

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 13th November 2019 Item 4 – Discussion with small and medium-sized Housing Associations – focus on repairs services and transfers	Item No 4
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Outline

In its last meeting the Commission received background information around Housing Associations / Registered Housing Providers. This included insight into the number of providers operating in the borough, their stock numbers, the different approaches / models which they may follow, and the extent and nature of their engagement with the Council.

Further to this the Commission decided that its main review of the year should seek to compare and contrast approaches of different providers within a range of themes, and their relationships with the Council. It would be intended that this would be delivered alongside hearing from Housing Association tenants and leaseholders around their experiences.

The review has not yet been scoped. However, the discussions in the September meeting highlighted a number of specific aspects as being of interest to Members. These were:

- Repairs services (including the way that providers engage with both residents and local Councillors where there are any concerns around service effectiveness)
- Approaches to transfers (support offered to residents – including vulnerable tenants and leaseholders - where rehousing is required)
- How providers co-operate with the Council's strategic housing function. Including contributions to the Council meeting local housing need and homelessness duties through allocations and nomination agreements. To include exploring providers' acceptance of nominations made by Council – including of more vulnerable households – and the extent of tenancy sustainment support.
- Assessing the infrastructure supporting the partnerships and relationships between the Council and Housing Associations. To compare Hackney's current Better Homes Partnership arrangement

with those being followed elsewhere (for example the London Borough of Waltham Forest's Housing Compact)).

- Providers' roles as social purpose organisations, and activities delivered to improve quality of life in Hackney. To include approaches to reinvesting surpluses in the local area and to the delivery of extended services (for example employment training and youth provision).
- To explore work to tackle anti-social behaviour and to keep neighbourhoods safe and clean.

In terms of the practicalities of exploring this broad range of areas and any others, it is suggested the Commission seeks to explore different aspects, across a number of different meetings.

Another suggestion is that small and medium-sized housing associations are looked at separately of large providers¹. This is due to points made in the last meeting around the very different scales of operations for smaller and medium sized providers compared to larger ones, and also around evidence pointing to smaller and medium, more locally based organisations generally providing a better service to residents compared to the very large ones.

This item

A number of small and medium sized providers have been invited to attend for this item. This is for a discussion focused on two aspects: Repairs services and approaches to transfers.

Invited guests:

- Aziz Rahim, Chief Executive, North London Muslim Housing Association
- Bashir Uddin, Director, Bangla Housing Association
- Ruth Davison, Chief Executive, Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA)
- Ita Symons, Chief Executive, Agudas Israel Housing Association (AIHA)
- Suzanne Wolfe, Chief Executive, Industrial Dwellings Society (IDS) (Suzanne has sent apologies on behalf of IDS and offered for IDS attendance at a future meeting)

Action

No papers have been provided for this item in time for them to be published in this agenda. Members are invited to ask questions of guests around the topics of repairs and transfers.

¹ The Greater London Authority (GLA) defines small and medium sized providers as housing associations that own fewer than 7,500 affordable homes in London, and fewer than 25,000 affordable homes nationally.