

I believe that everyone sitting round this table, no matter whether from the private homes, the shared ownership or the social rent, would agree that their main reason for being a member of WDCO is to ensure that Woodberry is and remains a wonderful place for them and their families to live. We all have this same objective regardless of our tenure. We are one in this. We have all subscribed to the Vision!

This motion speaks to me of fear. Fear that the private owners, who would from the completion of Phase 3 be in a majority on the Estate and consequently the WDCO Board, will act against the best interests of the original and the future social rent tenants. Fear that the social rent tenants will lose something? Their rights? Their voice? Their contribution to the future of the development? Only those who brought this resolution to the Exec can tell you that.

And so I ask myself what power does the WDCO Board have? What is the role of the WDCO Board?

We all know that the mix of tenures, the approximately 20%/20%/ 60% mix, the Parker Moris plus 10%, the split households, the arrangements for the move to a new home were all agreed at the beginning of this regeneration and are not capable of being changed by WDCO no matter how it is constituted.

IF we look at the WDCO Constitution it says very clearly that the purpose of WDCO is to act as the representative body of all residents. If we look at the Objects, they are carefully worded – we seek to improve, we seek to influence, we seek to inform. We are a forum for all parts of Woodberry to come together to discuss issues of mutual concern, to agree policies and to develop action plans to secure their implementation.

WDCO is not a regeneration decision making body. We cannot make major changes to this Estate. That is not our role. Our role is clearly to help influence decision making by giving input – the lived experience in the jargon as a contribution to the Design Committee for example, the working together to solve issues of mutual concern like the sewage issue, like the energy price issues, like the service charge issues. This is what we are here for. This is what we do. And this is what we should continue to do. We have this past year worked together well, regardless of tenure, to help solve issues of mutual concern.

This motion will split us in two, contrary to the aims of the Constitution, contrary indeed to the aims of the Partnership Agreement. Social rent and shared equity on the one hand, private owners and Shared Ownership on the other. IS this what we want? Does it help in any way? And even if we were to accept this motion of 50% for each group would it ensure that all the Board Members in each group would vote according to tenure. I would like to think not. I would like to think that all honest and honourable members of this Board would not vote on tenure grounds but would look openly at any proposition and vote on what was best for Woodberry regardless of tenure. That is what we are here for. And that is what we must do. And so I think, that if we are all honest, and act in the best interests of Woodberry, then this proposed change to the Constitution is not necessary and will in fact be detrimental to WDCO and the Community it represents.

