

MINUTES OF MEETING Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Wednesday, 31st March, 2021, 11:00

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Emine Ibrahim, Cabinet Member for Housing & Estate
Renewal**

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9. EXTENSION OF THE ROUGH SLEEPING DISCRETION POLICY

**Clerk's note – In accordance with Part 4, Section H, and Paragraph 18 of the Council Constitution, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed that this decision should be treated as matter of urgency and that the call-in procedure shall not apply due to the fact that any delay in decision making will impact on the Council's ability to utilise available funding to support families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals in Haringey*.*

The Cabinet Member considered a report which sought approval to extend the Rough Sleeping Discretion Policy to July 2021, in light of COVID-19 and ongoing lockdown restrictions in England.

The Cabinet Member noted that the application of 'Everybody In' in Haringey had improved outcomes for, and had likely saved the lives of, a number of Haringey's most vulnerable residents. It had also enabled the Council to engage with a number of people who were both vulnerable and hard to reach and ensured that these people had been receiving support from a range of services. As well as accommodation, the Council has been providing those it has placed in emergency accommodation with food and hot meals and facilitating engagement with health services. The Council had also committed to working with these residents to ensure that they were supported to continue living in settled accommodation once they moved on from their emergency accommodation. The Cabinet Member set out that the Council had provided accommodation for over 1000 individuals since March 2020.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member:

- I. Approved the Rough Sleeping Discretion Policy attached at Appendix 1, as agreed in September 2020;
- II. Agreed to extend the period of application of the Rough Sleeping Discretion Policy to 14 July 2021 unless terminated earlier or extended beyond this date by Cabinet / Cabinet Member decision.
- III. Noted that following termination of the Rough Sleeping Discretion Policy some of those placed in emergency accommodation under the policy will remain there pending placement in move-on accommodation pursuant to the Exit Strategy at Appendix 2 of the report.
- IV. Delegated authority to the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Renewal, to amend this policy to give effect to changes in legislation or statutory guidance, or directives or requests of a similar character issued by Government.

Reasons for decision

On 27 July 2020, the Council adopted the Rough Sleeping Discretion Policy, to ensure that people who were at risk of rough sleeping and were vulnerable in the context of Covid-19 would continue to be accommodated. This policy was, in the first instance, to run until 30 September 2020 and was then extended to 31 March 2021. Given that the circumstances under which it was introduced remain, it is proposed to extend this policy.

Alternative options considered

The first alternative option is to return to the approach that was taken from 26 March 2020 to 27 July 2020, i.e. to offer accommodation to anyone in the borough rough sleeping, or at risk of rough sleeping. The reason this option is not recommended is that local authorities have been directed by MHCLG to adopt locally appropriate policies, and the cost of continuing to provide emergency accommodation and welfare support to everyone rough sleeping would be an unsustainable cost to the General Fund.

The second alternative option is to return to the approach taken prior to 26 March 2020, i.e. to offer accommodation only to those to whom the Council owes a homelessness duty. The reason this option is not recommended is that this would mean that a number of at-risk people would not be provided with accommodation, and it is likely that they would be disproportionately negatively affected by sleeping rough in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic; this would constitute a risk to public health.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date

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