

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

<p>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY</p> <p>REPORT OF LIVING IN HACKNEY SCRUTINY COMMISSION</p> <p>NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING GAIN REVIEW</p> <p>Living in Hackney – 18th March 2015</p> <p>Cabinet – 20 July 2015</p> <p>Council – 25th November 2015</p>	<p>Classification</p> <p>Public</p>	<p>Enclosures</p> <p>Appendix 1</p> <p>Executive Response</p>
	<p>Ward(s) affected</p> <p>All</p>	

Introduction

This review explored the avenues of affordable housing delivery in Hackney – the contributions by private housing developers, through developments delivered by Registered Housing Providers (Housing Associations), and, more recently, through the Council recommencing its own housing delivery.

The Commission took evidence from a range of stakeholders and scrutinised the Council’s work in gaining as much affordable housing as it can from new privately funded developments and found good and committed work ongoing, although there are some recommendations which we feel could make negotiations more effective.

The Commission heard of the challenges faced by Registered Housing Providers in continuing to develop in the borough and made suggestions around actions that the Council may be able to take to better support them and to help address any relocation of their activities away from inner London. The Review explored the Council’s own housing delivery and have been very impressed with this housing programme.

While there are recommendations for changes for the Council to make on a local level, the Commission has not found any golden bullet with which rafts of more genuinely affordable housing units could be delivered, without wider national and regional changes. Subsidy has fallen with Central Government asking that the gap be filled by charging rents at levels which deem ‘affordable’ housing unaffordable to many. The Council despite being able to show sound business plans and a track record of delivery, is not able to access the finance with which it could do even more.

The findings from the evidence gathered reinforces the Commission view that the council must continue the work within the environment as it currently stands and make a stronger case for the changes needed on a wider level in order for further substantive progress.

The targeted nature of the Commission's recommendations encompass the national, regional, and local issues around affordability and add value to the further development and delivery of affordable housing in the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is requested to note the Commission's report and the response to it from the Executive.

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