

## January Housing Improvement Board Meeting

## 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 18:00- 20:00 Microsoft Teams

## Attendees:

**Board Members** 

Martin Wheatley (chair)

Yaw Boateng (resident, and Chair of Tenant & Leaseholder Panel)

Ishia Beckford (resident)

Les Parry (resident)

Eloise Shepherd (London Councils)

Phil Brookes (DLUHC Improvement & Assurance Panel)

In attendance

Councillor Hamida Ali (Leader of LB Croydon)

Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice (Cabinet Member for Homes)

Councillor Lynne Hale (Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes)

David Padfield (Interim Corporate Director for Housing, LBC)

Yvonne Aryeetey (Executive Officer, LBC)

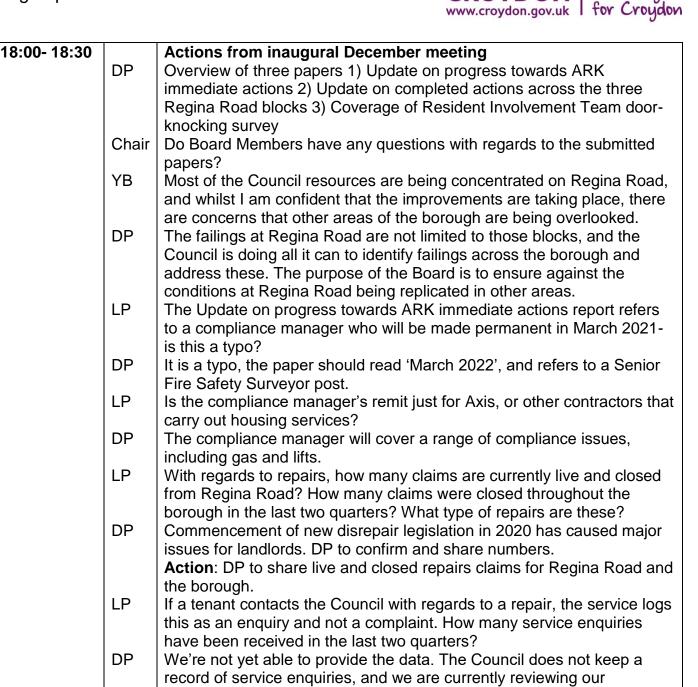
Velvet Dibley (Senior Strategy Officer, LBC)

**Apologies** 

Councillor Hamida Ali (Leader of LB Croydon)

Councillor Darren Rodwell (Leader of LB Barking & Dagenham, Local Government Association)

Fahad Eisa (resident)



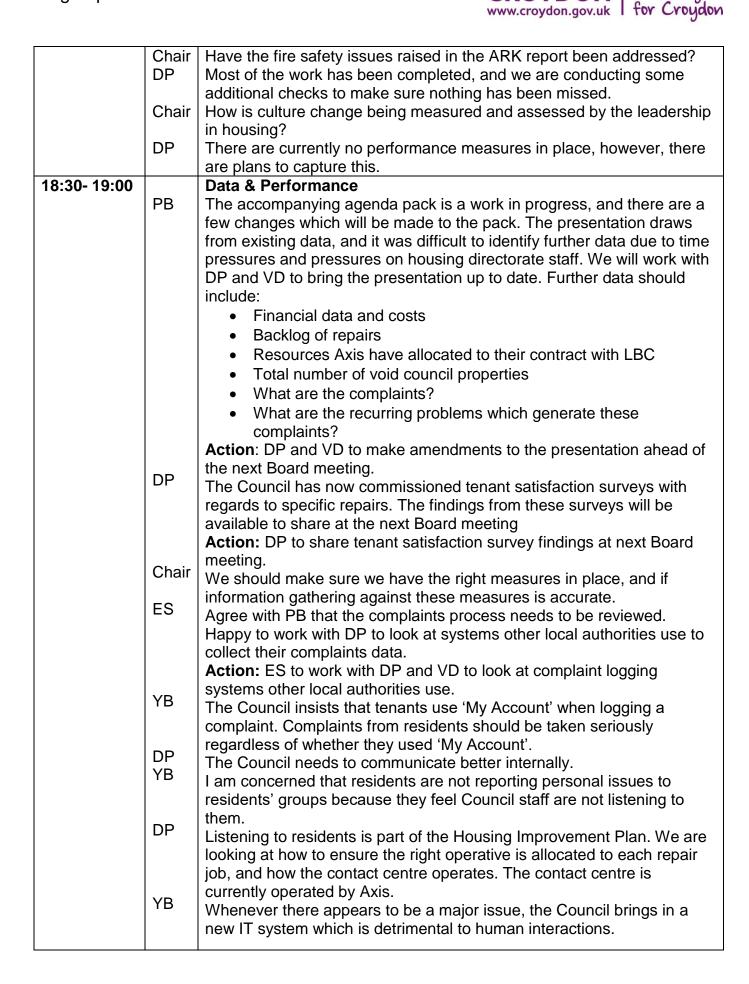
LP Can the tenants be advised as to how the HRA Budget works?

DP This will be covered in a later agenda item.

Chair What has happened to the roof of 1-87 Regina Road? Have the necessary repairs been carried out?

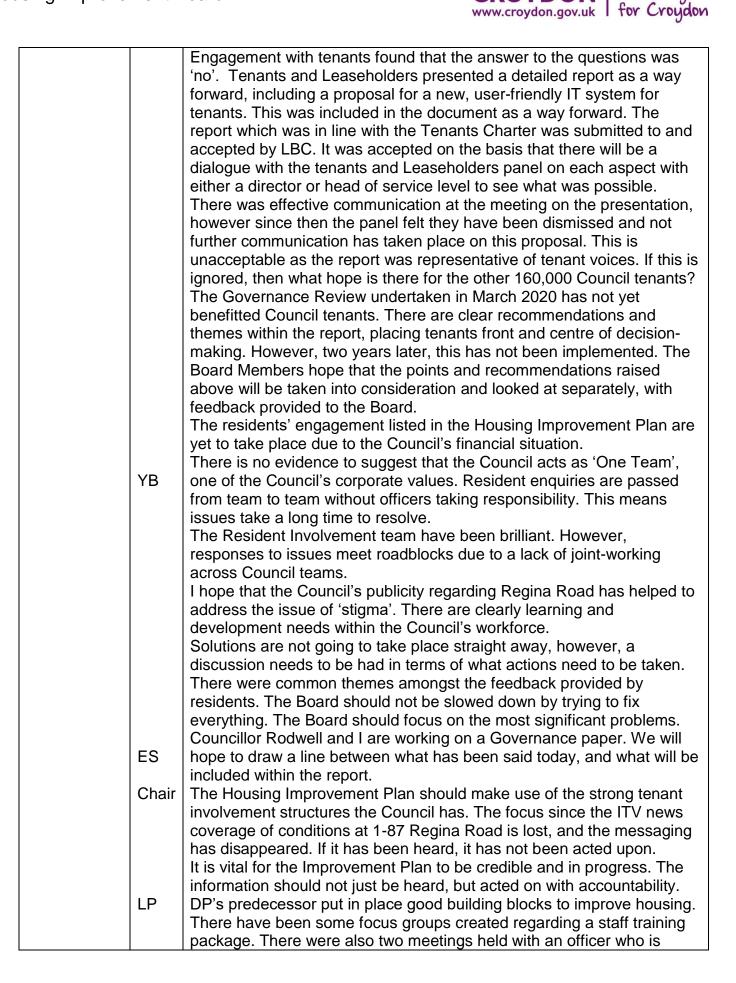
DP The roof will require a significant amount of work. Repairs have been carried out where possible, and properties have been decanted where they are affected by the roof. The Council needs to confirm with residents the plans to repair the roof.

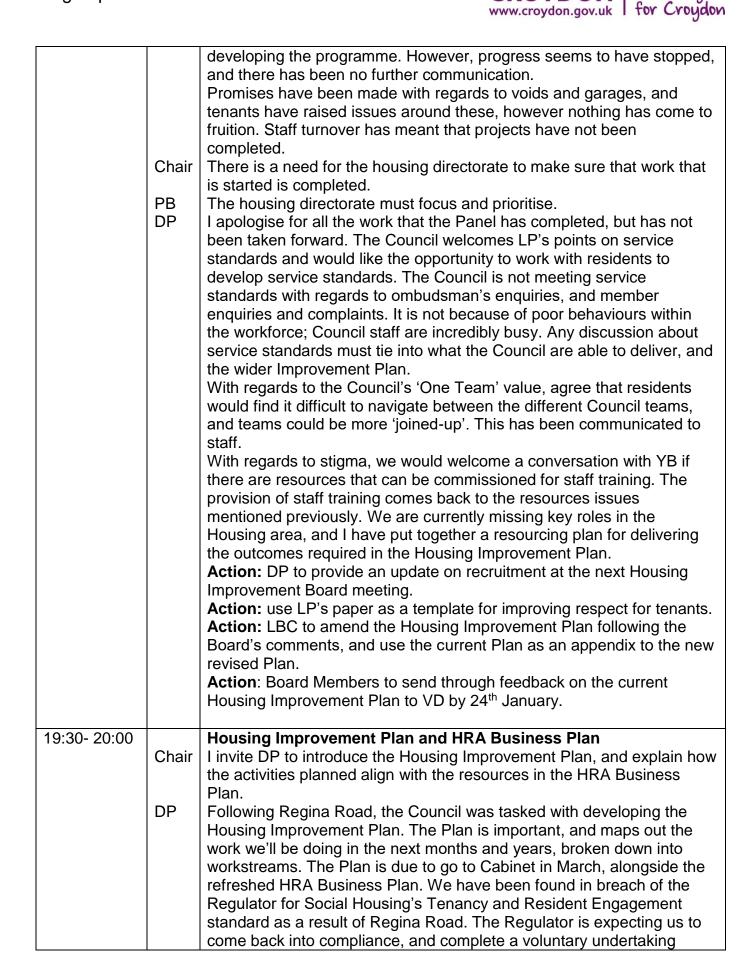
Chair DP Can you confirm that no one is living with water penetration? I can confirm that there should be no one living under these conditions. The Council is in the process of conducting mould-washing, mouldsampling, and ensuring there are no further leaks from other water sources.

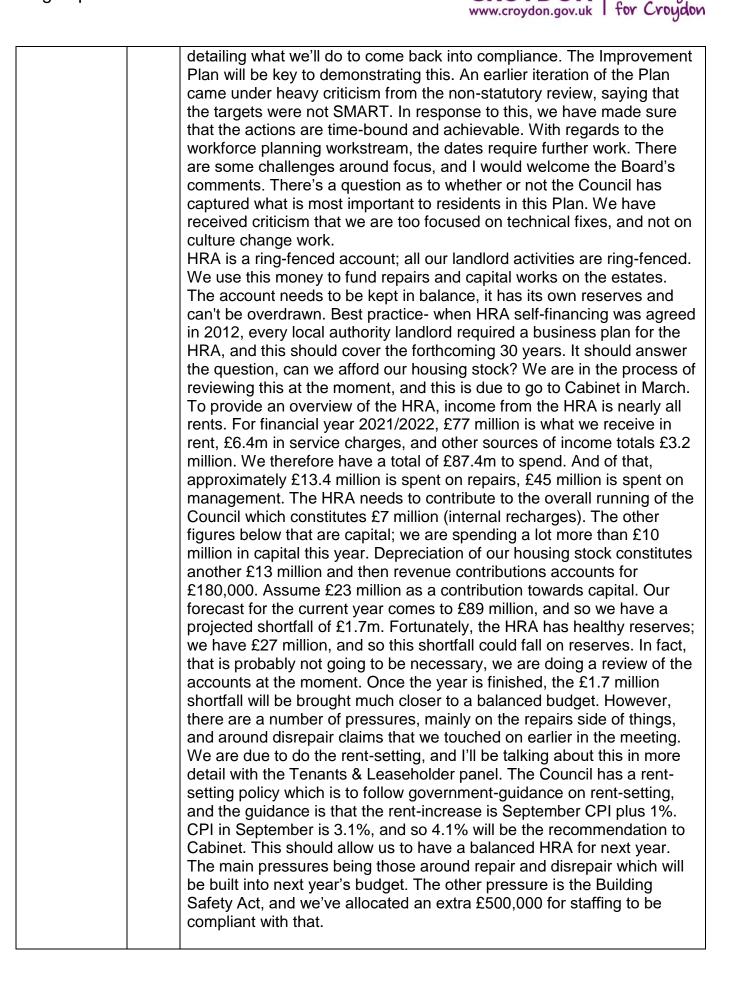




	DP	I understand how face-to-face interaction is important. Croydon's IT system is out of date and is being replaced by the best model on the market which will be able to collect better data.
	ΥB	This does not address the IT versus human interaction aspect. In terms of complaints and its relation to 'My Account', this should be followed up in a different forum.
	DP	There is an opportunity to have a conversation with residents to find out how they would like the Council's front-line service to look like.
	Chair	What would be a good design for an electronic system? The Council should be working alongside tenants rather than imposing systems on them.
	LP	Two reasons the Board should be interested in voids. One is social; there are over 6,000 residents waiting for homes, and many council properties are empty. Second is financial; empty homes represent a financial loss to the Council. This problem has been recognised by managers for years, and yet the voids process has worsened instead of improving. What is causing the delay to improvement to void turnaround times? What is the action plan to improve repair response time?
	Chair	These questions will be picked up under the Housing Improvement Plan item.
	РВ	Colocating of the contractor and the local Authority often helps enormously with the problem of the wrong trade being sent to a job. Also having it available to someone in the team with the technical skills to actually carry out a diagnosis effectively. Hoping that the council is still going ahead with the colocation plan areas of focus. The new IT system should enhance the customer experience.
	DP	The colocation system is still in plan, and the Axis contact centre will be back in Bernard Weatherill House. Action: LBC to provide an update on improving performance data with regards to complaints, and voids. LBC to provide an update on risk management of the new IT system.
19:00- 19:30	LP	<ul> <li>Tenant Respect The group was not able to visit residents to collect information due to Covid-19 restrictions. Other means of gathering tenant opinions are highlighted in the accompanying paper. Evidence from residents and front-line staff have been included in the paper. Both groups have arrived at a common view as detailed in the paper. The recommendations listed should be a set of standards for staff dealing with residents and tenants receiving a service from Croydon. Some of the key findings include: <ul> <li>Poor communication between LBC and tenants</li> <li>Tenants not feeling heard by LBC staff</li> <li>Lack of accountability amongst LBC staff</li> <li>Residents have requested that the above points are included in the Improvement Plan, but most importantly, would like to see some action and immediate change. Unless there's action, the trust and confidence of residents in the service that they pay for will remain an issue. The residents were asked, 'Are you treated with respect?' and 'Are you communicated with effectively?'</li> </ul></li></ul>









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	Chair	Will it be possible for this Board to look at the 25-year business plan before we have to report to Cabinet in March?
	DP	The business plan will be ready ahead of that Cabinet meeting, and so
		we will be releasing it beforehand. It depends on when the next meeting
		is scheduled, I don't see that being a problem.
	Chair	It is important to look at this at the next meeting, to understand the
	onan	relationship between the HIP and HRA business plan.
		Action- to present the HRA Business Plan at the next Housing
		Improvement Board meeting.
	Chair	There is a lot of detail in this Plan, and so we won't be able to do justice
	-	to all of that. If you have detailed comments in relation to the Plan,
		please send them to VD. Can the Board provide one or two 'hot-takes'
		each on your concerns? Secondly, can we address whether or not the
		Plan is 'even a plan'?
	Chair	The Plan is tremendously detailed list of activity, which is not a Plan. I
		expected something which was more purposive and set out a small
		number of things that need to be different in the way that tenants
		experience the service, i.e. performance and repairs service, capital
		investment in homes, and respect for tenants. Clear timescales and
		measures for how these issues will be addressed, and an activity plan
		falls behind those. It needs to say what we're going to do, and by what
		dates. At the moment, it's a list of activity, 'what good looks like' is not
		clearly defined, and there is work to be done in terms of putting
		timescales into things.
	LP	Two questions on the HRA first- is garage income included in the
		income? With regards to the disrepair protocol payments, is that done
		directly from the budget, or does the Council carry an insurance policy
		and a premium is paid from the HRA budget?
	LP	Action: VD to circulate a copy of the HRA slide
		How much at the moment is temporary accommodation costing the
		Council? Does the cost come from the HRA budget or General Fund? What part of the Plan actually puts a strategy in place to reduce
		temporary accommodation, or manage existing stock better than what
		we are now? My conclusion is that is gobbledygook, it does not outline
		what the end product is- it doesn't outline when or how. It's not a Plan,
		the Plan will mean nothing to people who live in Council property. The
		Plan needs to be simplified with end goals and timelines. The majority
		of people out there want to know what you'll improve and when, and
		what's the Plan to achieve it. I don't think it's suitable or acceptable.
	ES	I agree with the lack of vision. The work-stream on vision and strategy
		does not articulate a vision or a strategy. It needs to be communicated
		more clearly, and therefore make it more meaningful to tenants. I will
		provide further feedback to VD.
	YB	I think it is a Plan, but I'm not seeing how this relates to Croydon
		residents. It looks like the only people who get listened to are those who
		are in the know, actively involved in resident involvement or know who
		to speak to. This should not be the case, every resident should have
		access to getting issues resolved. An issue of grass cutting was raised
		previously, and I was told this was a decision made by corporate, and
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