

**Panel meeting –** hybrid meeting in person at 4 Chiswell St, London EC1Y 4UP and online

Thursday 8 December 2022, 10-12 (9-9.50am Members pre-meeting)

**Present**: Dinah Roake (Chair)

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| * Conor O’Shea (Generation Rent) * Chris Bailey (Action on Empty Homes) * Marcin Brajta (Camden Community Law Centre) * Sebastian O’Kelly (Leasehold Knowledge Partnership) [joined for full Panel] * Samanthi Theminimulle (Young private renters group, Toynbee Hall) | * Greg Robbins (London Federation of Housing Co-operatives) * Pat Turnbull (London Tenants Federation) * Fiona Colley (Homeless Link) * Anna Kear (Tonic Housing Association) * Abdirachid Fidow (Anti-Tribalism Movement) * Svetlana Kotova (Inclusion London) * Tilly Smith (Generation Rent) |

**In attendance**: Susie Dye (Trust for London), Jonathan Schifferes (GLA), Tom Copley (Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development), Jack Maizels (GLA), Leila Baker and Mary Carter (Panel Secretariat)

**Observers in attendance:** Luca Dellepiane, Mark McCahill, Darren Irish (all GLA)

**Apologies**: Melanie Sirinathsingh (Kineara), Mikey Erhardt (Young private renters group, Toynbee Hall), Sam Ashton (London Councils), Sam Hurst (GLA), Rebecca Goshawk (Solace Women’s Aid)

**Members pre-meeting, 9-9.50am**

* Members discussed themes to bring to the Planning for London item – see main meeting minutes.
* Members discussed the focus of each working group – see main meeting minutes.
* Working group notes/Panel papers – Some members said that they would prefer that full minutes are circulated rather than a summary of them.
* Items 3-6 are outstanding. To be brought back to March meeting if not able to be addressed sooner.

**Main meeting, 10-12**

1. **Chair’s welcome, introductions and updates**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including GLA observers. She recorded her thanks to Just for Kids Law for their contribution to the work of the Panel especially in its first year when they helped shape its work on children and families in temporary accommodation.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

The notes from the last meeting held on 20 September 2022 were approved by Panel and GLA.

1. **Chair’s business**

Chair has attended two Homes for Londoners Board meetings. Due to attend Housing Delivery Task Force meeting around Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) and housing supply chaired by the Deputy Mayor on 9 December. The chair will aim to bring to it views of residents/people without homes. Across both meetings there has been a focus on economic turbulence. With Susie Dye, Trust for London, Chair met with Sakina Sheikh, Chair of London Assembly Planning and Regeneration Committee.

1. **Standing item: Planning for London**

Jack Maizels, GLA, introduced the item and explained that the Planning for London website will be updated soon and organisations will be able to register for the stakeholder events. The GLA is pleased to be able to co-host a stakeholder event with the Panel. At this meeting want to think about issues and content.

Inclusion London: As part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), will have to look at protected characteristics. The Panel’s event could facilitate discussion on particular characteristics (also class) and the way those intersect. e.g. disabled people who are stuck in unsuitable accommodation because of a lack of accessible housing. GLA agreed that the PSED will apply but not to be limited to that. Will have to carry out an integrated impact assessment and that will feed into the options assessment.

GLA is still thinking about how to get different voices into the stakeholder events. How to ensure the discussion is set up so that people can feed in. Londoners will be selected for the deliberative event based on housing tenure, gender, ethnicity, income among other things.

Tonic Housing Association: Can you look at the totality of the housing system when seeking solutions? If you provide housing for specific needs e.g. older people, then what housing do you release? That isn’t usually measured. Smith Institute research covers this: [Housing allocations and the vacancy chain: how coordinating chains can better meet housing needs and tenant choice](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.smith-institute.org.uk%2Fbook%2Fhousing-allocations-and-the-vacancy-chain-how-coordinating-chains-can-better-meet-housing-needs-and-tenant-choice%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7C53e0912b452046d1a9ef08daddc00419%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638066114028375862%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Auh2k8QHi54EyG4urKfngXUG0rsc%2BXgOEfpMNJ9GJZY%3D&reserved=0).

LFHC: Who do we think social housing should be for and what do we want to achieve by it? Do we want to create mixed communities where people don’t feel they have been dumped?

Homeless Link: It’s important to hear voices of people with lived experience of homelessness. The deliberative events might not be the best way to do that and can be traumatising. Homeless Link can assist via Expertlink. Themes include the lack of accommodation to be able to move out of supported housing, the lack of housing to deliver Housing First.

GLA is keen to work with Panel to co-host a stakeholder event. Maybe it’s more than one event. Could be an ‘anyone’ event (as took place last time the London Plan was being developed) and a more targeted event.

London Tenants Federation: In defence of big events, the Examination in Public for the last London Plan was good, an opportunity to bring in grassroots groups and excluded people were represented. GLA not ruling out a big event and keen to bring in grassroots groups, but need to think which voices are missing and how to target which might be different events/formats.

Young Private Renters Group, Toynbee Hall: If there could be more transparency around the group that would be appreciated. Would encourage GLA to think about diversity rather than representativeness. GLA response we are looking at a group that broadly reflects the London population.

GLA explained that there is a statutory requirement to do an Examination in Public of the London Plan. It’s conceived as a way to object. The idea behind Planning for London is that it’s about saying let’s have a more deliberately inclusive way to hear from people. And to say here are the problems, how do we go about addressing them. These are the challenges and choices, how do we approach that.

**Actions and decisions:**

* The GLA and Panel will co-host a stakeholder event on housing. Coordination of the event will sit with the Project Reach & Influence working group.
* The Panel (via the Secretariat) to continue to talk to Planning for London team about the potential for members to sit on a steering group.
* Compile member views on what worked well/ less well in last London Plan processes.

1. **Working groups**

**5.1 Housing supply**

Panel would like the GLA to work with them on what are the blockages to delivering social housing looking ahead. Aware that increasing social housing is a shared issue so how do we boost supply and what would be the costs to ‘massively increase social housing’. And could we do a piece of work to understand the cost benefits of this.

Deputy Mayor reported that [Savills](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.london.gov.uk%2Fprogrammes-strategies%2Fhousing-and-land%2Fincreasing-housing-supply%2Flondons-affordable-housing-funding-requirement&data=05%7C01%7C%7Ce7868a41b67247fddf4408daddc7957a%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638066146516703173%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=oVzM1Rw2ewgkLyi7vkbe3wYxY1L%2B327TUyDxpG7riDI%3D&reserved=0) has produced the figures for the cost of delivering affordable – majority social – housing at the level we need. It does not calculate cost benefits e.g. housing benefit savings or other. The last time this work was done was Capital Economics [author T. Copley] now out of date. London would require an additional £4.4bn annually (£22.2bn over five years) to deliver the number of affordable homes that London needs, equivalent to more than six times the funding settlement London received in 2020. The cost benefit angle is useful. The NAO has said that affordable homes in London are better value than homes built outside London and the Public Accounts Committee picked up on that.

LHFC: Interested to look at other ways to boost supply e.g. through cooperative housing.

Trust for London: Can we envision a system that delivers social housing at scale?

London Tenants Federation: There is a gap between what we are talking about and the situation now. Opportunity Areas could target social housing in these areas and demand developers deliver. In 2019/20 79% was market housing and only 2% social housing. If you wanted it to be all social housing then that would always require a grant.

Deputy Mayor pointed out that they are getting more referred to GLA and levels of social housing being developed are rising but it takes time to work through to delivery.

**Actions and decisions:**

* Members to look at analysis by Savills that sets out the cost of delivering affordable – majority social – housing at the level needed.
* At the next working group meeting, come back to officers with comments and discuss the potential to do some work on cost benefits.

**5.2 Building Londoners voice in housing**

Noted the positive discussion about Planning for London. This group is focused on how do the GLA currently engage with the grassroots and get that feeding into the policy process. The group hasn’t wanted to comment until it understands current processes for this before looking at good practice examples. So far we – the Panel – have taken a Housing & Land approach to engagement and we don’t want to reinvent the wheel. So the question back to the GLA is where do you think it would be helpful for us to engage within the GLA?

London Tenants Federation has produced a report on the democratic deficit even among the large body of social housing tenants because of the run-down of tenant and residents associations.

GLA observed that it tends to be crises/challenges that lead Housing & Land’s grassroots engagement to bring people together and welcomes the idea of a joined-up approach beyond Housing & Land.

**Actions & decisions:**

* Planning for London needs to hear from people with experience of homelessness and also from grassroots groups; and different event formats may be needed for that.
* Agreed to have a joined-up conversation with GLA Communities and Housing & Land in order to avoid reinventing the wheel/hear how they engage with grassroots.

**5.3 Temporary accommodation**

The chair of this working group had sent apologies due Generation Rent: Two areas that were important to the working group: wants a holistic look at TA and the role of other tenures including PRS; and keen to include people who’ve experienced homelessness in order to understand that experience as part of a system as a way to fully understand it as part of the housing system.

Trust for London’s Better TA Initiative/ Secretariat: Leila Baker reported back that the London Housing Directors Working Group on Temporary Accommodation has now agreed its Terms of Reference and will be active from January 2023. It welcomes working with the Panel and there are plans to pilot training with housing options teams delivered by people with experience of TA.

Justlife are setting up Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAGs) in 5 areas with support from local strategic partners to amplify the voices of TA residents to advocate, lobby and influence for change. They have established plans to work in Westminster, Newham and Waltham Forest and seek the Panel/Deputy Mayor’s advice on which other boroughs to focus on. Southwark abd Brent were recommended and the Deputy Mayor offered to follow up with his local political connections in Brent.

London Tenants Federation pointed out that Right to Buy Back is going on TA when wouldn’t it be better to use it to provide permanent homes; and was aware that Capital Letters in Hackney have got no homes.

Deputy Mayor: the balance of Right to Buy Back is 50:50 permanent social housing and TA. This is a crisis and local authorities have very little choice. Using RtoBB properties is more viable because they can ask LHA rather than social housing rents.

**Actions & decisions:**

* Support for the proposal to pilot training with housing options teams delivered by people with experience of TA. Working group to discuss next steps.
* Recommending Brent or possibly Southwark for future Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAGs). Secretariat to feed back to Justlife.

**5.4 Race equity in housing**

The group has struggled to find members. The GLA is already doing very good work on this including its [Housing and race equality in London](https://airdrive-secure.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/london/dataset/housing-research-notes/2022-03-23T07%3A59%3A24/Housing%20Research%20Note%208%20-%20Housing%20and%20race%20equality%20in%20London.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAJJDIMAIVZJDICKHA%2F20221121%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20221121T103342Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-Signature=f63229a66cbba748a5ffbb7ec46ffd88bc65db07ce9859d32e5289f208dcaf41&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host) evidence report so the next step could be to hear from that and use that to inform ourselves.

**Actions & decisions:**

Decision to not continue to meet as a separate working group. At the next Panel meeting to have a presentation from the GLA on their research on race and housing. The scope of that discussion being to inform ourselves.

**5.5 Project/Reach and influence**

The group’s update was noted.

**Actions & decisions:**

See action above on Planning for London co-hosted stakeholder event coordination.

1. **AHP EDI action plans**

The GLA piloted a contractual requirement that partners provide an EDI action plan. At the last meeting, the Panel discussed the proposed framework being used by officers in the Investment Operations Team to assess the plans. This framework was amended based on Panel Members’ feedback.

Officers provided the following feedback about their experience of assessing the Plans. A full note of the feedback is included as an addendum to these minutes.

The team has found the guidance useful and is now interested to look ahead at how the plans will be monitored. In terms of assessment, it is up to the GLA what is a proportionate remedial action when a plan falls short. The context for this is a challenge – given current ‘turbulence’ it’s not the case that if the GLA has to pull the funding from one partner, then another partner will step in to provide those homes.

Coops UK: The format of the plan is not the issue, it’s about the impact of the plan. It would be good to have feedback on what are the areas where they're failing and where those are significant or not. GLA responded that they do need to have a checklist format so that they can share their assessment with lawyers given that part of the commissioning process is that legal backstop. GLA is on a journey culturally to be able to have a more discursive approach to looking at this.

**Actions & decisions:**

* GLA to update the Panel about what happened to Leadership 2025’s offer to review/monitor the EDI Action Plans.
* Voice working group to include this in their joined-up conversation with the GLA’s Communities and Housing & Land teams.

1. **Open Space to raise emerging or pressing topics**

There is a Housing Delivery Taskforce meeting taking place the next day on 9 December, chaired by Deputy Mayor and with the Panel Chair attending. This Roundtable will be focused on finding solutions e.g. what are the solutions to the current skills shortage that mean we are not set up to build even if you take away the funding issues?

Tonic Housing Association pointed out that there is a lot of shared ownership properties empty and difficulties getting mortgages. Could we do a rent to buy product? The Deputy Mayor responded that there have been various attempts around the country which haven’t worked, but that’s no excuse to give up.

London Tenants Federation pointed out that London Living Rent is advertised as a rent to buy tenure.

London Tenants Federation called for a rent freeze not a rent cap – latter still allows for a rent rise.

Generation Rent raised the issue of exempt accommodation: the worst end of the private rented sector is going into this. The Deputy Mayor noted that he has been asked about this by the Housing Committee.

Generation Rent raised short-term lets and Airbnb. And offered to keep Deputy Mayor and Panel updated on a/ progress of Rachel Maskell MP’s Private Members Bill, Short-term and Holiday-let Accommodation (Licensing) Bill which was due to have its second reading on 9 December; and an amendment to the Levelling Up Bill on the same issue.

Other points raised

Infrastructure levy: Trust for London is part of a housing policy funders group that is looking at this and considering putting out a letter that raises the issues. Centre for Social Justice is due to release a report. Action on Empty Homes is working on this as part of the [Better Planning Coalition](https://betterplanningcoalition.com/). The Deputy Mayor said he was also very concerned about this.

Leasehold Knowledge Partnership: asked if there was an up to date assessment of Right to Buy figures. Deputy Mayor said that he can share the way this was last calculated (using FOIs).

**Actions & Decisions**

Dinah to circulate details of the request from the Deputy Mayor for ideas/solutions.

1. **Next steps**

The Chair thanked Jonathan Schifferes, GLA for all his work and support for the Panel.

The next London Housing Panel meeting will be at 3pm-5pm 7 March 2023 (2-3 Members pre-meeting) ***please note change of time***. Future meetings will be scheduled to take place one week before the Homes for Londoners Board meetings – dates to be arranged once the new schedule of Board meetings have been confirmed.

**Dates of other future meetings:**

Homes for Londoners Board meeting – 1 March 2023 at 10am.

**Feedback on GLA EDI Action Plans**

1. What do you think of the new guidance for assessing EDI Action Plans?

The guidance has been very useful for our teams to assess the plans. That being said, in terms of the action plans submitted by bidders; although most bidders understood what was required, some partners struggled with understanding why this was required at such a level of detail while others either felt this was not in the remit of their housing delivery teams or that their organisation was already EDI compliant so the guidance was setting out a different approach to what they were already doing.

* This has been useful but in respect of assessments, but I think some guidance/definitions/training on how the key standards are assessed, would have helped. For example, if a partner publishes its gender pay on Gov.uk website, is this satisfactory or are they required to publish pay for diverse background or disable employees?

1. How have you found applying the guidance against the funding condition for bidders to have an action plan?

Accordingly, bidders responded differently. Bidders were advised by our teams, well ahead of the deadlines on the criteria and were reminded regularly during update meetings on making an early start considering the current programme delivery pressures would intensify as we got closer to the end of the year. Submissions were for the most part timely and most submissions generally met the criteria using the guidance provided. However, a number of  partners struggled, either with the required level of detail, the format required and/or the prioritising of this workstream against their delivery pressures under the current programme. There was also a general feeling amongst our teams that it was a challenge to provide further information particularly where queries from bidders were very detailed as we were not experts in this field. Most of these queries arose when bidders involved their HR departments in the drafting of their submissions.

* Some partners already have EDI action plans, are they required to update it so it is in line with the requirements of the GLA? If so, these take time as would require approvals from internal board.
* How do we evidence the achievements  such as staff take up (e.g. recruitment data for under-represented groups; one of the five min EDI standards?)
* Personally, I was not clear on how to score partners on sustainable/diverse supply chains.

1. How important is the EDI Action Plan to achieving EDI outcomes in the housing sector by using GLA’s grant-making powers?

The action plan is useful for contractually ensuring that partners provide a vision for change, rationale for implementing the actions or initiatives set out, and timeframe for implementation, effectively road-mapping their initiatives to develop and improve their approach to EDI. This would encourage ourselves and our partners to reflect approaches to EDI; effect lasting culture change in their organisations; as well as embedding EDI in how homes are developed and delivered, helping to ensure that the homes delivered through the AHP meet the needs of London’s diverse communities.

* Without doubt, it is important, however, our 2021-26 contract, remains silent on any enforcement by the GLA if these actions are not delivered.

1. Is there anything you have been impressed/disappointed/surprised by?

I have been impressed as to how well tuned most of our partners to EDI in their organisational structure, processes and service delivery. I was also impressed by how much fervour there was to do more and recognising the significance of improving this area.

* Impressed by some partners already incorporating EDI action plans but it will be key for the GLA to understand how these are properly assessed if we were to enforce any action in future.

**Panel meeting held on 8 December 2022**

**Actions & Decisions (draft pending preparation of full minutes, circulated 9 December)**

* Minutes of Panel meeting held on 20 September 2022 were agreed.
* Planning for London standing item.
  + The GLA and Panel will co-host a stakeholder event on housing. Coordination of the event will sit with the Project Reach & Influence working group.
  + The Panel (via the Secretariat) to continue to talk to Planning for London team about the potential for members to sit on a steering group.
  + Compile member views on what worked well/ less well in last London Plan processes.
* Housing Supply working group (1)
  + Members to look at analysis by Savills that sets out the cost of delivering affordable – majority social – housing at the level needed.
  + At the next working group meeting, come back to officers with comments and discuss the potential to do some work on cost benefits.
* Voice working group (2)
  + Planning for London needs to hear from people with experience of homelessness and also from grassroots groups; and different event formats may be needed for that.
* Agreed to have a joined-up conversation with GLA Communities and Housing & Land in order to avoid reinventing the wheel/hear how they engage with grassroots.
* Temporary accommodation working group (3)
* Support for the proposal to pilot training with housing options teams delivered by people with experience of TA. Working group to discuss next steps.
* Recommending Brent or possibly Southwark for future Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAGs). Secretariat to feed back to Justlife.
* Noted that Capital Letters reporting unavailability of properties in Hackney
* Race equity and housing working group (4)
* Decision to not continue to meet as a separate working group. At the next Panel meeting to have a presentation from the GLA on their research on race and housing. The scope of that discussion being to inform ourselves.
* Project/Reach and influence working group (5)
* See action above on Planning for London co-hosted stakeholder event coordination.
* EDI Action Plans
  + GLA to update the Panel about what happened to Leadership 2025’s offer to review/monitor the EDI Action Plans.
  + Voice working group to include this in their joined-up conversation with the GLA’s Communities and Housing & Land teams.
* Open agenda space focused on issues to bring to Housing Delivery Taskforce meeting on Friday 9 December. Dinah to circulate details of the request from the Deputy Mayor for ideas/solutions.