

NOTICE OF MEETING

HOUSING, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 6th March, 2025, 6.30 pm - George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ (watch the live meeting [here](#), watch the recording [here](#))

Councillors: Alexandra Worrell (Chair), Tammy Hymas, Dawn Barnes, Khaled Moyeed, Holly Harrison-Mullane, John Bevan and Isidoros Diakides

Quorum: 3

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business (late items will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items will be dealt with as noted below).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and
- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, Paragraph 29 of the Council's Constitution.

6. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

7. VERBAL UPDATE ON THE LOCAL PLAN

8. MOCK HOUSING INSPECTION - UPDATE (PAGES 13 - 20)

9. ALLOCATIONS POLICY

To follow.

10. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (PAGES 21 - 34)

11. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items admitted at item 3 above.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

TBA

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Fiona Alderman
Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ

Wednesday, 26 February 2025

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING Housing, Planning and
Development Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 16th December,
2024, 6.30 pm**

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Alexandra Worrell (Chair), Tammy Hymas, Dawn Barnes,
Khaled Moyeed, John Bevan and Isodoris Diakides**

ALSO ATTENDING:

213. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

214. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence

215. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business

216. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

217. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Panel received a public question from Mr John Poulter, relating to housing disrepair claims. A summary of the key points of his question are set out below:

- What is the Council doing to ensure Council Taxpayer's money was being spent wisely and that value for money was being achieved when an increasing number of Housing disrepair claims were being taken out against the Council by leaseholders and tenants.
- The Council was failing to carry out repairs and major works and these properties were then deteriorating, to the point of significant legal action being taken by the tenants and leaseholders.

- The situation was being exacerbated by poor communication from the repairs team and a more general failure of different Council departments not talking to each other.
- The issue was disproportionately affecting elderly, frail and otherwise vulnerable tenants.
- There was a failure of contract management in order to get the repairs done.
- The questioner received an FOI response that identified that there were 4753 outstanding legal disrepair claims against Haringey Council.
- The questioner suggested that the Council should set up a dedicated panel to review these cases and get the repairs issues resolved before the situation was escalated to the point of legal action being taken.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, Cllr Sarah Williams, thanked Mr Poulter for coming along to the meeting and putting his points across. The Cabinet Member set out that the Council would encourage residents not to go through the legal process, as this often made the repairs process lengthier and more difficult to resolve. Instead, the Council would prefer residents to report repair issues to us directly. It was suggested that ultimately, the only winners of legal disrepair claims were solicitors. The Cabinet Member noted that this was not such a significant industry for disrepair lawyers, there would be much more money for repairs and improvement programmes. In addition, it was commonly known that these solicitors work under a success fee arrangement, where they will take a portion of tenant compensation, in addition to serving a large bill on the Council. The Cabinet Member commented that this represented a poor use of public money and ultimately deprives Council tenants of their own resources for almost no additional benefit.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council was obliged to follow a particular process once a legal claim has been received. This involved disclosing records to the solicitor, arranging for an initial inspection and agreeing upon the scope of works based on that report. It would then be necessary to code and issue that work to a contractor and complete the job. Unfortunately, the legal process, particularly when litigated can significantly slow down the process of completing repairs, causing greater frustration. The Cabinet Member set out that, in response to increased levels of disrepair claims, significant progress has been made to adequately resource disrepair works. The Council has a robust process in place for the completion of works and the Cabinet Member commented that she not did have any concerns regarding contractor management following the work done over the last year to transform the service.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council often faced logistical challenges in arranging access with tenants, the requirement to arrange decanting tenants to alternative accommodation where major works are required, and the storage of personal items. Co-operation between the Council, tenants and their representatives remained essential to successfully conclude works. The Council often found there was a breakdown in communication between tenants and their solicitors regarding access and other logistical issues, which caused works arrangements to fail. The Cabinet Member stated that the organisation ultimately regarded the solicitor's involvement as an impediment in most cases and this was further compounded by the lack of incentive for works to be completed from the commercial perspective of lawyers, as

they could charge more legal costs the longer a case continued without resolution. The Cabinet Member advised that, the Council has a dedicated Disrepair Team, which liaises as necessary with Tenancy Management, tenant's solicitors, and any other specialist teams within the Council, to ensure that residents were kept informed throughout the process and that any specific needs are met.

Cllr Williams gave assurances that the Council remained committed to completing all works as per legal agreements reached in disrepair cases, taking into account all circumstances in line with our obligations.

The Director of Housing, Jahedur Rahman, advised that he appreciated that from Mr Poulter's perspective that it may look like the Council was failing to close down disrepair cases, However the cases were being actioned and closed down. It was noted that, since November 2023, the Council closed down 460 live disrepair cases. 350 live cases had been closed down since in the current financial year. The Director of Housing advised that closing cases down quickly could be very difficult as they had to agree the scope of works with tenants solicitors. There were a number of legal steps that had to be followed before a case could be closed down, and this tended to take time.

218. MINUTES

Cllr Bevan advised that he had arranged to meet with Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing before Christmas, but that Clarion had failed to respond to his requests for a meeting.

Cllr Bevan also requested that the Member contact sheet around housing association contacts should be formatted in such a way as to allow the contact details to be cut and pasted from the document.

The Panel requested clarification about the frequency that the £20 meal allowance was paid to tenants who were residing in hotels. **(Action: Jahedur Rahman).**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 5th November were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

219. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2025/26 PROPOSALS

The Panel received a report which set out the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget 2025/26 proposals relating to the HRA. The report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 10th December. It was noted that Every year, the Council set a business plan for its Housing Revenue Account. This business plan considered projected income and expenditure over a 10-year and 30-year period. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is the Council's record of the income and revenue expenditure relating to Council housing and related services. Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the HRA is ring-fenced and cannot be subsidised by the General Fund. Since April 2012, the HRA has been self-financing. Under self-

financing, Councils retain all the money they receive from rent and use it to manage and maintain their homes. Setting a medium-term and long-term business plan for the HRA allows the Council to plan for investment in its housing stock, investment in building new council housing for the borough and to ensure that services for tenants and leaseholders continue to be delivered.

The report was introduced by Kaycee Ikegwu, Head of Finance and Chief Accountant, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 19-40. Cllr Carlin, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services was present for this item, along with Cllr Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning. Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing was present along with Hannah Adler, Head of Housing Policy & Strategy, and Robbie Erbmman, AD for Housing. The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about the key drivers of the in-year budget position as at Quarter 2, which was projected to achieve a surplus of £4.365m against a budgeted surplus of £8.603m (an underachievement of £4.238m). In response officers advised that the three key drivers were: A rise in disrepair cases, which included settlement costs and also the costs of undertaking repairs; an increase in damp and mould referrals – a dedicated team for damp and mould along with a dedicated hotline had been established to tackle the increased number of cases; and additional costs arising from having to place families in hotels. The service was working to try and reduce this cost through use of temporary decants, where possible.
- b. The Panel sought clarification about the figures in the report for a reduction in the discount caps for Right to Buy. Officers confirmed that the discount caps would no longer be indexed in line with inflation and would revert to 2003 figures, which was £16k, rather than the recent maximum sum of £136,400. In relation to a follow-up about the financial impact of this reduction, officers advised that they expected that the number of RTB applications would fall and the Council would keep more of its tenanted stock. However, there would be less money generated from Right to Buy receipts and this tended to be used for acquisitions. Officers advised that there had been a large increase in the number of applications received before the 21st November cut-off point to receive the old discount, with around 700 applications received.
- c. The Panel queried how many of those applications would likely progress through to the property being purchased under Right to Buy. In response, officers advised that there were a series of checks undertaken for each application to ensure that person was eligible to receive the discount, as well as anti-fraud checks. Once these were complete a Section 125 Notice was drawn up, the final calculations were done and then the applicant had to get a mortgage approved. It was suggested that the vast majority of applications fell through as a result of the checks and difficulties in getting a mortgage approved. Officers advised that based on previous experience, of the 700 applications received, the number of properties sold under Right to Buy would be significantly less. It was suggested that the average was around 50 successful purchases from around 250 applications a year.
- d. The Panel queried the fact that the report projected Right to Buy capital receipts based on projections that were done before the 700 additional applications were received and whether this would have an impact on borrowing costs. In response, officers advised that the updated modelling

would be included in the final MTFs report coming to February Cabinet. Officers also commented that they would expect that any reductions in income would be made up for through additional grant funding for acquisitions from the GLA and central government.

- e. The Chair queried the in-year position around under achievement of income due to voids, and the extent to which the off-setting of this was being done through a reduction in staffing costs. The Chair commented that as much resource as possible should be going into clearing the voids. In response, officers advised that the service undertook a capitalisation exercise to see if some of the one-off costs should come from the capital budget, this would reduce pressure on the revenue budget. The Director of Housing agreed with the point around needing resources to tackle voids, but advised that there were other areas, such as damp and mould that had seen a reduction in demand. The Service was undertaking an exercise to see how services could be delivered in a different way.
- f. The Chair requested a breakdown of the actions being taken to mitigate costs within voids. In response, officers advised that they would be happy to share them at a future date but there were staffing implications and the proposals were still being finalised.
- g. A member of the Panel raised concerns with the figure of 4972 legal disrepair claims and questioned how any Council could possibly manage that. In response officers advised that the Council did not have 4972 outstanding disrepair claims and that the figure of 4972 was erroneous. The Panel asked for a written update on the current number of legal disrepair cases that the Council was facing. **(Action: Jahedur Rahman)**.
- h. A member of the panel advised that the Council's current position of having 433 voids, meant that there was a shortfall, in rental income and from having to pay Council Tax on empty properties, of around £4m. This was roughly equivalent to the projected in-year shortfall in the HRA surplus. It was suggested getting the voids issue sorted seemed to be crucially important. In response, officers advised that as a landlord there would always be a level of void properties to turnaround and the position in Haringey was improving. It was suggested that the historical backlog of voids had been cleared, but that there had been 350 new voids coming into the system in the current year. Of those 350, around 100 were from the Neighbourhood Moves scheme. The voids work was being undertaken through the DLO and external contractors.
- i. The Panel asked whether the 433 voids included those that had been boarded up like on the Love Lane Estate. In response, officers advised that there was a number of voids that required major works and that there were managed separately, through the Asset Management team, due to significant costs involved in repairing them. It was estimated that the figure was around 20 voids.
- j. The Chair sought clarification about the increase in voids arising from the success of the Neighbourhood Moves scheme and why this was not anticipated. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that more work needed to be done to look at the impact of like for like replacement and whether this was creating pressures elsewhere. It was emphasised that the scheme had a lot of benefits such as rightsizing, downsizing, and providing bespoke homes. It was suggested that building the number of homes the Council was, was inevitably going to cause a lag with other services.

- k. The Panel raised further concerns about the number of voids and the impact that this had on the overall revenue budget. In response, officers acknowledged that the current position on voids was higher than the organisation would like. It was emphasised that although it may look like the 400+ number of voids had not changed very much, the Council had cleared the historical backlog, but 350 new voids had been created this year, partly due to the success of the House Building programme and the Neighbourhood Moves scheme. It was set out the long term goal in the HRA business plan was for voids to be at 1%, which was around 150 properties. The Director of Housing advised that by the end of the financial year, the service was looking to get the number of voids down to 200.
- l. The Panel contended that the delays in turning around voids seemed excessive and that once the Council was notified of a person moving out, works should be scheduled and carried out like in any other situation. The Panel commented that in the past, the Council had incentivised residents to give two months' notice by giving them their last month's rent back. This, it was suggested, would give the Council enough notice to carry out the works before the next person was due to move in. In response, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources advised that in the past the Council had moved people in and tried to undertake the repairs whilst they lived there. However, this has not worked as the repairs did not get done, and some of the properties were in such a poor state that nobody wanted to live there. The Council had changed the policy in recognition that the easiest time to fix the property was before someone had moved in. It was suggested that if the properties were not in such a state of disrepair, including damp and mould, then fixing them up after people moved in might be a possibility.
- m. A Member of the Panel suggested that the Council should be focused on building new homes, rather than turning around voids and that Members were losing perspective about the number of new homes that were being built. It was suggested that people moving homes were probably still paying rent, and that rent was probably a slightly higher due to moving to a bigger home.
- n. The Panel requested a written response about what the average time to turn around a void property was, and also what the longest and shortest turnaround time for a void property was. **(Action: Jahedur Rahman).**
- o. The Panel queried the proposed average weekly rent for 2025/26 and the fact that the rate of increase for six and seven-bed properties didn't follow the same trajectory as other properties. In response, officers advised that six and seven-bed properties were a very small sample size, the increase was based on property value, and some of them may have been re-let recently (at an increased rate).
- p. The Panel queried the 31% reduction in service charges for heating and asked how robust those assumptions were. In response, the Panel were advised that service charges were recovered at cost and the costs had to be demonstrable. The service charges for those on the DEN would be significantly lower than corresponding central heating costs. These were not metered and the 31% reduction in heating costs would be what was passed on to residents.
- q. The Panel also sought assurances about some of the higher rates of increase in service charges, such as 21% in caretaking costs, 10% increase in cleaning services within sheltered housing and 29% increase in converted properties cleaning. The caretaking service charge increases reflected the fact a deep cleaning programme had been undertaken and that the rate of increase

reflected the costs. Officers advised that most tenants were on housing benefit and that the increase would be covered by Local Housing Allowance.

- r. The Panel sought assurances around what the total percentage change was for service charges and how that compared with the previous year. In response, officers advised that different people received different service charges, so it was difficult to compare in a meaningful way. The Panel sought assurances about whether the total increase in service charges was over the level of LAR rent increase of CPI inflation plus 1% (2.7%). Officers agreed to come back with a written response about what the percentage change was for total amount of service charges across the board and whether it was more than 2.7%.
(Action: Kaycee).
- s. The Panel queried the discretionary 5% increase of rents and whether this was reflected in the table showing proposed average weekly rent for 2025/26. In response, officers advised that the 5% increase only applied to new properties or re-lets. The impact on affordability for people on benefits would be negligible as it would still be well below the LHA cap. The people who it would affect were the one-third of tenants who paid their own rent, either in part or in full. The Cabinet Member emphasised that to date this had only affected those who had received a new or re-let property since the policy change was made last year. Of the 15000 tenancies, it was estimated that so far this would apply to around 300.
- t. The Panel enquired about street sweeping service charges, and why this wouldn't be covered by Council Tax. In response, officers advised that this was specific to blocks and estates within the HRA, which was separate to the General Fund.
- u. The Panel also queried the service charge for converted property cleaning. Panel Member suggested that these were likely to be small, converted properties with a very small communal hallway. It was commented that it was very difficult to envisage somebody coming out to clean such spaces. Instead, tenants would invariably do it themselves. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that it was important to say that not everyone in a converted property would be charged this service charge, however if you were charged it, you would be receiving the service. Officers advised that if there were any specific examples of people being charged and not receiving the service, then they would encourage Members to email them outside of the meeting.
- v. In response to a question, officers advised that there were very few properties in the borough that would hit the formula rent caps. Formula rent was a complicated formula, based on a sample size of properties and average incomes. Officers also set out that a lot of new builds and those properties coming online in the near future, would be based on London Affordable Rent, which was specifically derived from the rent cap figure. Officers clarified that London Affordable Rent was a fixed rate across London, whereas formula rents involved a calculation. The Panel requested a breakdown of average rental charges across the different bedroom categories for new-lets/re-lets in 2025/26 on formula rent properties. **(Action: Hannah/Robbie).**
- w. In response to a question about the Haringey Community Benefits Society (HCBS), Officers advised that the properties were leased to the HCBS for a maximum of seven years and the properties would then revert to being socially rented properties within the HRA. The seven year timescale was because this was the maximum possible without approval from the Secretary of State.

Haringey was speaking to the government to see if the length of leases could be extended.

- x. The Panel sought assurances about how confident the organisation could be with the proposed service charge changes set out in the report. In response, officers advised that the process involved looking at the in-year costs to forecast what next year's costs would be and then an uplift was applied. The draft budget was set using in-year costs up to November, it was noted that these would be more robust by the time the February final budget was set. Finance gave assurances that they did not expect these number to change much.
- y. In response to a question about rent flexibility, officers provided assurances that nobody who was on a formula rent, would be paying LHR rates unless they moved into an LAR property.
- z. The Panel reiterated their concerns about the impact of voids on the revenue budget of the Council and the need to tackle this a priority. In response, officers advised that a significant amount of resource had been allocated to deal with voids, both internally and externally, in order to get it down to 200 by the end of the financial year.
- aa. The Cabinet Member advised that there was a Hardship Fund within the HRA of £300k, which was initially set up following the increase in energy costs. This fund was administered by the Financial Inclusion team and its purpose was to support tenants to keep them in a sustainable tenancy.
- bb. The Panel enquired about bad debt provision and why the current figure seemed higher than it had in the past. In response, officers advised that the figure was based on current performance and the 2% figure represented what it was anticipated next year's figure would be, based on current levels. It was anticipated that in subsequent years this would come down to 1%.
- cc. The Panel enquired about rent collection levels. In response, officers advised that current collection levels were between 97.5% and 98%, which compared favourably across different London boroughs. Haringey had seen year-on-year improvements in rent collection levels in recent years.
- dd. In relation to table 6.1, the Panel queried why the Housing Demand line of expenditure remained the same across the business plan. In response, officers advised that this was a historic staffing contribution cost for Housing Demand from the HRA for things like allocations and lettings. Officers advised that they were going to look at the figure as part of future business planning in order to ensure that it was current and accurate.
- ee. In response to a request for clarification, the Panel was advised that the capital financing costs were the borrowing costs needed to service the debt in support of capital scheme. The contributions to major repairs was ring-fenced depreciation, and the revenue costs to capital was effectively the surplus, that was used to fund capital projects.
- ff. The Panel queried why there had been a substantial increase in expenditure on major works compared to last year. In response, officers advised that the budget had been re-profiled to bring the spend forwards, but the overall amount was the same. It was noted that the Major Works budget and the Carbon Reduction budget had been combined into one spending line. The projections for this budget were based on recent stock inventory data.
- gg. In response to a question, officers advised that the partnering contract had gone out to tender and submissions were due on 10th January. It was

anticipated that mobilisation and work starting onsite would happen in September 2020.

- hh. The Panel sought assurances about how the service had managed to reduce costs by 14% but still deliver the same amount of new homes. In response, officers advised that the main drivers were; a reduction in construction costs, looking at designs and value engineering, a flexible procurement approach, and a move to use steel frames rather than concrete due to their respective costs. The Panel received assurances that there was no reduction in the quality or design of the buildings and that most of the changes made wouldn't be noticed. It was suggested that this was more of a standardised approach rather than a reduction in quality, and that the service was still targeting net zero carbon and Passive House on every scheme. It was also suggested that as more houses were being built the team were getting a lot better at doing it.
- ii. The Panel sought assurances around whether the budgeted C. £8m a year in fire safety works was enough. It was noted that this was a projection based on all of the available survey information that was available. Officers advised that this figure was as robust as it could be. It was also commented that Phase 2 of the Grenfell recommendations may impact the cost, notably, if the definition of a high-rise building was altered. The Panel was advised that the budget was the amount needed in order for the Council to be compliant with regulations. As more intrusive surveys were undertaken, the costs could increase. It was emphasised that the most important priority for everyone was the safety of buildings and residents.
- jj. The Panel sought assurances around what was happening with Cornwall Road and the Red House. In response, officers advised that unfortunately the contractor had gone bust for Cornwall Road. It was suggested that overall, the Council had been quite fortunate with its contractors, given current market conditions. In relation to Red House, officers advised that this was an acquisition rather than direct delivery and that delays had been due to contractual wrangling with the contractor. It was anticipated that this would be completed by April 2025.
- kk. The Panel asked about the downward trajectory on spend on new homes acquisitions in the plan. In response, officers advised that this was a reflection that the plan was oriented to delivery of 3000 new homes and that as the organisation got closer to that number, there were less acquisitions programmed in. The Cabinet Member advised that further details about delivery of new homes above and beyond 3000 would be announced in the future.
- ll. The Panel requested an update around Lendlease and the High Road West scheme, in response officers advised that the plan reflected the fact that some expenditure had been moved due to issues with the contractor. Officers advised that they were in discussion with Lendlease about the future of the scheme, but that they could not say anything more in a public forum at this stage.
- mm. The Panel sought assurances around the fact that only 74% of properties had been surveyed as part of the stock condition work and questioned whether the remaining properties would be surveyed as well. In response, officers confirmed that was the case, and that the Regulator expected that 100% of the stock would be surveyed every five years.
- nn. The Panel queried whether there was a relationship between the reduction in spend on external providers of supported housing and providing more

- supported housing in-house. In response, officers acknowledged that there was a relationship and advised that they were doing some work to ensure that the client group for whom they were developing supported housing took an approach that delivered cost savings or cost avoidance in the General Fund.
- oo. The Panel commented that they would like to see more comms done about the Council's bespoke homes programme and individual cases studies of people who have received a new home and the difference it has made to their lives. The Cabinet Member acknowledged this request and advised that it could be difficult to get residents to talk to the Council and be part of comms campaign.
- pp. In response to a question, officers advised that the money put into Housing Demand from the General Fund, was an additional top-up in addition to the acquisitions programme and that the figures for this were baked into the wider acquisition programme, rather than be represented by a separate line in the budget.
- qq. The Panel questioned whether the Decent Homes standard included decorating, painting rusty railings, and smartening up communal areas. In response, officers advised that it did not, but that a separate programme was being developed to tackle this and Parklands had been identified as the first estate that would be used as a pilot. Officers advised that it was a joint programme with Estates and Asset Management and that it would be partly funded through the HRA and partly funded through the General Fund.
- rr. The Panel congratulated the Planning Service on having won Local Authority of the Year at the Planning Awards.

RESOLVED

- I. That the Panel noted the HRA's current financial position as set out in the report which sets the foundations for the full draft budget for 2025/26 and 2025/26-2029/30 Business Plan.
- II. That the Panel noted that the final HRA 2025/26 Budget and 2025/26-2029/30 Business Plan would be presented to Cabinet on 11th February 2025 and for final approval at Full Council on 3rd March.

220. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

221. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

6th March

CHAIR: Councillor Alexandra Worrell

Signed by Chair

Date

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Report for: Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel – 6 March

Title: Mock Housing Inspection - Update

Report authorised by: Jahedur Rahman, Operational Director of Housing Services and Building Safety

Lead Officer: Claire Linnane, Programme Manager.

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** For information.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Panel note the information contained in the report.

2. Describe the issue under consideration

Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel requested an update on the mock housing inspection of relevant housing services conducted against the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards, carried out by specialist housing consultants, Housing Quality Network (HQN) between September and October 2024.

3. Background

- 3.1 The new regulatory regime for social landlords came into effect from 1st April 2024. This included the introduction of four new consumer standards covering key aspects of service delivery – Safety and Quality, which covers stock quality and Decent Homes, resident safety and compliance, repairs, and aids and adaptations; Transparency, Influence and Accountability, which covers resident engagement, complaints, equalities and diversity, performance and information about landlord services; Neighbourhood and Community which covers dealing with antisocial behaviour and hate crime, domestic abuse, local cooperation around shared areas etc; and Tenancy, which deals with allocations, mutual exchanges, tenancy fraud, tenancy management and sustainment.
- 3.2 The Regulator will inspect all social landlords at relatively short notice over a period of four years commencing from April 2024, using a risk-based approach to determine its programme. Where there are serious concerns about performance, the timing of inspections will be accelerated. Landlords are given a grading from C1 – C4, as set out below. The Regulator has been clear that in the first round of inspections very few C1

gradings will be awarded, reflecting the considerable scope for improvement in the sector.

Grading	Description
C1	Our judgement is that overall the landlord is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards. The landlord has demonstrated that it identifies when issues occur and puts plans in place to remedy and minimise recurrence.
C2	Our judgement is that there are some weaknesses in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed.
C3	Our judgement is that there are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is needed.
C4	Our judgement is that there are very serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards. The landlord must make fundamental changes so that improved outcomes are delivered.

- 3.3 To assist the Council, HQN were commissioned by Housing Services to carry out a mock inspection of the housing service's state of preparedness for inspection by the Regulator and compliance with the consumer standards.
- 3.4 A team of specialists from HQN carried out the mock inspection, with an expert in asset management, repairs and compliance leading on the Safety and Quality standard, and their Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive carrying out the estate visits and other reality checks.

4. Details

- 4.1. The mock inspection took place between September – October 2024. A range of evidence was submitted in advance including:
- Completed self-assessments against the four HQN consumer standard toolkits
 - A range of key documents e.g. strategies, policies, and plans including our Housing Improvement Plan, and performance information
 - A summary of where the service has come from since it came back in-house, including details of the self-referral to the Regulator, and the current direction of travel.
- 4.2. The inspection consisted of:
- A review of the submitted evidence
 - Interviews with the Chief Executive, Cabinet Members, and key managers

- Carrying out focus groups with involved residents and frontline staff
- Conducting reality checks:
 - Sampling complaints and anti-social behaviour case files
 - Observing contact centre calls from housing residents
 - Carrying out visits to a number of housing estates including Broadwater Farm
 - Visiting several void properties
- Observing key meetings i.e., Housing Improvement Board and Resident Voice Board.

HQN's main findings:

Preparation, organisation, and document submission

- 4.3. HQN found this was well-managed, including document submission, inspector team welcome, and organisation of site visits, and responses to queries was timely and effective.

Reality checks - estates

- 4.4. The visit to Broadwater Farm was found to be a positive experience by the inspector who visited this estate. No graffiti was observed on this estate or the others visited, although there was some inconsistency in grounds maintenance. Inspectors also commented on very clean lifts and areas were generally well-maintained, although noted some were very tired. Staff were found to be impressive, enthusiastic and professional.

Safety and quality standard - findings

- 4.5. In HQN's opinion, the Council's current position is such that it may be able to provide the level of assurance the Regulator will be seeking. HQN stated that *'Significant progress has been made in securing a better understanding of the stock and in addressing each of the health and safety weaknesses that necessitated self-referral.'* However, it considered that tenant satisfaction with the repairs service has seen some improvement, weaknesses remain and need to be addressed in a timely manner if the relevant 'required outcomes' in the safety and quality standard are to be evidenced.
- 4.6. HQN made the following recommendations as priorities for improvement against this standard:
- Ensure the frequency of stock condition surveys is in accordance with accepted best practice (five yearly)
 - Take steps to 'map out' and report on all health and safety risks (not just the 'big six')
 - Regularly review, and report on the progress of migrating key health and safety data from spreadsheets to the integrated health and safety capability

- Ensure the Housing Improvement Board has effective oversight of the organisation's approach to facilitating, coordinating and delivering aids and adaptations
- Take urgent steps to formalise and implement the organisation's response to the 'no access' problems currently hampering the ability to undertake electrical inspections in a timely manner
- Ensure the planned improvements to the responsive maintenance and voids management service deliver the expected outcomes for the council and tenants

Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard - findings

- 4.7. In HQN's opinion, the Council's current position is such that it may be able to provide the level of assurance the Regulator will be seeking to confirm compliance with this standard, *'but more rigour should be brought to the collection of household data, and management of complaints is a work in progress (though on an upward curve).'*
- 4.8. HQN made the following recommendations as priorities for improvement against this standard:
- Set out the approach to developing the culture of the team – much work is going on, but you would benefit (and make it easy for the regulator to understand) from setting this out – consider developing a people strategy
 - Draft a household data collection strategy to bring rigour to this area, track progress and set out how you will use the data – set targets for collection of data
 - Consider implementation of an annual engagement impact report
 - Continue to focus on improvements to complaints management process – review progress after an appropriate period (suggest six months)
 - Ensure you are compliant with Ombudsman's Complaint handling Code
 - Include percentage of stage two complaints responded to within target in performance report
 - Ensure the complaints policy is visible, and website is user-friendly
 - Consider changes to the transactional survey on complaints to improve feedback – for example, targeted telephone surveys to get richer feedback (rather than just trying to boost response rate)
 - Review the number and range of improvement plans – would you benefit from streamlining? Are they all reviewed at the appropriate level of governance?

Neighbourhood and Community standard - findings

- 4.9. In HQN's opinion, the Council's current position is such that it should be able to provide the level of assurance that the Regulator will be seeking to confirm compliance with this standard.

4.10. The following recommendations were identified as key priorities for improvement:

- Several actions are underway to develop and/or improve services – in particular relating to IT and processes and seek accreditation. There is a need to retain the focus on these and at the appropriate time review progress and success
- Review the approach to estate inspections – is there an opportunity to harmonise, achieve economies of scale and more tenant engagement
- Ensure all relevant policies, strategies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis – e.g. communal area policy
- Set out the approach to managing ASB and hate crime – tell the story to the regulator
- Review the monitoring and reporting on hate incidents and crime to ensure data is reliable
- There is significant activity happening in this area – consider how best you can capture the outcomes.

Tenancy Standard - findings

4.11. In HQN's opinion, the Council's current position is such that it may be able to provide the level of assurance the Regulator (RSH) will be seeking to confirm compliance with this standard, particularly in respect of allocations. However, HQN considers there is much work needed to turn the end-to-end lettings process into positive practice.

4.12. HQN identified the following key priorities for improvement:

- Review the housing allocations policy to ensure it remains appropriate
- Review the current position re the backlog of vacant properties and set targets to eradicate
- Review the key-to-key process to identify opportunities to streamline and improve process, including: Making use of notice period – e.g. inspect, identify any significant works required while vacant, advise outgoing tenants on requirements pre-termination
- As soon as feasible, introduce the six-week visit for new tenants to aid effective support to new tenants
- Consider the introduction of a comprehensive transactional survey for the end-to-end process
- Review the approach to supporting new tenants – can more support to furnish and equip properties be offered
- Set out the approach to tackling social housing fraud – amend or develop a new policy
- Review the tenancy policy to ensure it is up-to-date and remains relevant
- Review the approach to 'right-sizing' to ensure process is rigorous, comprehensive and well promoted.

Overall assessment

- 4.13. HQN's overall assessment was that their experience was '*one of the strongest we have seen in the last couple of years*'. They commented positively on examples of working with the community and resident engagement, and the Housing Improvement Board for having the right levels of challenge and support and focussing on looking at the right issues.
- 4.14. HQN believed having looked at the results from over 50 consumer standard inspections undertaken by the RSH, Haringey would be likely to be rated as a C2 ("some weaknesses and improvements are needed").
- 4.15. HQN also noted that addressing the identified issues around safety and quality and continued progress on key activities under the transparency, influence and accountability standard could well result in the RSH deeming the service to be at C1 standard.

Action plan and monitoring arrangements

- 4.16. A housing inspection action plan has been developed in partnership with relevant assistant directors and heads of service by the Transformation team to address the key priorities identified by HQN.
- 4.17. The action plan has been loaded onto Monday.com, the Council's project management monitoring system. Lead officers will be responsible for providing six-weekly progress updates on delivery of the action plan to the Member-led Housing Improvement Board.

5. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes'?

- 5.1. By delivering the housing inspection action plan the service is contributing to meeting Theme 5 of the Corporate Delivery Plan – Homes for the Future, particularly the following outcome: An improvement in the quality of housing and resident services in the social rented and leasehold sector. The service is also contributing to meeting Haringey 2035 – Our Vision Call to action 1- Safe and affordable housing in Haringey.

6. Carbon and Climate Change

- 6.1. N/A

7. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

Not required on the advice of the Principal Scrutiny Officer.

7.1. Procurement

Not required.

7.2. Head of Legal & Governance [Name and title of Officer completing these comments]

Not required.

7.3. Equality

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

The Regulator's new Consumer Standards, particularly the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard are likely to have a positive impact on Haringey council tenants as there is a requirement for landlords to 'understand the diverse needs of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs' and 'assess whether all tenants have fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services. Additionally, the standard requires that landlords must ensure that their services are accessible.

8. Use of Appendices

None.

9. Background papers

None.

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Report for: Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel – 6th May 2025

Title: Work Programme Update

Report

authorised by : Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Lead Officer: Philip Slawther, Principal Scrutiny Officer 0208 489 2957,
philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report gives details of the proposed scrutiny work programme for the Panel for the remainder of 2024-25, and for next year's work programme in 2025-26.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 (a) That the Panel considers its work programme, attached at **Appendix A**, and considers any areas of the work programme to be rolled over to 2025/26, or else suggest future agenda items for 2025/26.

(b) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse any amendments to the Panel's work programme, at its next meeting.

(c) That the Panel agreed the scoping document for its proposed Review on TA Placements Policy and the PRS Discharge Policy set out in **Appendix B**.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The work programme for Overview and Scrutiny was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 December 2024, following the scrutiny café event held on 20th September 2024. Arrangements for implementing the work programme have progressed and the latest plans for the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel are outlined in **Appendix A**.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The Panel could choose not to review its work programme however this could diminish knowledge of the work of Overview and Scrutiny and would fail to keep the full membership updated on any changes to the work programme.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The careful selection and prioritisation of work is essential if the scrutiny function is to be successful, add value and retain credibility. At its first meeting of the municipal year, on 13 June 2024, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a process for developing the 2024/25 – 2025/26 scrutiny work programme.
- 6.2 Following this meeting, a number of activities took place, including a Scrutiny Survey and a Scrutiny Café event, along with various agenda planning meetings. From these discussions issues were prioritised and work programme agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December.
- 6.3 Whilst Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies, i.e. work programmes must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, this item gives the Panel an opportunity to oversee and monitor its work programme and to suggest amendments.

Forward Plan

- 6.4 Since the implementation of the Local Government Act and the introduction of the Council's Forward Plan, scrutiny members have found the Plan to be a useful tool in planning the overview and scrutiny work programme. The Forward Plan is updated each month but sets out key decisions for a 3 month period.
- 6.5 To ensure the information provided to the Panel is up to date, a copy of the most recent Forward Plan can be viewed via the link below:

<https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=609&RP=110>

- 6.6 The Panel may want to consider the Forward Plan and discuss whether any of these items require further investigation or monitoring via scrutiny.

Scrutiny Review of TA Allocation and PRS Discharge Policy

- 6.7 Following the the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel meeting on 26th September 2024, the Panel determined to undertake a short piece of scrutiny work around the TA Allocation & PRS Discharge Policy. An initial meeting was held on 28th January with officers to discuss the possible scope of that work. The scoping documents for the proposed review including its terms of reference are attached at **Appendix B**. Members are asked to agree this scoping documents and agree to send it to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for formal agreement.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1 The contribution of scrutiny to the corporate priorities and the Corporate Delivery Plan will be considered routinely as part of the OSC's work.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance and Procurement

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications then these will be highlighted at that time.

Legal

- 8.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
- 8.3 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions.
- 8.4 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme and the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny function) falls within the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 8.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

Equality

- 8.6 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

8.7 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;

- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
- Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
- Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
- Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.

8.8 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Work Programme

Appendix B – Scoping document for Review on TA Allocation and PRS Discharge Policy

Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel

Work Plan 2024 – 2026

1. Scrutiny review projects; These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings that will be arranged as and when required and other activities, such as visits. Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover all these issues through in-depth pieces of work, they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Panel. These issues will be subject to further development and scoping. It is proposed that the Committee consider issues that are “cross cutting” in nature for review by itself i.e., ones that cover the terms of reference of more than one of the panels.		
Project	Comments	Priority
TA Placements Policy & TA Discharge of Duty Policy	The Panel would like to do a short review to align with the development of these two strategies. The Panel would like to look at Temporary Accommodation and how the organisation decides who is placed in what type of property. The Panel is concerned about the use of expensive nightly paid accommodation and the use of Travelodges. The Panel would also like to look at the types of accommodation that we place people in to discharge out housing duty, particularly use of the private rented sector.	

2. “One-off” Items; These will be dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Panel. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.	
Date	Potential Items

2024/25	
30 July 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Housing Asset Management Plan • Leaseholders • Fire Safety Action Plan
26 September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy & Policies Programme • HRA Capital Governance • Placemaking Programmes and Funding • Response to Ombudsman Complaint in relation to Planning Application HGY/2022/4537
05 November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Associations • Work Programme
21 November 2024 (Budget Meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget scrutiny
16th December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Scrutiny (HRA)
06 March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Update on the Local Plan consultation timetable and process • Allocations Policy • Housing Mock Inspection
2025/26	

Meeting 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Update on the Housing Improvement Programme and outstanding actions from the Social Housing regulator referral • Tenant Satisfaction Measures (survey results) • Cabinet Member questions (Cllr Williams) • 12 month update on the actions from the Review into PRS
Meeting 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Fire Safety Actions • Repairs and Cyclical maintenance of existing estates • Cabinet Member questions (Cllr Gordon)
Meeting 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Homelessness and TA. • Further update on the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme (Update on its implementation and progress to date) • Cabinet Member questions (Cllr Williams)
Meeting 4 (Budget)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Scrutiny • Update on Legal Disrepair claims
Meeting 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Social Housing Consumer Standards • Update on the Council's Housebuilding Programme • Voids

Indicative future agenda items:

- Local Plan
- An update on zero carbon future building projects and zero carbon demolition projects. It was suggested that this could dovetail with an update on the Local Plan.
- Complaints and how do we handle these? Learning from complaints.
- Aids & Adaptations (Possible Joint meeting of Adults & Housing or Housing Members invited to Attend Adults Panel meeting)

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Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel

Review on Haringey's TA Allocations and PRS Discharge policies (2024/2025); Scope and Terms of Reference

Review Topic	Review / Project Title
Rationale	<p>As part of the work planning process for Scrutiny in 2024/25, we undertook an online scrutiny survey and an in-person Scrutiny Café event to engage with local community and resident groups, to seek their views about which areas Scrutiny should focus its attention upon for the next two years. As part of the feedback relevant to the Housing, Planning and Development Panel, one of the areas where most concern was raised was Temporary Accommodation and a lack of available social housing more generally, as well as the length of time that families had to wait on the housing register, before being allocated a council home.</p> <p>At the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel meeting on 26th September 2024, the Panel received an update on the upcoming housing strategy and policy programme. During the meeting it was discussed that the TA Allocations and PRS Discharge policies were due to be revised over the following 6-9 months. The policies had last been updated in 2016. Since 2016 the level of demand and complexity of demand for local housing has changed significantly and a revised policy is needed to determine how different people or groups will be prioritised for social housing, given that the number of people on the housing register face outstrips the number of homes available. In light of this, it is felt that a review on this area is timely and provides the Panel with an opportunity to have a tangible impact and contribute to improved outcomes for residents.</p> <p>The allocation or placement policy sets out how the organisation prioritises different types of households for local housing placements (and by extension which groups are not going to be prioritised). The PRS discharge policy relates to how the Council prioritises placing someone in an arrangement with a private sector landlord in order to discharge the Council's homelessness duty to that person. The two policies are currently separate but they could be combined into a single policy. The criteria used to prioritise someone for TA is likely to be fairly similar to how to prioritise someone for a PRS placement. One method used by some other local authorities to prioritise residents is to have bandings. Officers advise that these are not statutory and that there were other options for determining which groups or individuals should be prioritised for housing.</p>

	<p>The Panel propose to conduct a scrutiny review of the council's new TA Allocations and PRS discharge policies which are being developed over the next 6 months.</p> <p>We know there are many issues within the council's use of TA that are of interest and concern to everyone – how long people spend in TA, the quality of the accommodation, and how best to maximise our supply of the least harmful forms of TA. However, in order to make best use of a time-limited scrutiny review and to try to have a tangible impact, it is proposed to keep it focused on the TA allocations and PRS discharge policies.</p> <p>The Council has a limited amount of local housing stock for use as TA and the scrutiny panel would like to make sure that we have as robust and evidence-based framework as possible for making decisions about who is prioritised and who is not.</p>
Objectives/Desired outcomes	To make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet in relation to the development of new TA allocations and PRS discharge policies
Key lines of enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who should be prioritised for the different types of TA available? (Both in terms of its type e.g. a flat, B&B, nightly paid, and its location e.g. in borough, in London, outside of London?) Who should be a lower priority? • What criteria should be used to decide where someone falls in the prioritisation? • Who will be protected from certain types of accommodation? What are the red lines? E.g. children under a certain age will never be placed in X type of accommodation. • Who should be prioritised for placements into the PRS? Who is this not appropriate for? • How much choice should/can households feasibly have? • What are the most socially just choices and what are the most cost-effective?

Terms of Reference (Purpose of the Review/ Objectives)	<p>To review the TA Allocations Policy and the PRS Discharge Policy and make recommendations for how these could be improved. In particular, the Panel want to understand what criteria should be used to decide when someone is given priority and who should be protected from certain types of accommodation.</p> <p>The Panel are keen to know what other local authorities doing around this and to understand best practice.</p>
Scrutiny Membership	<p>The Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel:</p> <p>Cllr Worrell (Chair), Cllr Diakides, Cllr Harrison-Mullane, Cllr Hymas, Cllr Barnes, Cllr Bevan & Cllr Moyeed</p>
Timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 6. evidence sessions to take place March-early April. • Recommendation setting mid-April. • Write up late April. • Sign off on final draft early May.
Links to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026.	<p>Homes for the future</p> <p>Outcome Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving social housing and the private rented sector services • A reduction in temporary accommodation
Evidence Sources	<p>These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance, research and policy documents; • Interviews with Cabinet Member, key officers – what is the current experience of applying existing policies and what is the current thinking on direction of travel for the new policies?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with NGOs and academics in this field • Other London boroughs
Methodology/Approach	<p>A variety of methods will be used to gather evidence from the witnesses above, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk top research; • Evidence gathering sessions with witnesses; and • Visits
Witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers – Hannah Adler, Sara Sutton, Darren Fairclough • Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning • Haringey residents who have experience of having been through this process if we can find someone willing to engage • London Councils/LGA • Other London boroughs who have up-to-date TA allocations/PRS discharge policies • NGOs with expertise – Shelter, Crisis, Trust for London • Academics in this space – further research required
Equalities Implications	<p>The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to: (1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act; (2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not; (3) Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.</p> <p>The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy/maternity; race; religion/faith; sex and sexual orientation. In addition, marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.</p>

	The Panel should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during final scoping, evidence gathering and final reporting. This should include considering and clearly stating: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to service and fair representation of all groups within Haringey; Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised. The Panel should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence, when possible.
Date for completion	Cabinet – June 2025
Reporting arrangements	The Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health will coordinate a response to Cabinet to the recommendations of the panel's final report.
Publicity	The review will be publicised through the scrutiny website. The outcomes of the review will be similarly published once complete.
Constraints / Barriers / Risks	We aim to complete the draft report before the membership of the panel is updated for 2025/26. However, In order to achieve this, we need to keep the review short, specific and time focused. A failure to do so will undermine the timescales for this report and risk the report not being completed by late May.
Officer Support	Lead Officer; Philip, Scrutiny Officer, 0208 489 2957 philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

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