

Subject: Housing Committee Work Programme

Report to: Housing Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 16 October 2014

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the proposed work programme for the Committee during the 2014/15 Assembly year.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee agrees a proposed adjustment to its work programme as identified in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In order for relevant preparatory work to be undertaken, Members need to agree the subject of the next project they wish to investigate later in the Assembly year.
- 3.2 Members will receive a report at each Committee meeting on the progress of the projects agreed as the basis for the work programme. Additional projects will be included in the work programme from time to time reflecting the need for the Committee to respond to tasks such as consultations or other events as necessary.

Criteria for topic selection

- 3.3 The criteria for selecting topics are some, or all, of the following: That the topic
- 1) Addresses a strategic challenge relating to housing in London, with a particular emphasis on:
 - developing and maintaining sustainable communities
 - reducing inequalities and offering opportunities to all Londoners;
 - 2) Relates to the responsibilities and priorities of the Mayor and GLA Group;
 - 3) Provides an opportunity for the Committee to influence policy ; and

- 4) Provides an opportunity for the Committee to add value by bringing significant new evidence or new perspectives to the debate.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The Committee has agreed improving the affordability of home ownership as its next new topic for investigation. In order for sufficient preparatory work to be undertaken alongside the Committee's two other ongoing investigations, it is proposed that the Committee's first meeting on this topic be moved from November to December.
- 4.2 The Mayor published a new Housing Strategy, following consultation, in April 2014.¹ The Strategy contained outline proposals for a range of significant initiatives, notably seeking to increase the supply of new homes in London and to improve quality standards in the private rental sector. Six months on, these proposals have been taken forward:
- the London Rental Standard was launched in May 2014 with the aim of raising professional standards in the private rented sector, by promoting longer tenancies and tackling rogue landlords;
 - the deadline for bids for the Housing Zone designation passed on 30 September 2014 and an announcement on successful bids is expected in November, although early bids have been following a fast-track timetable. The Mayor is combining £200m of his housing funding with match-funding from the Treasury to try to unlock or accelerate housing supply; and
 - a discussion paper on the Mayor's proposed London Housing Bank was published in April and consultation closed in May 2014. In its first phase, using £200m of GLA funding, the Bank is intended to provide soft loans or investment to support Registered Providers in the delivery of additional affordable homes outside of the regular routes. A prospectus was expected in the Summer with an announcement in November but no further information has yet been made public.
- 4.3 It is therefore proposed that the November meeting slot be used for an update from GLA Housing and Land on progress with these key elements of the Mayor's new Housing Strategy. This session would also assess the extent to which the Committee's recommendations relating to these matters have been taken into account or implemented, such as those contained in the Committee's reports on rent reform² and its letter on encouraging diversity in London's house building industry.³

Future topics

- 4.4 The table below sets out the allocated dates for the Housing Committee in 2014/15 and lists the main business proposed for each date at this stage. The business for future dates is subject to change as the Committee develops proposals for its work. Dates may be used for formal Committee meetings, informal meetings, site visits or other activities for the Committee. The work programme also provides for the Committee to respond to any matters that arise at short notice.

¹ [Housing in London, GLA, April 2014](#)

² [Rent Reform: Making the Private Rented Sector Fit for Purpose \(June 2013\)](#)

³ [Letter to the Mayor – London Development Panel and Diversity in the Housebuilding Industry \(August 2013\)](#)

Housing Committee meeting date	Proposed topic
Tuesday 11 November 2014	Update on Mayor's Housing Strategy 2014
Tuesday 2 December 2014	Improving the affordability of home ownership
Tuesday 20 January 2015	Improving the affordability of home ownership
Tuesday 10 February 2015	<i>To be agreed</i>
Tuesday 17 March 2015	<i>To be agreed</i>

4.5 Other topics proposed for later in the municipal year include:

- **Affordable homes numbers** – the Committee will wish to keep the number of affordable homes built in London under review;
- **Lettings agencies** – following up on the Committee's work last year on the private rented sector, assessing the effectiveness of different models for regulating lettings agencies and including consideration of social lettings agencies;
- **Student housing** – looking at build quality and prices of new student accommodation in London;
- **Rent controls** – also following up work from the Committee's Private Rented Sector report published in 2013, considering the range of mechanisms applied in Europe and whether or how they might work in London; and/or
- **Housing Zones** – scrutinising proposals for the Mayor's new Housing Zones which are identified in his recent Housing Strategy.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report: None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers: None

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