

Report for: Cabinet, 11 November 2025

Item number: 16

Title: A Draft Homelessness Strategy for Consultation

Report authorised by : Sara Sutton, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing, and Health

Lead Officer: Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing

Ward(s) affected: All

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

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy.
- 1.2. This report provides a brief summary of the process - including engagement with a wide range of stakeholders – by which a Draft Homelessness Strategy has been prepared for consultation. The report outlines how that consultation is proposed to take place. The report then sets out the strategic objectives and commitments proposed within that draft strategy.
- 1.3. The report recommends Cabinet to approve the Draft Homelessness Strategy attached at Appendix 1 in order that the council can carry out formal consultation. That consultation will inform the development of a new Homelessness Strategy for the period to December 2027.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1. A home is a fundamental human right. Few things are more important than having a home. But housing has become increasingly unaffordable: for many Haringey people, home ownership and even private renting are out of reach. In spite of the council's new housing delivery programme - which has built more than 800 new council homes in the last five years – more than 2,600 Haringey households are living in Temporary Accommodation. Many more are living in insecure housing at risk of homelessness.
- 2.2. So the way that the council works with its partners across the borough to prevent and respond to homelessness over the next two years is critically important. We are proposing a homelessness strategy that has effective partnership working at its heart. The strategy aims to protect Haringey's wider population from the risk of homelessness, to improve our homelessness prevention services, to provide

specific interventions for groups at particular risk of homelessness, and to improve accommodation options for those experiencing the emergency of homelessness.

2.3. But the actions proposed in this draft strategy cannot on their own end the homelessness crisis. Addressing homelessness requires structural solutions - including reformed welfare systems and better security of tenure.

2.4. This is a situation of crisis too for local authorities, and that also requires structural solutions. After more than a decade of severe cuts to council funding from 2010, the stabilisation in recent years has been welcome. But we have not recovered lost financial ground. And the way that Temporary Accommodation is funded – a longstanding situation where it is uniquely ineligible for the kind of housing benefit subsidy provided to other kinds of housing - creates a subsidy gap which poses a critical risk to London boroughs' finances. Aligning subsidy rates with current market conditions and investing in affordable housing are critical to restoring financial stability and improving outcomes for homeless households.

2.5. The people of Haringey are our biggest strength. I'd like to thank the organisations who worked as part of the Haringey Homelessness Reduction Board to oversee this draft strategy's development and the very many people with lived experience of homelessness who helped us understand the issues it needed to address. I encourage Cabinet to approve this draft strategy so that we can consult the people of Haringey on it.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended:

3.1. To approve the Draft Homelessness Strategy attached at Appendix 1 for formal consultation as set out in this report

3.2. To note that following that consultation officers will bring back to Cabinet a draft new Homelessness Strategy for 2025-2027 for adoption.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1. The Homelessness Act 2002 ("the Act") requires local authorities to carry out a homelessness review and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy informed by that review at least once every five years. The Draft Strategy proposed here for consultation has been developed over the course of more than a year with considerable engagement from a wide range of stakeholders, including people with lived experience of homelessness and organisations working to support them. If the draft is approved by Cabinet, the council will consult as set out in this report before developing an amended, final version of a Homelessness Strategy for adoption in December 2025.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1. Cabinet could decide not to adopt the Draft Strategy proposed here. This is not recommended because to do so would delay the adoption of a strategy that the

Council is required by law to have in place. Further, the Council is required to take its Homelessness Strategy into account in the exercise of its functions as a local housing authority, and it requires updating for this purpose.

6. Background information

What is a Homelessness Strategy?

- 6.1. The Act defines a homelessness strategy as a strategy for preventing homelessness, securing that sufficient accommodation (of a range of types) is available for people who are or may become homeless, and providing satisfactory support for people who are or may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.
- 6.2. The strategy must consider how the Council (both as local housing authority and as social services authority), any other public authority, voluntary organisation, or anyone else is expected to meet the objectives of the strategy. It may include specific actions or objectives to be undertaken by the Council, or, with its agreement, by any other public authority, voluntary organisation, or anyone else.
- 6.3. The local housing authority must keep the strategy under review. Before adopting or modifying the strategy the local housing authority must consult any public or voluntary organisations or other persons, as it considers appropriate.
- 6.4. Both the housing authority and the social services authority must take the homelessness strategy into account when carrying out their functions.
- 6.5. The Government's 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy encourages local authorities to integrate rough sleeping and homelessness strategies to create a more cohesive approach to addressing homelessness in all its forms, including rough sleeping.

Haringey Homelessness Reduction Board

- 6.6. Homelessness Reduction Boards (HRB) were proposed in the Government's 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy as a mechanism for improving local accountability for the delivery of homelessness services, from February – May 2019. In a number of Local Authority areas, HRBs have been established and play an effective role. The Local Government Association recommend that HRBs could be an opportunity to increase the commitment of a variety of public bodies to the delivery of a local homelessness strategy.
- 6.7. The 2024 Housing Strategy commits to a partnership approach to homelessness and to "set up a Homelessness Reduction Board to drive that partnership work... and play a key role in developing a new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan for the Council, and thereafter to overseeing its delivery."
- 6.8. The Haringey Homelessness Reduction Board (HRB) was established in November 2023. It is chaired and led by Councillor Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, and Deputy Leader of the Council.

- 6.9. The Haringey HRB is made up of senior officers from across the Council along with external partners including:
- Citizens Advice Haringey
 - Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing
 - Depaul UK
 - Hestia Housing
 - National Probation Service (NPS)
 - NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board
 - Metropolitan Police
 - DWP
- 6.10. The HRB has generally met every eight weeks. Its key purpose, as agreed in its terms of Reference, is to oversee the development and implementation of the Haringey Homelessness Strategy 2025 so that through effective partnership work homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented and reduced in our part of London; and thereafter to keep the strategy under review.
- 6.11. The Board has decided that the 2025 Homelessness Strategy will cover the period to 2027 and that it will oversee the development of a joint homelessness and rough sleeping strategy from 2027.

Engagement and Codesign

- 6.12. Between October 2024 and April 2025, officers spoke to 38 people with experience of homelessness across 26 different organisations and venues.
- 6.13. At the same time the council ran a survey on our Commonplace site that received 136 responses. This first phase of engagement sought to understand the issues that people with lived experience wanted to see addressed in the homelessness strategy. Participants were also asked to suggest solutions.
- 6.14. Almost everyone asked the council to improve the way that it communicates with people experiencing homelessness - and with organisations supporting them.
- 6.15. Many people identified a need for the council to provide better support for people experiencing homelessness.
- 6.16. Many cited the need for in-person assessment and support. The most frequently raised area related to calls for more supportive, person-centred, and trauma-informed approaches.
- 6.17. A recurring theme was the shortage of social housing.
- 6.18. Many people asked for improvements in the quality and availability of local temporary accommodation. There were repeated concerns about families being placed far from support networks and schools, with suggestions that temporary accommodation should be local, family-friendly, and appropriately equipped.
- 6.19. We also facilitated a group of six people who have been placed in Temporary Accommodation by the council to design solutions to the most frequently-raised

areas of concern, communication, and support. The group recommended that the Homelessness Strategy should include 25 commitments which have either directly or with amendments been incorporated into the draft strategy.

Consultation

- 6.20. In order to introduce any or all of the proposed changes to, and to adopt, the Homelessness Strategy, the council is required to consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations, or other persons they consider appropriate.
- 6.21. It is proposed to carry out consultation on this draft of the Homelessness Strategy for eight weeks from late November 2025 including by using an online Commonplace page and questionnaire, and encouraging stakeholders, partners, and the wider community across the borough to comment through those means.
- 6.22. Alongside the Commonplace questionnaire, it is proposed to consult directly with people who have lived experience of homelessness, especially those whose voices are seldom heard. It is proposed that this includes consultation with the council's formal community networks, consulting with people facing homelessness from custody, and reconvening the codesign group that met in the first phase of engagement, a group made up of people with lived experience of homelessness.
- 6.23. To ensure that the council hears from partner organisations, it is also proposed to consult further with members of the Homelessness Reduction Board, and to consult with stakeholders at the Haringey Live Well Board and Haringey Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Homelessness Review

- 6.24. A thorough review of evidence has been carried out to guide the strategy and attached as Appendix 2.

The Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.25. The council has conducted an Equalities Impact Assessment on the draft strategy attached as Appendix 3. The council will review that assessment in light of its consultation on the draft Homelessness Strategy.

The Draft Homelessness Strategy

- 6.26. The Draft Homelessness Strategy is structured around five strategic objectives. Each objective is supported by a series of commitments. The strategy sets out the actions that the council proposes to take over the next two years to meet each commitment.
- 6.27. **First strategic objective: To prevent homelessness in Haringey through more effective partnership working**

- The council and each member organisation of the Homelessness Reduction Board commit to building shared commitment and coordination so that services across the borough work together to prevent and respond to homelessness

6.28. **Second strategic objective: To protect Haringey's population from the risk of homelessness**

- We commit to doing all we can to create a housing sector that works for everyone in Haringey.
- We commit to doing all we can to support people in Haringey who are facing financial poverty and disadvantage
- We commit to improving early-stage homelessness prevention

6.29. **Third Strategic Objective: To improve the council's homelessness prevention services for those facing the crisis of homelessness**

- We commit to providing a face-to-face, trauma-informed, person-centred assessment and support service to people who are facing or experiencing homelessness, including those who are living in Temporary Accommodation.
- We commit to improving the way in which we communicate with applicants throughout their journey through our Housing Needs services so that we are always open, honest, respectful, and clear.
- We commit to using digital and online resources more effectively

6.30. **Fourth Strategic Objective: To provide specific interventions for groups at high risk of homelessness.**

We commit to stopping our young care leavers becoming homeless

- We commit to helping people within the criminal justice system people find accommodation
- We commit to providing targeted support for women whose homelessness is hidden.
- We commit to providing multi-agency support to women engaged in street-based sex work.
- We commit to reducing homelessness and harm for women and men who have been subjected to sexual and domestic violence and abuse
- We commit to supporting vulnerable single people and those with complex needs so that they do not become homeless
- We commit to preventing victims of cuckooing from becoming homeless
- We commit to providing new pitches for our Gypsy and Traveller community
- We commit to understanding better the housing needs of communities experiencing racial inequality.

6.31. **Fifth Strategic Commitment: To improve accommodation options for those experiencing the emergency of homelessness**

- We commit to increasing the availability of good quality homes to use as Temporary Accommodation and settled accommodation.
- We commit to empowering people who are facing or experiencing homelessness, including those who are living in Temporary Accommodation, to make well-informed choices.
- We commit to improve health and wellbeing outcomes of people in Temporary Accommodation and ensure a seamless move into settled accommodation.

- We commit to improving the quality of supported housing in Haringey – and, in challenging financial circumstances, to increase the overall number of supported housing places available
- We commit to enabling people who rough sleep to achieve their aspirations, access the support they need and build a happy life off the streets

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026

- 7.1. The Corporate Delivery Plan commits to adopting a Homelessness Strategy in 2025.

8. Carbon and Climate Change

- 8.1. The proposed Homelessness Strategy does not directly support the Council's commitments to Carbon reduction, though key commitments within it do support the Action Plan.

9. Statutory Officers comments

Finance

- 9.1. Any financial impact of the council carrying out a formal consultation to develop a new Homelessness Strategy will be met by the service's budget.

Procurement

- 9.2. Strategic Procurement note the contents of this report and confirm there are no procurement related matters preventing Cabinet from approving the Recommendations in paragraph 3 of this report.

Director of Legal & Governance

- 9.3. The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments as follows. Legal implications are otherwise set out in the body of the report.
- 9.4. By s1 Homelessness Act 2002 the Council was required to carry out a homelessness review for its district and formulate a Homelessness Strategy informed by that review by 31 July 2003. It must keep that strategy under review and publish a new strategy at intervals of no more than 5 years thereafter.
- 9.5. The Homelessness Strategy is by s3(1), "a strategy formulated by a local housing authority for:
- (a) preventing homelessness in their district;
 - (b) securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless
 - (c) securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district
 - (i) who are or may become homeless; or

(ii) who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.”

- 9.6. The Council is required (also by s1) to take its Homelessness Strategy into account in the exercise of its functions.
- 9.7. In formulating its Homelessness Strategy, the Council (s3(7A)) must have regard to its current Allocation Scheme, Tenancy Strategy, and the current London Housing Strategy.
- 9.8. By s3(8), “Before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy the authority shall consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate.” The Council has a practice of consulting service users and providers, housing staff, and other stakeholders, as well as more general public consultation to capture ideas, views, and feedback. Those groups have a legitimate expectation of consultation.
- 9.9. The Director of Legal & Governance sees no legal reason why Cabinet should not adopt the recommendations in this report.

Equality

- 9.10. The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 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 protected characteristics and people who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not
- 9.11. 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/civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 9.12. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected
- 9.13. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) attached as Appendix 3 evaluates the potential effects of Haringey’s Draft Homelessness Strategy on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- 9.14. As set out above, extensive engagement was undertaken between October 2024 and April 2025, including a Commonplace survey and a working group of service users. Respondents included a high proportion of older people, disabled people, women, ethnic minorities, and individuals on low incomes.
- 9.15. Data analysis confirms that people with protected characteristics are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness in Haringey. Black,

disabled, and young people are particularly affected. National research also highlights elevated risks for LGBTQ+ and trans individuals.

- 9.16. Socioeconomic status is identified as a key determinant of homelessness. Individuals in poverty, those with low educational attainment, and those in insecure housing are at heightened risk. Only 13.2% of those affected by homelessness are in full-time work, and just 1.6% are homeowners, compared to 37% of the wider borough population.
- 9.17. Children and young adults (18–34) are disproportionately represented among homeless applicants. Disabled people, particularly those with learning disabilities and mental health conditions, are also significantly overrepresented. The strategy includes specific actions to improve support and accommodation for these groups.
- 9.18. Black residents are nearly twice as likely to experience homelessness compared to their proportion in the general population. The strategy acknowledges the role of structural racism and proposes improved data collection and partnership working with specialist organisations to address the needs of marginalised racialised communities.
- 9.19. Disabled people—particularly those with learning disabilities and mental health conditions—are significantly overrepresented among those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Haringey. While 13.7% of the borough's population report a disability, 23.3% of lead homeless applicants have health conditions likely to constitute a disability. People with learning disabilities are especially affected, with 1.2% of lead applicants identifying as such—three times the rate in the general population.
- 9.20. Although local data on homelessness, gender Gender Reassignment, and sexual orientation is limited, national research indicates that LGBTQ+ and trans individuals face significantly higher risks of homelessness.
- 9.21. While local data on religion among homeless individuals is limited, London-wide figures show that Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, and people with no religion are overrepresented in the homeless population.
- 9.22. The strategy recognises that overlapping identities—such as being Black, disabled, and a lone parent—compound disadvantage. It commits to trauma-informed, person-centred approaches and improved data collection to better understand and respond to the needs of individuals facing multiple forms of inequality.
- 9.23. The draft homelessness strategy seeks to improve the way that the council and its partners prevent and respond to homelessness. It therefore aims broadly to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics and people disadvantaged because of their socioeconomic status.
- 9.24. Within that, the draft strategy also makes specific provisions for the following groups with protected characteristics or disproportionately comprised of people with protected characteristics: young care leavers, communities experiencing

racial inequality, the Gypsy and Traveller community, vulnerable single people and those with complex needs, and those who have been subjected to sexual and domestic violence and abuse.

- 9.25. The strategy is expected to have a broadly positive impact on all protected groups.
- 9.26. No negative impacts have been identified for any protected characteristic.
- 9.27. The strategy supports the council's duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. It promotes inclusive service delivery, targeted support for high-risk groups, and engagement with diverse communities to ensure equitable outcomes.
- 9.28. The strategy includes a commitment to improve data collection and analysis over the next two years, with a view to informing a more targeted and inclusive approach.
- 9.29. The council will consult on the draft strategy as part of its commitment to ensure that the strategy as finally adopted fully meets its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010).

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – The Draft Homelessness Strategy

Appendix 2 – The Draft Homelessness Evidence Review

Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment of the Draft Homelessness Strategy

11. Background papers

[Haringey Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2023](#)

[Haringey Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 - 2027](#)