

**Report for:** Cabinet 11 February 2025

**Item number:** 15

**Title:** Housing Annual Report 2023-24

**Report authorised by :** Jonathan Kirby

**Lead Officer:** Jahedur Rahman, Operational Director of Housing Services and Building Safety

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** Non Key

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1. This is the second Housing Annual Report to be produced by the Council since the service was brought back in house in June 2022.
- 1.2. The housing service has been through a period of significant change - and on a journey of improvement - since it was insourced in June 2022. It self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing and was found to be in breach of two parts of the Home Standard in February 2023. It was subject to a Regulatory Notice until March 2024 or until full compliance is achieved. In April 2023 a Housing Improvement Plan was agreed by the Council to address and resolve the issues raised, and to grasp the opportunity to improve services for the benefit of our residents and tenants.
- 1.3. The Housing Annual report gives an overview of the Service's performance between 2023 and 2024. It is structured in accordance with the Housing Regulator's latest consumer standards for social housing:
  - safety and quality of homes
  - tenancy management
  - neighbourhoods and communities
  - transparency, influence and accountability
- 1.4. It indicates where progress has been made; headline achievements; where there is more work to be done and next steps. It also includes financial and performance data.

## **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1. As a council landlord, we are obliged by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to be accountable, accessible and transparent in the way we deliver our services. This report supports that obligation by providing our residents and stakeholders with a review of what we have done to maintain good quality

and safe homes; to support neighbourhoods and communities; and manage our tenancy services well. It also provides tenant satisfaction data, complaints figures and a breakdown of budget allocation and how we have spent the income we receive.

- 2.2. The report for 2023-24 describes our ongoing priorities and next steps as we continue the transformation process set out in our Housing Improvement Plan. It sets out the progress we've made in respect of:
- compliance with fire and electrical safety standards
  - making more of our homes decent
  - delivering major works schemes
  - tackling repairs issues
  - improving our tenancy management and our continued support for tenants with the cost-of-living crisis and migration to Universal Credit
  - involving our residents in shaping our services through our resident engagement framework.

It also reflects a positive shift in around half of our tenant satisfaction measures.

- 2.3. We have been meeting regularly the Housing Regulator and Housing Ombudsman as we roll out our Improvement Plan and have had positive feedback from them in 2024, confirming that the service is moving in the right direction. We need to keep up this momentum in the coming year as there is still much to do however – particularly around improving our repairs service, resolving and damp and mould issues and learning from complaints, where our performance remains below average.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. Cabinet notes and approves the Housing Annual Report 2023-24 attached as Appendix 1 so that it can be made available to tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders on the council's website.

### **4. Reasons for decision**

- 4.1. The council has committed to improve its housing services. So it is essential that it is transparent about what it delivers: the landlord services it provides to tenants and leaseholders; the work it is doing to maintain and improve homes; the ways it supports the communities it manages; how it is spending the money it receives from rents and charges; and how it listens and learns from residents.

### **5. Alternative options considered**

- 5.1. Not applicable

## **6. Background information**

- 6.1. On 7 December 2021, Cabinet resolved that the Council's housing service which was then provided by Homes for Haringey ("HfH") should be brought back in-house and delegated authority to officers to deal with the detailed implementation process. It was agreed that the transfer would take place on 1 June 2022.
- 6.2. 6.2 Following the findings of the external health check after the Council brought the service back in-house, the Council made a self-referral to the RSH in January 2023. The RSH responded in March 2023 to confirm that they had concluded that the Council had breached two parts of the Home Standard:
- Part 1.1 (a) of the Home Standard says that registered providers shall:  
(a) ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard.
  - Part 1.2 (b) of the Home Standard says that registered providers shall:  
(b) meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.
- 6.3. Since identifying the issues the council has embarked on implementing a Housing Services Improvement Plan, agreed at Cabinet in April 2023. Since the self-referral the Operational Director of Housing Services and Building Safety and Director of Placemaking and Housing have been meeting monthly with the Regulator to monitor the Council's progress and provide the appropriate level of assurance that our improvement plans are on track.

### **Regulator of Social Housing**

- 6.4. The RSH is the government body tasked with overseeing the regulation of the social housing sector, regulating both local authority and housing association landlords, collectively known as Registered Providers (RPs). The RSH adopts an assurance-based co-regulation approach. This means that the local authority executive, usually the cabinet, in local authority landlords, or the board of the housing association are responsible for ensuring they comply with the regulatory standards set by RSH.
- 6.5. All Council housing providers are subject to the consumer standards and the RSH will intervene if these are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.
- 6.6. The RSH expects the Council to have systems such as audit, risk management and performance monitoring in place that allow the early identification of problems and take effective action to resolve them.
- 6.7. Where appropriate the RSH expects providers to self-refer. The Council's approach has been to acknowledge failure and take responsibility for urgent

improvement. The Council is working very closely with the RSH to achieve the necessary improvements.

## **2. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes**

- 6.8. The Report describes the Housing Service's contribution to Theme 5 of the Corporate Delivery Plan: Homes for the Future - our vision of a borough where everyone has a safe, sustainable, stable and affordable home. The work of the housing service's resident engagement team in promoting tenant and leaseholder involvement and co-production of services and policies also supports the aims and ambitions of the Haringey Deal.

## **7. Carbon and Climate Change**

- 7.1. The housing service is contributing to the council's net zero ambitions by improving the energy efficiency and sustainability of its stock and encouraging greening projects on its estates. The report includes an update on the council's first council home retrofit project at the Coldfall estate.

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

### **Finance**

The Housing Annual Report is an update report on housing activities during the year 2023/24.

- 8.1. The financial information on housing activities have been reflected in the Housing Revenue Accounts 2023/24 financial statement.

### **Procurement**

- 8.2. Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report and confirms there are no procurement related matters preventing Cabinet from approving the recommendation stated in paragraph 3 above.

### **Assistant Director of Legal & Governance**

- 8.3. The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the drafting of this report and comments as follows:
- 8.4. The RSH has statutory responsibility for setting and enforcing housing standards in the social housing sector, including local authority housing.
- 8.5. As a registered provider of Social Housing, the Council is required to comply with the consumer standards set by the RSH.

- 8.6. Section 198A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 enables the RSH to use its regulatory and enforcement powers if a registered provider such as the council has breached a consumer standard.
- 8.7. The RSH has taken the co-regulation approach and is working with the Council as it seeks to remedy the breaches identified in “Background Information” above. Where it is not satisfied, the RSH has a range of enforcement powers including imposing penalties, awarding compensation to tenants and (under s269A Housing and Regeneration Act 2008) censure of employees where there has been mismanagement.
- 8.8. The Review sets out the Council’s progress towards satisfying the RSH that it is remedying its breaches of RSH standards.
- 8.9. The Assistant Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) confirms that there are no legal reasons preventing approval of the recommendations in this report.

## **Equality**

- 8.10. 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.
- 8.11. 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 apply to the first part of the duty.
- 8.12. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.
- 8.13. This decision is not expected to have any direct positive or negative equality impact. It does, however, indirectly contribute to Haringey Council’s housing improvement plan. Black people, disabled people, women and those from a low socio-economic background are overrepresented in our social housing stock, so it is anticipated that this decision will have an indirect positive impact on those who share these protected characteristics.

## **9. Use of Appendices**

- 9.1. Appendix 1 – Housing Annual Report 2023-24

## **10. Background papers**

- a. 7 December 2021 - Decision on the Council's proposal to bring Homes for Haringey (HfH) in-house – [link here](#)
- b. 7 July 2022 – Proposals for Resident Engagement and Participation following the Insourcing of Homes for Haringey – [link here](#)
- c. 18 April 2023 - Housing Services Improvement Plan and Compliance Assurance Statement – [link here](#)
- d. 16 January 2024 - Housing Annual Review 2022-23 [link here](#)