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## Mayor sets out first details of new team to speed up homebuilding

23 August 2016

Sadiq Khan has today (Tuesday 23 August) released the first details of his plans to set up a powerful 'Homes for Londoners' team at City Hall to oversee homebuilding in the capital and boost the delivery of new and affordable homes.

The Mayor of London has begun work to pull together and bolster housing and development capacity at City Hall and across the GLA family. As a first step, he has begun recruiting new experts to scrutinise 'viability assessments' - the financial details that lie behind how much affordable housing new developments include.

The experts, who will be drawn from finance surveyors and property consultant experts and be based at City Hall, will support housing delivery by making planning decisions faster and more consistent, and by ensuring new developments include the maximum amount of affordable housing.

Sadiq will also lead a new 'Homes for Londoners' board, formed of London Boroughs, housing associations, and developers. The board will oversee delivery, land assembly and investment decisions, and will draw on expertise from across the housing and property sectors to help develop new policy for the capital.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "Homeownership has been slipping increasingly out of reach for more and more Londoners, and rents have been getting harder and harder to afford. I want to be honest with Londoners from the start that it will take time to turn things around - we're starting from a position where last year the previous Mayor built the lowest number of affordable homes since records began.

"I am determined that Londoners get the same opportunities this great city gave me. That is why I am setting up my Homes for Londoners team to speed up homebuilding and to move towards 50 per cent of new homes in London being genuinely affordable to rent and buy."

A review of capacity and skills across the GLA will now get underway. Its aim is to ensure the 'Homes for Londoners' team can play a more active role in the delivery of housing, particularly in bringing forward public land in London, and speeding up the planning process. This may also lead to additional expertise and support being recruited into the team in due course.

David Montague, Chair of the g15, said: "The Mayor of London has made housing a priority from day one, and we have been working with James Murray on a new strategic housing partnership.

"Homes for Londoners will bring together the GLA, housing associations, local authorities and housebuilders to tackle the capital's housing crisis.

"The priority now must be to build a long-term pipeline of clean serviced and consented land. With this we can guarantee apprenticeships, jobs, economic growth, thriving communities and affordable homes. Without it, London will lose out in the competition for investment and growth."

major report on Homes for Londoners, an encouraging step if we are able to get the delivery, including getting

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...me this strategic initiative that will help all key agencies work closer together towards building the thousands of extra homes London urgently needs.”

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## Notes to editors

1) The Homes for Londoners governance board will meet quarterly and will be made up of:

- Mayor of London (Chair)
- Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development (Deputy Chair)
- Four borough Leaders — to be nominated by London Councils
- Transport for London Commissioner
- GLA Executive Director — Housing & Land
- Chair of the G15
- Two members of the residential property sector

2) The viability expert team being assembled will also provide in-house advice and support on:

- London Plan viability (e.g. SHLAA)
- Opportunity Areas/Intensification Areas — Planning Frameworks (OAPFs)
- Development Infrastructure Funding Studies (DIFS)
- Housing Zones and other potential London Plan Growth Zones

In due course the remit of this service will be expanded to provide a dedicated planning and viability resource to review public sector land, including land owned by TfL and boroughs. It could also provide support to Local Planning Authorities in their own viability assessments.

3) The skills and capacity review will begin this summer to identify where additional expertise and support is required to help City Hall have a greater role in driving the delivery of housing, particularly in providing the necessary expertise or interventions to help bring forward more public land for development and providing investment and planning support to enable and speed up development.

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