 pm in the Kennistoun and Willingham TRA Hall, Willingham Terrace, Leighton Road, London NW5 2UY

### **REGISTERED DMC MEMBERS PRESENT**

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Jane McWilliams (Chair)      | Brookfield Estate TRA                 |
| Derek Jarman (Vice-Chair)    | Kennistoun & Willingham TRA           |
| Josh Cedar                   | Holly Lodge Residents Association     |
| Sue Clarke (Sub)             | Carrol Close & Sanderson Close TRA    |
| John Cowley                  | Camden Square TRA                     |
| Ingrid Foxton                | Lissenden Gardens Tenants Association |
| Greg Hattingh                | Torriano Estate TRA                   |
| Joanna Hill                  | Maiden Lane TRA                       |
| Kevin Lawer (Sub)            | Ingestre Road Tenants Association     |
| John Loughran                | Ingestre Road Tenants Association     |
| Sophie Rodger                | Carrol Close & Sanderson Close TRA    |
| Helen Jack                   | Lissenden Gardens Tenants Association |
| Agnieszka Slominska-Karachuk | Whittington Estate TRA                |
| Pauline Stafford             | Maiden Lane TRA                       |

### **OTHER RESIDENTS PRESENT**

|                |                                      |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Terry Esnault  | Local Resident                       |
| Kay Reynolds   | Spencer Rise and Churchill TRA       |
| Paul Tomlinson | Amphill Square TRA (Camden Town DMC) |
| Tom Young      | Local Resident                       |

### **COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS PRESENT**

Councillors Meric Apak, Richard Cotton, James Slater and Sagal Abdi-Wali

### **COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS ABSENT**

Councillors Camron Aref-Adib, Sylvia McNamara, Andrew Parkinson and Anna Wright

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Natasha Constantinides, Consultation Officer (Tenant Participation)  
Deanne Jean-Marie, Customer Service Manager  
Stanton La Foucade, Tenant Participation Coordinator  
Jahaan Seesahai, Estate Management Service Manager  
Abdilatif Shidane, Neighbourhood Manager

**The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Kentish**

Town District Management Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. REGISTRATION OF TENANTS' AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND CO-OPTION OF TENANT REPRESENTATIVES**

The 'A' and 'B' lists were noted.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anna Wright, Steve Barton (Holly Lodge TRA), Momota Kahtoon (St Pancras Way Est TRA) and John Webb (Kennistoun, Willingham, Rosemary & Margaret TRA)

Tara Cookson (Neighbour Manager) advised that she was unable to attend the meeting.

### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no such declarations.

### **5. NOTIFICATIONS OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

There were no notifications of urgent business.

### **6. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the last meeting.

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the minutes of the meetings held on 23 July 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arsing

The Chair updated the meeting on the ongoing issues that had been experienced by the Highgate Safer Neighbourhood Panel. The Chair reported that a meeting had been held with the police to discuss the issues and an action plan was put in place. Those who attended had commented that the meeting had been a positive step forward.

## **7. KENTISH TOWN PROGRESS REPORT - ACTION POINTS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the actions arising from the previous meetings, which was circulated as a tabled paper.

### Heating Pool Update

The meeting was advised that once officers had information they required from the contractors, this meeting would be organised with TRAs. An update would be provided, once available.

### **ACTION: Tenant Participation**

### Housing News – Energy Performance Certificates

This could not be included in the next edition of Housing News as the deadline for new information had passed. Information would instead be circulated to residents by email and then information would be added to the next edition of Housing News.

### HS2

The Vice-Chair had made a request to the newly appointed Leader of the Council to write to the government on this issue. It was confirmed that the Leader would write to the Deputy Prime Minister.

The DMC were keen for this issue to be followed up as it was important that developers responsible for HS2 were committed to providing social housing.

### **ACTION: Tenant Participation**

## **8(a) LIFTS**

The discussion report on Lifts, which had been marked as to follow, was not provided therefore the meeting did not consider this item.

## **8(b) VOIDS**

The discussion report on Voids, which had been marked as to follow, was also not provided therefore the meeting did not consider this item.

It was suggested that the DMC should write a letter to the Chief Executive, relevant Directors, and Leader of the Council to ascertain why the reports were not provided and to express disappointment that the reports that were requested well in advance had not been produced.

**ACTION: Chair and Vice-Chair**

Cllr Apak, Ward Councillor, agreed to look into the issue further for the DMC.

Cllr Abdi-Wali, Cabinet Member for Better Homes, reported that she had spoken to officers and discussed concerns about the failure to provide reports and assured the meeting that this was not acceptable and work would be undertaken to ensure that this situation did not occur again in the future.

Cllr Abdi-Wali added that the services were still expected to provide the reports, so that the DMCs could receive the information they had requested. Officers clarified that work was ongoing to complete the reports, and they should be ready in late September or early October.

The DMC agreed that a special meeting should be scheduled to consider the reports, once they became available. A provisional date of 29 October 2024 for an in-person meeting was suggested.

**ACTION: Tenant Participation/ Committee Services**

**8(c) DMC BIDS PROCESS REVIEW**

Natasha Constantinides (Tenant Participation) introduced the report.

DMC representatives were in agreement that the proposals outlined in the report seemed beneficial and made the system more transparent, so were supportive of the proposals

Responding to a questions officers provided the following information:

- The project evaluation form requested that TRAs sent in photos of their projects, following completion.
- The new process will be in operation for the next round of DMC meetings (November/December).
- A new microsite was under development and it was hoped that this would enable applications to be made online, but for the time being applications and evaluation forms should be submitted by email.
- TRAs were advised to speak to their Tenant Participation Officer before submitting a bid.
- The new evaluation form asked for information about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and how residents with protected characteristics would be impacted

by TRA projects. The intention of this was to ensure that projects on estates were inclusive and beneficial for all residents.

- Collecting this information would mean that improvements could be made and that all residents felt included.

The report was noted.

## **9. KENTISH TOWN DMC BUDGET**

The Chair introduced the report.

Representatives from Brookfield Estate TRA outline the bid for the Christmas Festive Event they were planning. The TRA advised that there would be a Dickens themed Christmas market, a Santa's Grotto, which provide Christmas gifts to children on the estate, each of which would be specially picked for each child, Christmas Hampers for pensioners, ending with a Pantomime visit a few days before Christmas.

Representatives from Ingestre Road TRA outlined their project which aimed to improve gardens on the estate.

An update was also sought on the matched funding for the Peckwater Estate MUGA project, so that the remaining funding could be determined.

### **ACTION: Tennant Participation**

#### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the following bid requests be approved:

| <b>TRA</b>                   | <b>Bid Request</b>   | <b>Amount</b> |
|------------------------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Brookfield Estate TRA</b> | Christmas Festive Event  | £4,995.00     |
| <b>Ingestre TRA</b>          | Garden maintenance project – purchase of Wood chip, water bowser, hose and reel, and top ups for flower beds | £1,643.00     |

## **10(a) RESIDENTS ACTION DAY UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the information report.

The Tenant Participation Coordinator provided an update on the Residents Action Day and advised that the final arrangements were underway and a programme for the day had been finalised.

112 residents had registered to attend the event, with more expected to sign up. More promotional material would be sent out before the event.

The Tenant Participation Coordinator reported that the event was currently under budget in some areas.

Further information would be sent out by email and posters would be sent out by request, for TRAs to display on notice boards.

Responding to a question the Tenant Participation Coordinator explained that attendees were asked to book the talks, workshops or events they wanted to attend on the day when they booked a ticket to the event.

The information report was noted.

#### **10(b) UPDATE ON HEADS OF SERVICE EVENT**

Consideration was given to the information report.

The Vice-Chair, who was in attendance at the Heads of Service Event, provided an update to the meeting and reported that the Event was informative, and it was hoped that it would be an annual event going forward.

Responding to questions, the Tenant Participation Coordinator provided the following information:

- There will be more work on the format, so that there was enough time at the end for the TRA reps to ask questions.
- A video of the event and the Q&A would be uploaded to the microsite.
- Consideration was given to how the event would run in future and the format and frequency of these events.

The Cabinet Member for Better Homes was pleased that the event was a success that had proven to be useful for residents.

The information report was noted.

#### **10(c) WORKS COMMUNICATION TO TENANTS AND RESIDENTS**

The information report was noted.

**10(d) ASBESTOS REMOVAL**

The information report was noted.

**10(e) FIRE SAFETY UPDATE**

The information report was noted.

**10(f) KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Consideration was given to the information report.

The KPI report outlined that the Council had a 98% rent collection target, despite the £18million in rent arrears. The meeting noted that other London Boroughs had collection targets of 110% to address growing rent arrears.

The Cabinet Member of Better Homes explained that the position on arrears had improved, and the Welfare Team worked to support residents with rent arrears. It was noted that the transition to Universal Credit continued to be a cause of residents falling into arrears.

The DMC was informed that the total arrears in Kentish Town had decreased, however the Borough as a whole had increased.

The meeting agreed that it would be useful to have further information on the work that was underway to tackle arrears and requested a report be provided, including information on why the arrears were increasing.

**ACTION: Head of Leaseholder Services and Housing Income**

It was reported that KPIs will be a standing item on each agenda, the meeting was satisfied with how the data was presented.

The information report was noted.

**11. KENTISH TOWN LOCAL INFORMATION REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Neighbourhoods.

Abdilatif Shidane (Neighbourhood Manager) provided an overview of the report.

Responding to a question on downsizing incentives, the Neighbourhood Manager advised that incentives were advertised to residents however, sometimes residents had certain expectations which could be difficult to meet in the available properties, which meant that downsizing could be a challenge.

In response to a follow up question the Neighbourhood Manager agreed to report back to the meeting on how downsizing incentives were funded.

**ACTION: Neighbourhood Manager**

Generally, residents could not be compelled to downsize, it must be their choice. In certain situations, if a resident was under occupying, was in rent arrears and at risk of eviction the resident could be asked to downsize, but otherwise it was up to the resident to decide if downsizing was best for them.

Concern was expressed that lots of families were living in properties that were far too small, which could then lead to issues with damp and mould, and if more people under occupying chose to downsize it would help resolve this issue.

The meeting also noted that small flats on estates had been sold, reducing the availability of small properties.

The report was noted.

**11(a) MOTION - DIRECT LABOUR AT HOLMES ROAD**

Consideration was given to the motion as set out in the Tabled Paper, which was moved by the Chair and seconded by the Vice-Chair.

Paul Tomlinson, Camden Town DMC Rep, accompanied by Tom Young, introduced the motion as set out in his written submission.

The Vice-Chair expressed support of the motion and was concerned that the council facilities were services were proposed to be moved to would not be able to support capacity.

DMC Reps were concerned about the future of the recycling facilities currently at Holmes Road. Tom Young, a local Architect supporting the motion confirmed that the developer has committed to replacing the recycling centre.

Responding to questions and comments, Tom Young provided the following information:

- Other facilities, such as the Police Station would also be demolished as part of the plans.
- The Holmes Road Depot was refurbished in 2020 at a cost of £8.5million.
- The site was then reportedly sold for £33million, which was deemed to be vastly under value.
- There were 25 flats on the site, with 4 leaseholders and 21 council tenants residing there. The residents had not received information on the future of their homes.



Concern was expressed by the DMC that Unions had not yet been consulted on the future of the Holmes Road Depot, considering it was a place of work for many council employees.

The Cabinet Member for Better Homes confirmed that the sale was subject to Planning Permission and whilst plans were not yet confirmed, a new depot would have to be built, to support jobs and future employment opportunities and apprenticeships. The plans were still in very early stages; therefore, it was difficult to comment on the future of the site.

The Chair acknowledged that whilst it may be too early to comment and plans were not confirmed, it was important for residents to get this information as soon as possible, as residents often felt they were the last to know about plans that directly impacted them.

The Cabinet Member for Better Homes confirmed that conversations would continue, once more information on the future of the site had been obtained

The meeting agreed to accept the motion and noted that it was of vital importance that the DMC be kept up to date with developments, considering that the redevelopment area was in Kentish Town. Therefore, it was

**RESOLVED –**

- i) THAT the Kentish Town DMC accept the motion; and
- ii) THAT an update on the Regis Road redevelopment be provided to each future meeting of the Kentish Town DMC.

**ACTION: Director of Property Management**

**12. CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet Member for Better Homes.

The Cabinet Member for Better Homes provided an overview of the report highlighting the key objectives she had set for her time in the role.

The Cabinet Member for Better Homes then provided the following information in response to questions:

- If a council owned property was sold, it must be replaced with another property.
- However, it was not like for like replacement and there was currently a focus on increasing the number and availability of family sized homes due to the serious overcrowding issues within the Borough.

- There were not currently enough available properties to house larger families experiencing overcrowding.
- However, it was acknowledged that those seeking smaller properties were also facing issues.
- There were a number of different issues with no easy solution.
- Voluntary downsizing was welcome, and incentives were offered for those choosing to do so.
- However, there was a need to find a solution that did not rely on pressuring people to move out of their homes, as residents had lifelong tenancies, and many had been in their properties for a long time.
- More homes needed to be built, which was a priority of the new government.
- Work was undertaken alongside other Local Authorities to write a report with recommendations to the new government.
- The report had been sent to Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister for consideration.
- The lack of provision for young people had a huge impact on Anti-Social Behaviour, youth violence and offending, so it was a key goal of the Cabinet Member to build upon provisions for young people to move towards addressing these issues.
- The HRA was in deficit and overspends had been met by dipping into reserves, so it was important to rebuild reserves to be financially secure. However, increasing rents to meet the shortfalls would make payments unaffordable, so it was important to balance priorities.

The report was noted.

### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 8.53 pm.

### **CHAIR**

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**MINUTES END**