

MINUTES OF THE MEETING Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Tuesday, 23rd September, 2025, 6.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Adam Small (Chair), John Bevan, Lester Buxton and Isidoros Diakides

248. 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.

249. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Barnes.

250. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business

251. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

252. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

253. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting on 23 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

254. KPI UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation which provided an update on a number of key performance indicators relating to the Housing Service. The data related to performance as of July 2025. The presentation was introduced by Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing; Scott Kay, AD Repairs and Compliance; and Christian Carlise,

AD Asset Management, as set out in the published agenda pack at pages 13-42. Cllr Williams, the Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning was also present for this item. The following arose during the discussion of this report:

- a. The Panel sought assurances around the fact that it appeared that the organisation was failing to meet the targets on nearly all of its KPIs, and queried the extent to which this was a significant problem. In response, officers commented that was one way of looking at it. Officers clarified that there were a number of KPIs which had a 100% target. These were statutory targets for compliance areas. It was suggested that there were legitimate reasons for not being able to achieve 100%, such as not being able to get access to a property to undertake gas safety inspections. The Director of Housing set out that whilst the service aspired to achieve 100% every month, there were practical challenges to achieving it. The Panel were advised that the service undertook benchmarking of its performance against a range of other landlords and Haringey tended to be in the upper quartile when measured against other providers.
- b. The Panel raised concerns about the fact that Haringey had come last for two years running in relation to the number of Ombudsman complaints per head of population. It was suggested that this painted a different picture to some of the information provided in the presentation. In response, officers commented that context was important when reviewing performance against Ombudsman complaints. It was commented that, last year, Haringey had just over 1500 Stage 1 complaints, and of these, 55 complaints ended up being referred to the Housing Ombudsman. Officers set out that the service undertook 60k repairs a year, including gas safety and mechanical works, of which 1500 residents raised a complaint. It was suggested that in this context, the proportion of repair work delivered that resulted in a complaint being raised was relatively small.
- c. As a follow up to the above question, the Panel sought assurances that performance on Ombudsman complaints would improve. In response, officers advised that they were not entirely clear about the methodology of the measure being referred to. It was commented that these figures did not relate specifically to the presentation and that Ombudsman referrals related to complaints, rather than repairs performance specifically. Officers set out that the service benchmarked their outturn with the Housing Ombudsman with similar authorities like Hackney and Southwark. It was reported that both of these authorities had a higher maladministration rate to Haringey. It was commented that a lot of London local authorities did share a commonality around an ageing stock profile, and a lot of the complaints that were received related to stock condition.
- d. In relation to tenant satisfaction measures, officers advise that outcomes had improved since the ALMO came back in-house. Against a majority of indicators in this area there was a year-on-year improvement since 2023. In relation to the methodology of the tenancy satisfaction surveys, the service used an independent external company to undertake the surveys. The expectation was that 1000 of these were done in a year, Haringey tried to undertake 2000 a year.
- e. The Panel queried how Leaseholder service charge collection could increase above 100%, to 102%. In response, Officers advised that the service profiled the monthly performance figure based on the annual target which was based on the amount received in cash terms. It was possible that from month to

- month the amount collected could exceed the monthly average that had been set, hence 102% represented a figure that was in excess of the monthly average.
- f. The Panel requested further information about the reasons behind the dip in performance for satisfaction of last repair. In response, officers advised that the service had been focusing on outstanding and complex cases that had been going on for a long time. It was suggested that this tended to skew the satisfaction scores as the resident may be happy with the repair but dissatisfied with the time it took to resolve the repair.
 - g. In response to a follow-up, officers advised that there were dealing with a higher volume of complex cases and damp and mould cases that a year ago, because they had additional capacity from having a number of specialist contractors on board. The Director clarified that the service measured satisfaction with a repair at the point of the case being closed.
 - h. The Chair commented that whilst he accepted that levels of dissatisfaction were being measured at a particular time, he contended that the results still showed that residents were dissatisfied. It was suggested that perhaps there was scope to consider how the Council communicated with residents on repairs and kept them updated. In response, officers acknowledged that there was scope improve resident satisfaction through looking at how the organisation communicated the status of repairs with its residents.
 - i. The Panel queried the figure of 302 voids in July and asked if that was calculated in the same way that the number of voids was calculated in the last update to the Panel. In response, officers provided assurances that it was calculated in the same way. Officers advised that the current number of voids was around 270 and that the Council had a round 500 voids a year. This compared favourably with 600 a year in 2023.
 - j. The Panel noted that the stated 186 responses to the satisfaction survey in July seemed quite low. In response, officers advised that the satisfaction surveys were sent out to residents, when a job had been completed and that Council had little control over whether people chose to fill in the survey and return it. By way of context, it was highlighted that of the 186 returns, 146 were satisfied.
 - k. The Panel queried the 7% figure for tenancy audits. In response, officers advised that there had been a delay with uploading these. Officers advised that as a result performance was lower than expected, but it would increase. It was expected that 2000 audits would be completed by year end.
 - l. The Chair requested that future standing KPI updates included information on the number of legal disrepair cases, if possible. **(Action: Jahed).**

RESOLVED

Noted

255. 2025/26 FINANCE UPDATE Q1

The Panel received report which provided a Q1 Finance update for 2025/26. The report covered the position at Quarter 1 of the 2025/26 financial year including General Fund Revenue, Capital, Housing Revenue Account and Dedicated Schools Grant budgets. The forecast total revenue outturn variance for the General Fund was £34.1m comprising £24.9m base budget pressures and £9.2m non delivery of savings. The report was introduced by Kaycee Ikegwu, Head of Finance and Jahedur

Rahman, Director of Housing as set out in the agenda pack at pages 43-186. The following arose as part of the discussion of this report:

- a. The Panel noted the projected overspend of £11.4m in Housing Demand and the fact that this was related to Temporary Accommodation and the rising costs of Nightly Paid & B&B accommodation.
- b. The Panel questioned the fact that there was a significant overspend, given the amount of scrutinising of the budget that took place last year. The Panel queried the extent to which there were contingencies built into the budgets. In response, officers advised that within the HRA there was a reserve balance, which was effectively a contingency. The guidelines suggested that this should be equivalent to 10% of annual rental income. Officers set out that Haringey's reserve balance was set at a higher level than was set out in the guidelines, and that there was a significant contingency in place.
- c. The Panel sought clarification around the reasons behind the slippage in the capital programme. In response, officers advised that 55% of the allocated capital spend was spent last year. There were two key areas where there were slippages. The first was delays to work in two major blocks, which were awaiting approval from the Building Safety Regulator. The second area of slippage related to phase 2 works coming in at an increased cost. This required external assurance around the additional cost, which caused delays.
- d. The Panel queried whether there was some learning to be taken forward about factoring in delays arising from legislative changes or from the creation of a new regulatory framework. In response, officers commented that it was difficult as it depended on the body or regulator in question. The delays in this instance were caused by a lack of qualified surveyors to carry out the works. The Cabinet Member commented that it seemed as though there had been no workforce plan put in place by the government to accompany the legislative changes.
- e. The Panel queried the personal financial limit that would make someone ineligible for social housing. The Panel also raised concerns about checks on ownership of foreign homes not being adequately undertaken and queried what checks were done in relation to owning a home overseas. In response, officers agreed to come back with a written response. **(Action: Jahed)**.
- f. The Panel queried the relationship between the projected £34.1m overspend and the £37m EFS loan that was secured from the government. The Panel requested clarification about where the £37m loan was reflected in the overall budget position. **(Action: Corporate Finance)**.
- g. The Panel raised concerns about the fact that the report highlighted that the £37m exceptional financial support may not be enough to cover the budget gap at year end, particularly given assurances that were provided previously on this. The Panel queried to what extent some of the additional revenue budget pressures could be attributed to delays in implementing the capital programme. The Panel also questioned how the projected overspend was so large at an early stage in the financial year. In response, officers commented that the Section 151 Officer was best placed to respond to questions about the size of overall projected overspend and the financial assumptions that were made as part of the overall budget. Officers commented that borrowing was seen as the last resort and that other sources of revenue would always be utilised first. Officers also stated that the position was a forecast and the £37m

- EFS had not been spent at this point. Assurances were given that the overall position was expected to improve by Quarter 2.
- h. The Chair commented that the overall budget position was a matter for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and he directed members to focus their questions on the bits of the budget pertaining to housing.
 - i. In relation to the concerns raised about a failure to build new homes having an impact on temporary accommodation spend in the General Fund, the Cabinet Member clarified that the underspends in the capital programme related to refurbishment works, rather than TA.
 - j. The Panel sought clarification about the fact that the report identified that the monthly costs of TA were up 83% year on year, but that the total number of people in Nightly Paid Accommodation (NPA) was down. In response, officers clarified that there had been a reduction in private sector lease accommodation and that this had led to a knock on increase in NPA. The Director of Housing advised that the service had been targeting B&B accommodation with the aim of consolidating some of the provision and getting a reduced rate. It was commented that the service was also looking to do this with NPA in order to achieve in-year savings. In the longer term, it was commented, the Council was looking to acquire 250 properties to reduce the reliance on B&B and NPA accommodation, which were the most expensive forms of TA.
 - k. Officers confirmed that the numbers of NPA had increased from 1850 to 2150. Officers confirmed that the units would be used, rather than them being available if the Council needed them. The cost of NPAs had increased by 18% since the budget was agreed, the underlying cost assumption in the budget was that costs would increase by 10%. The overall numbers in B&B had reduced. Officers provided assurances that detailed financial modelling was undertaken and that this led to an increase in the corporate contingency within the budget. External assurance had been carried out on the modelling and the assessment of the modelling used was overwhelmingly positive. In addition, the service was reviewing its future forecasting on a monthly basis going forward.
 - l. The Chair sought clarification about the acknowledgement in the report around a key future risk relating to the legal disrepair budget of £2.7m. In response, officers advised that there had been a 20% reduction in new cases coming through. The commentary in the report reflected new legislation that was coming through and the associated risk that this could lead to a wave of new disrepair claims against the Council.

RESOLVED

That the report was noted.

256. CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN Q1 2025/26 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Panel received a report which provided an update at Q1 on the Council's progress against the actions outlined in the Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) 2024-2026. The report was introduced by exception by Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing and Christian Carlisle, AD Asset Management, as set out in the report at pages 187-245.

The Panel noted that there was one indicator that had a red RAG rating for Housing and this related to delivery of retrofitting improvements to the Council's Housing stock,

which was red in relation to the budget, due to reliance on external funding. The Panel sought clarification about whether there were going to be improvement works carried out to blocks, some of which had not had any works done in a generation. In response, officers advised that works would be carried out where there was a dedicated programme in place i.e. if there was decency work being done or works to high rise blocks, but other than that, not at this stage.

RESOLVED

That the high level progress made against the delivery of commitments as set out in the CDP 2024-26 at the end of June 2025, was noted.

257. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation which provided an update on the Housing Improvement Programme which included; the voluntary undertaking to the Regulator of Social Housing, safety and compliance, Decent Homes, and damp and mould. The presentation was introduced by Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing as set out at pages 247-279 of the agenda pack. Christian Carlise, AD Asset Management and Scott Kay, AD Repairs and Compliance were also present for this item, along with Cllr Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning. The following arose in discussion of this item:

- a. As part of the voluntary undertaking to the Regulator of Social Housing, the Council undertook a commitment to improve in ten key areas. The Director of Housing advised the Panel that the Council had met those ten commitments and the next step was for this to be validated by external auditors.
- b. The Panel sought clarification about the extent to which the service was affected by delays within the courts, in relation to getting a Court Order to access a property. In response, officers advised that it varied from month to month. There was no permanent backlog, but some months there were more cases that the service would like to put through than the courts were willing to accept.
- c. In response to a question about whether going through the courts was expensive, officers advised that it depended on the type of order that was being sought. This varied from a few hundred pounds for an EPA warrant to very expensive for an injunction. Officers also commented that for gas safety certificates and electrical safety certificates, they undertook warrant applications were possible as this was quicker and more cost effective. A trial of electrical warrants had resulted in 40 warrants, which resulted in 19 being enforced to date.
- d. The Panel queried the table of FRA Overdue Actions and questioned what the Pennington's figure related to. In response, officers advised that Pennington's were an external company that the Council brought in to conduct a review of its housing stock, following the ALMO being brought back in-house. Following that review, the Council self-referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing in January 2023. The table showed the number of fire safety actions that were outstanding at the point of Pennington's completing an internal review, the point that the Council referred itself to the Regulator and the current position as of 2nd September.

- e. The Panel was advised that the achievement of 100% homes being brought up to the Decent Homes Standard was part of a five-year plan and the profile of the number of homes being brought up to decency each year was agreed with the regulator. In year one, the target was for 1000 homes to be made decent and the Council achieved 1600. In year two, 719 homes were made decent against a target of 700. The current position was that 80.65% of council homes were at the decency standard. Since the ALMO came in-house the non-decency position had gone from 31.83% to 19.35%. The Council was working toward 100% decency by the end of 2027/28.
- f. The Chair queried the fact that the profile of the delivery of 100% Decent Homes was backloaded over the period and sought assurances that the Council would be able to meet the ramping up of decency works that was required. In response, officers acknowledged that the profiling of work was backloaded and that this was based on a recognition that the Council did not have an adequate long-term supply chain in place to deliver the works. Officers provided assurances that they expected that the target of 100% would be met by the end of 2027/28. Officers advised that a lot of the focus over the next three years would be around external works and that the Council was well on the way with internal Decent Homes work.
- g. In response to a follow up, officers advised that as part of the Asset Management Strategy agreed by Cabinet in December 2023, the Council set out its investment priorities within the HRA within three key areas; building safety; fire safety and decency. Officers gave assurances that the Council would ensure that the HRA had enough funding to fund these three areas, and that they would be prioritised above other areas of investment.
- h. The Panel queried whether the service understood the profile of the Decent Homes work that was left to do in terms of geographic location and clustering. In response, officers advised that they had a profile of the works which derived from the stock condition surveys that provided information on the condition each property and the works would be formulated on that basis. In order to achieve VfM, the service would also look at what other works could be done whilst the scaffolding was up on a particular block.
- i. The Chair queried the extent to which it was possible to be certain that all decency works could be carried out on time, given damp and mould and the fact that to some extent the extent of damp and mould was unknown. In response, officers advised that they had achieved 75% access to internal properties and 90% access to communal areas as part of the first programme and so they knew the condition of the vast majority of properties. In terms of the 25% that they were unable to access, these would be prioritised again this year as part of the rolling inspection of 20% of properties every year.
- j. In response to a query, officers commented that they had a stronger delivery partner in place through the presence of the partnering contractors. The Council would be working with four Tier one contractors across the borough to deliver the planned investment works. It was commented that it took nearly two years to get the contract in place and that once it was in place, the capacity existed to ramp up decency works in the later part of the five-year timescale.
- k. The Panel queried whether the contractors were in place. In response, officers advised that the Council was in the process of awarding contracts and mobilising works. It was expected that the works would begin in February/March 2026. The Council had two contracts in place on an interim

basis to carry out works whilst the new contracts were mobilised. The Chair noted that monitoring the performance of these contracts may be something that the Panel wanted to look into as part of the 2026/27 work programme.

- l. The Chair sought further information about the dedicated team in place for damp and mould cases and the extent to which an increase in demand had been modelled following the introduction of Awaab's Law as part of the Social Housing (regulation) Act 2023. In response, officers advised that the team had dedicated damp and mould surveyors in place who were able to respond within the required timescales. There were also dedicated contractors in place who had the capacity to take on additional work if needed. The service could also draw on other areas of the business to meet additional demand. Officers acknowledged that demand could increase as Awaab's Law became more well known. Assurances were provided to the Panel that there was sufficient capacity within the current team at present to meet expected demand.
- m. The Panel sought clarification on anecdotal accounts that the Regulator of Social Housing based their judgement on statistical evidence rather talking to residents. In response, officers advised that it would likely vary according to the inspection team. Officers advised that they would interview a number of senior figures within the organisation, attend meetings of the HIP Board, likely attend scrutiny panel meetings, attend resident engagement meetings and possibly do estate walkabouts. The Director of Housing advised that the service carried out a mock inspection last year to look at how the organisation would meet the new regulatory standards. Following that mock inspection, 48 actions were put forward, and the Council had been working on implementing these actions over the last 7 months.
- n. The Panel noted that the timelines for delivery were set out in the report as five days to start relevant safety work following an initial investigation and that works had to start within 12 weeks. Officers commented that there were prioritising working through a backlog of 300 existing cases before Awaab's law came into effect in mid-October. It was hoped that being able to reduce this backlog would allow the service to meet demand and the above timeframes. The Director of Housing commented that ultimately the service would have to see what the demand was like at the time of implementation.
- o. The Chair cautioned that, similar to a spike in legal disrepair cases, the service would likely see another spike following implementation of Awaab's Law.
- p. The Panel sought assurances about what the impact might be on other service areas from prioritising damp and mould and whether the Council might need to de-prioritise fire safety assessments for example. In response, officers advised that there would be no de-prioritisation of other areas of repair and that damp and mould was being prioritised on top of maintaining all of the other business areas.
- q. The Chair commented that in capturing the risks of non-compliance with Awaab's Law, it was also important to recognise that the biggest risk was to the health of Council residents.
- r. The Chair queried what the damp and mould vulnerability data was. In response, officers advised that the Housing service was working with Children's social care and Adults social care so that when colleagues in those services visited vulnerable people in their homes, they could make referrals to housing around damp and mould. There was a concern that some people with vulnerabilities might not be reporting it themselves. The Director of Housing

also advised that the service was triaging the information from Adults and Children's with its own housing data, to get a more holistic data set. It was also noted that there were a series of questions asked by staff when someone called to report damp and mould and the answers to these questions were used for internal analysis of the risks to those living there and the severity of the case.

- s. The Panel enquired about the extent which external contractors were used for damp and mould works and what was being done to build up the in-house capacity through the DLO. In response, officers advised that the internal Director Labour Organisation was made up of 120 trades operatives and that they carried about 70% of repairs, whilst the other 30% was contracted out. Officers set out that the intention was to continue to grow the DLO and to bring in new apprentices each year. A new Training Manager had just been recruited who would be responsible for bringing through the operatives through their apprenticeships.
- t. In response to a question, officers confirmed that other contractors across the Council had the ability to report damp and mould cases and that they were encouraged to do so.

RESOLVED

Noted.

258. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

That the work programme was noted.

259. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

260. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 17 November
- 15 December
- 9 March 2026

CHAIR: Councillor Adam Small

Signed by Chair

Date