

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Scrutiny Task Group: Brent's Housing Associations**

#### **Recommendations Agreed at Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

**20 July 2016**

#### **Theme 1: Right to Buy**

1. Strategic Director Community Wellbeing uses strategic forums with registered providers to monitor the impact of Right to Buy in Brent and helps to mitigate any potential problems which are caused.
  
2. Cabinet Member for Housing sets out a common position to all registered providers operating in Brent that the local authority would like homes of four bedrooms or more, specially adapted housing, and older people's housing exempted from the Right to Buy.
  
3. Strategic Director Community Wellbeing and Cabinet Member for Housing develop agreements with housing associations and the Greater London Authority which maximise the number homes replaced in Brent, including four-bedroom properties, as well as homes for social rent.
  
4. Strategic Director Community Wellbeing invites housing associations operating in Brent to fund jointly an anti-fraud investigator for a time-limited period to help housing associations' investigations into Right to Buy fraud and offer free training for staff on fraud and speculative buying practices.
  
5. Director of Policy, Performance and Partnership to consider integrating Right to Buy into Brent's financial inclusion strategy so that tenants are better informed about interest rates, mortgages, cost of major works, responsibility for repairs, and the operation of companies who encourage purchasing of homes under Right to Buy.
  
6. Cabinet Member for Housing requests that housing associations advise tenants of their financial options, and inform them of the wider responsibilities of becoming a leaseholder as part of the purchasing process for Right to Buy.
  
7. Cabinet Member for Housing promotes strategic forums with registered providers to share information and expertise about properties going into the private rented sector as a result of the Right to Buy extension.

## **Theme 2: Social Housing Supply**

8. The Strategic Director Community Wellbeing and Lead Member for Housing to initiate further discussions with other London local authorities about collaborative arrangement for provision of social housing in the future.

9. Brent's Cabinet Member for Housing to use strategic forums to enable smaller housing associations to be able to gain expertise and knowledge in business planning and other areas from the larger registered providers operating in Brent.

10. Cabinet Member for Housing and Strategic Director Community Wellbeing put in place mechanisms to signpost residents to information about the Community Land Trust Network and Federation Confederation of Cooperative Housing and self and custom-build networks and organises a one-off event to stimulate interest in developing other social housing models.

11. The Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing commissions a feasibility study about developing affordable Self-Build on marginal areas of council owned-land which is not suitable for its own house building programme.

12. Brent Council to update its Housing Strategy 2014-19 to weight available council-owned land not intended for the council's own house-building programme towards housing association or partnership developments with them which house social tenants and vulnerable people in line with the council's political commitments.

## **Theme 3: Social Rent Reduction**

13. Brent Council to continue to work closely with social landlords in the borough to evaluate the effects of welfare reform, in particular the overall benefit cap, and to develop appropriate processes and procedures that facilitate the achievement of this.

## **Theme 4: Pay to Stay**

14. Cabinet Member for Housing to request that housing associations operating in Brent report regularly to the council outlining any progress they are considering in implementing Pay to Stay.

## **Theme 5: Partnerships**

15. Cabinet Member for Housing organises more frequent forums around specific issues such as rents, welfare reform and employment as well as linking with London-wide housing groups so there can be a useful exchange of information and expertise.

16. The Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing organises a housing summit each year to bring together all the registered providers in the borough in addition to the regular quarterly forum meetings.

17. In collaboration with housing associations, Brent Council develops mechanisms that will enable housing association tenants to share their concerns and service priorities.

18. Cabinet Member for Housing to write to housing associations to encourage tenants' representation at the board level of housing associations by bottom-up elections.

19. Cabinet Member for Housing to develop a partnership model which is more weighted towards those providing in-demand tenures and housing and with an emphasis on quality.