

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 17th November, 2025, 6.30 - 9.00 pm**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Adam Small (Chair), Dawn Barnes, Khaled Moyeed, Harrison-Mullane, John Bevan and Diakides**

## **ALSO ATTENDING:**

### **261. 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'.

### **262. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Buxton.

### **263. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

### **264. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **265. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

None.

### **266. MINUTES**

In relation to matters arising from the previous meeting, the following points were raised:

- The Panel disputed the extent to which someone illegally subletting a room would be picked up as part of a tenancy audit. The Panel requested further information about whether we would be relying on self-declarations at the tenancy audits in order to get an accurate figure, or whether some consideration was being given to a more proactive process of requiring written permission to sub-let. **(Action Sara Sutton).**

- The Panel sought clarification about whether the limit of £100k for a person of pensionable age to have in savings was appropriate. The Panel requested a written response on why it was set at this level (**Action Sara Sutton**). The Cabinet Member advised that the allocations policy was being updated and this provided an opportunity to bring it in line with other benefits.
- The Panel reiterated their request to receive regular updates on the numbers of legal disrepair claims as part of the standing KPI item update. (**Action Sara Sutton**).
- In relation to undertaking financial checks on whether people have properties abroad, officers clarified that there was a limit to the checks that could be carried out for foreign property and that these checks would usually be carried out in instances where there was intelligence to that effect or in cases involving fraud. The Chair requested a written response on what checks were undertaken as part of fraud checks on tenancy, including holding foreign assets. (**Action Sara Sutton/Minesh Jani**).
- In response to a request for clarification, officers confirmed that legal disrepair claims were limited to Council owned properties.

## RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

## 267. KPI UPDATE

The Panel received a set of slides which provided an update on arrange of Key Performance Indicators relating to the Housing Service, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 17-48. The following arose as part of the discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel commented on the 38% score for handling of ASB as part of the tenant satisfaction measures. In response the Cabinet Member commented that ASB was a difficult issue, particularly given the vulnerabilities of some of the people who perpetrated it. The Cabinet Member pointed to some successes in getting closure orders to prevent some of the more serious cases and commented that it was hoped that better cross working between the Council's ASB team and the Housing ASB team, as well as the roll out of the good neighbour policy would help. The Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health commented that bringing these services together in one directorate helped focus support for vulnerable people. It was also commented that there was some work being undertaken with health partners, including the allocation of £2.6m to fund assertive outreach work, which included supporting mental health.
- b. The Panel commented that the level of homes that met the Decent Homes standard seemed to have remained fairly static. In response, officers advised that the Council had a target to bring all homes up to the decent homes standard by 2028 and that there had been an 8% improvement over the last three years. Officers also cautioned that the figure was not static and that homes became non-decent during the course of the programme.
- c. The Panel commented that there seemed to be a knock-on impact to resident satisfaction with things like repairs, arising from the problems they experienced in contacting the Council about that repair. The Panel set out the importance of

- improving call waiting times and being able to update tenants regularly on the particulars of their case. In response, officers acknowledged these concerns and the fact that there had been a drop in telephony performance within Customer Services in the past couple of months. It was commented that additional resources were being put into that team and that there was a service recovery plan in place. Officers also highlighted the importance of digital innovation and the integration of the Customer Services interface with the Housing repairs system. Officers commented that the Council had removed the capping of calls and that there was a system in place for people to get a call back.
- d. The Panel commented that the data suggested that performance around levels of satisfaction with repairs had decreased in the current year compared to last and that the Council had consistently failed to meet its target on this KPI. In response, officers set out that there were a number of factors that impacted performance in this area including; contact centre waiting times, volume of repairs, type of repairs. Officers provided assurances that they were working to resolve these issues and they had restructured the management of repairs and improved the process of tracking complex repairs.
  - e. The Panel queried whether Council Tax was owed on empty void properties. In response, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources confirmed that this was the case.
  - f. The Panel queried decreasing performance around leaseholder collection charges. In response, officers advised that annual bills went out to leaseholders in September and that this usually coincided an increase in queries where the leaseholder disputed some aspect of the bill. In addition, the bills had increased this year and this had led to a decrease in collection rates. Officers advised that there would be some briefings arranged for councillors and residents groups to explain some of the issues that had arisen this year.
  - g. In relation to voids, officers advised that they were in the process of reestablishing the internal teams and reorganising them so they were multi-skilled. In addition, the Council had just appointed two new void contractors, so it was envisaged that this would make an impact in terms of being able to turn around more void properties. The Cabinet Member commented that historically, the Council had around 200 new lets in a year, but this year it had been 750. There was a lot more voids properties to turn around due to the increase in people moving into newly build Council homes.

## **RESOLVED**

That the update was noted.

### **268. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY REVIEW ON PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING**

The Panel received an update on a previous Scrutiny Review that the Panel undertook on Landlord Licensing in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). The recommendations from which were considered by Cabinet in March 2024. The report consisted of a cover report, the original Scrutiny Review report and a table which provided an update on the implementation of the recommendations from the Review. The report was introduced by Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning

and Gavin Douglas, Head of Regulatory Services as set out in the agenda pack at pages 49-86. Lyn Seller, Private Sector Housing Team Manager was also present for this item. The following arose as part of this discussion of this item:

- a. Cllr Williams commented that the introduction of the Renters Reform Bill would have a big impact on the housing in PRS and the organisation's responsibility as the local housing authority. The Bill proposed a number of reforms including a ban on no fault evictions, a ban on rental bidding and a ban on paying rent in advance of more than one month.
- b. Officers advised that there had been around 22k licensing applications, with around 21k licenses issued. 7k compliance inspections had been undertaken and 108 Civil Penalty Notices (CPNs) had been issued. More staff had been recruited to the team since the last update, with 39 staff in the team and paid for through the licensing fees.
- c. In response to a query, officers clarified that CPN's were not there to pay for the licensing scheme, instead the licensing fees paid for this. Income from CPNs could be used more broadly across the area of private sector housing.
- d. In response to a query around why the number of fines received from CPNs had decreased slightly since the last update, Officers advised that this was a live figure and that a reduction may reflect that some of the cases may have been lost on appeal. It was also noted that there was currently a significant backlog in tribunal hearings, which meant that the appeal process could take some time. Cllr Williams advised the Panel that two-thirds of local authorities had not issued any CPNs and that 108 was comparatively high.
- e. The Panel questioned the likelihood of further expansion of the selective licensing scheme. In response, officers advised that the scheme was due to expire in 2027 and that work had begun to build the dataset in order to support an application for an extension. The dataset would determine whether there was scope for an expansion of the scheme. It was also noted that the Renters Reform Bill would require landlords to provide an updated dataset to the Council.
- f. In relation to advocacy and Rent Repayment Orders, officers advised that there was an existing arrangement with Justice for Tenants and it was hoped that the Renters Reform Bill would strengthen the authority's ability to adopt more formal arrangements. Current legislation limited what the licence fee income could be spent on.
- g. The Panel sought clarification about the current inspection cycle. In response, officers advised that there is a requirement in law to inspect HMOs every five years. However, for the selective licensing scheme, the application to MHCLG stated that the 75% of properties would be inspected in a five year cycle.
- h. In relation to 21k applications approved from 22k applications and the number of licensing applications that had been refused, officers clarified that properties were not refused a licence but that the fit and proper person nominated as the licence holder could be refused. In these circumstances, another person would be nominated as the licence holder. Officers commented that there were outstanding licenses to be processed and that there were around 490 new applications received last month, so the numbers were not static.
- i. In response to a question, officers provided assurances that there were plans to increase engagement with landlords and to reinvigorate the landlords forum as well as residents forums, particularly following the introduction of the Renters Reform Bill.

- j. In response to a question about apprenticeships, officers advised that there were two apprentice Environmental Health Officers in the team. In addition, the service were trying to upskill their existing staff and that a number of officers had transitioned from compliance officers to enforcement roles.

## **RESOLVED**

Noted.

### **269. SCRUTINY OF THE 2026/27 DRAFT BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2026/2031**

The Panel received a report for their consideration and comment, on the Council's draft 2026-27 Budget and 2026-31 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) proposals that related to the Panel's remit. The report include the Budget/MTFS report that went to Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> November, along with appendices that set out the General Fund revenue and capital budget proposals relevant to Housing and Placemaking. The report was introduced by Kaycee Ikegwu, Head of Finance and Cllr Carlin, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 87-160. Also present for this item were the Corporate Director of Adults, Health and Housing, along with the Director of Placemaking. Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning was present for this item and so was Cllr Gordon, Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy.

The report identified that the estimated additional budget requirement for Housing Demand in 2026/27 was £13.2m, consisting of £4.3m of previously agreed proposals and £9.9m of new proposals. The report identified £9.9m of proposed new budget pressures across 2026/27, £9m of which were attributed to an 18-19% increase in the cost of Nightly Paid Accommodation for Temporary Accommodation. The report also identified a £257k reduction in the Floating Support Contract as a proposed new budget saving. Furthermore, the report identified £1m of investment required to provide proposed reductions of £2.1m across the five-year period of the MTFS. This proposal related to incentive payments to private sector landlords to retain and grow private sector leasing housing stock, and thereby reduce the Council's reliance on costly nightly paid and B&B accommodation. The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about how much of the circa £9m budget pressure related to Temporary Accommodation related to the decrease in availability of Private Sector Leased accommodation (PSL). In response, officers advised that the net impact of PSL was around £350k. It was highlighted that there was an invest to save proposal around incentive payments to PSLs and that this would be a net cost to the Council in the first year of the MTFS. Officers provided assurances that the proposals were a combination of some robust modelling, which the service had received external assurance on, including benchmarking against other London boroughs. Officers commented that Haringey benchmarked favourably against other London boroughs.
- b. The Panel queried what assumptions were used in relation to the reduction in PSLs and what impact would the increase in the cost of NPA have from 2027 onwards. In response officers set out that they couldn't really forecast beyond 12/18 months when it came to the cost of NPA due to the volatility in the market

- making it very difficult to accurately predict beyond this timeframe. It was also commented that the Renters Reform Bill would likely have an impact in this area. The Corporate Director advised that they had based the modelling for the invest to save proposal on a number of assumptions on income and expenditure over a three year period. A piece of work had been undertaken to look at transitioning from higher cost NPA to lower cost NPA, which it was hoped would have a positive impact on the overspend.
- c. The Chair sought clarification on whether it was the case that the modelling showed a reduction in PSL even with the invest to save proposal, it was just that the reduction would be less with the incentive payments. In response, officers confirmed that was the case and commented that they did not expect to have 100% take up of the incentive arrangements and that the service had been prudent in its modelling assumptions.
  - d. The Panel requested a written response from officers in relation to the current position with Broadwater Farm in terms of the latest cost estimate and the likely timescales for completion. The Panel noted their general concerns about some of the big projects being delayed and the knock on impact that this had on loss of income and spiralling costs. **(Action: David Sherrington).**
  - e. The Panel sought assurances from officers about how confident they were with their projections in relation to Housing Demand, given the £11.4m projected overspend in this area. In response, officers advise that they hoped to see an improvement in this projection towards the year end. It was set out that Haringey was one of many London boroughs that had seen escalating costs in TA and that the rate of the increase in costs was very difficult to project. Officers advised the Panel, that Haringey was a bit of an outlier in terms of the overall numbers of people in TA were fairly stable and the organisation was managing demand at the prevention and relief stage, as well as managing the numbers of people moving out of TA. There were around £6m of savings in this area to deliver over two years. Officers reiterated that it was very difficult to project demand and cost in a volatile market. Officers also set out that the numbers and cost of NPA may rise as the Council focused its efforts on reducing the numbers of B&B accommodation, which was the most expensive and least suitable type of accommodation.
  - f. The Panel sought assurances around the invest to save proposal around floating support contracts and queried whether the 35% reduction in contract value was as a result of efficiencies or whether it was a refocusing of support to the most vulnerable. In response, officers advised that it was both. It was anticipated that there were some service efficiencies that could be made and that the service had some current vacancies. The contract varied in terms of the support it offered individuals and there was a recognition that better value for money could be driven by focusing on those most in need. Officers highlighted that there were also a number of VCS organisations that offered support in this area, and some of these were funded by the Council. In addition, the independence and early intervention team would include two tenancy sustainment officer posts, so the Council's offer in this area was broader than just this one saving proposal.
  - g. The Panel asked for more information in relation to the £262k budget pressure around legal recharges. In response, officers advised that this reflected a realigning of the budget to reflect actual spend in this area. The allocated

- budget and the actual spend on things like disrepair claims or landlord claims had not been aligned for a couple of years.
- h. The Panel raised concerns with the proposed saving in relation to floating support contracts. It was commented that this could be a false saving, in that it would cost the Council more in the long run than they would save in the short term. The Panel requested further assurances from Cabinet that there was a genuine financial benefit arising from this saving. In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing advised that she had become increasingly convinced that that the level of support offered by some of these contracts was so small that their impact was negligible, and that the Council should be targeting its support in this area to those who needed it most. The Cabinet Member also echoed the comments of officers that there was a range of other support available in the voluntary community sector. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources provided assurances that they were aware of possible additional costs arising in other areas and that this was considered when agreeing a saving proposal.
  - i. The Panel also raised concerns with the latest performance on voids, as set out in the KPI update and questioned whether additional resources were needed in this area. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that there were three new contracts being put in place in relation to voids and that these should be agreed by Cabinet next month.
  - j. The Chair commented that the Cabinet report made clear that the scale of the budget pressures is so severe that a fundamental rethink was required about how the Council delivered services. The Chair asked the Cabinet Member to elaborate on what this might mean in relation to the Housing Service and TA. In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing commented that this was a system issue that had built up over a number of years and that system change was required to resolve it. The Cabinet Member commented that the organisation was getting more support from the government in terms of grant funding and in terms of their support for Haringey's house building programme and acquisitions programme. Officers advise that the homelessness prevention grant in the current year was £14m and that Haringey had also received an additional £813k in additional grants. Officers also highlighted a number of other areas of work that was being undertaken including move-on solutions for families and the homelessness prevention hub that would be co-located with Citizen's Advice. The Corporate Director commented on the rent convergence programme and the increase in costs for TA. It was noted that this was a partial driver of the increase in bad debt provision, but it was projected that this would drive savings of around £1m.
  - k. The Chair asked the Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy to elucidate on the £580k budget pressure identified in relation to Wood Green, as well as the £2.1m change to the capital programme in relation to Wood Green and Tottenham. In response, Cllr Gordon advised that the budget pressure related to the fact that a number of staff salaries were capitalised and that if the specific project did not go ahead, or if the project did not deliver a capital asset, the salaries would no longer be able to be capitalised and so would become a pressure within the General Fund. Officers added that a review of the service was being undertaken in the coming months.
  - l. The change to the capital programme related to the Future High Streets project and the change was the use of additional match funding to reduce the need for

General Fund match funding. There was no change to the project outcomes, just how it was funded. Officers advise that they would continue to explore similar outcomes for other projects. In response to a question, officers advised that the additional match funding came from central government.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Panel scrutinised the proposals presented in the report and the appendices and provided the following recommendations to OSC:

- I. That Cabinet provide further assurances around the proposed £257k saving in floating support contracts. The Panel is concerned that this may be a false saving and would like further assurance that there is a genuine financial benefit arising from this saving. The Panel is concerned that the short term saving from a reduction in tenancy sustainment may result in additional costs to the Council in the long run.
- II. That further information be provided around how the Council plans to improve performance on turning around void properties and reach the 1% target.

## **270. HARINGEY DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

The Panel received a report on the Draft Local Plan. The Local Plan was approved by public consultation by Cabinet on 16 September 2025 and public consultation was underway, closing on 19 December 2025. The paper set out the background to the Haringey New Local Plan and signposted the Panel to key documentation relating to the Draft Local Plan. The report was introduced by Cllr Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning and Bryce Tudball, Head of Spatial Planning. Rob Krzyszowski, Director, Planning & Building Standards was also present for this item. The following arose during the discussion of the report:

- a. The Chair commended officers for the breadth and scope of the Draft Local Plan, acknowledging the large amount of work that must have gone in to producing the document. Officers set out that the Local Plan was the spatial expression of the Council's vision and would set out how the organisation would seek to tackle the housing challenges it faced, along with tackling climate change and other challenges.
- b. The Panel noted that it was a 15 year plan and sought assurances that it would be updated regularly, given the need for flexibility in light of changing priorities. In response, officers advised that Local Plans should be updated every five years. It was commented that the Plan was very detailed so it was hoped it would be more a case of refining it, rather than wholesale changes in future. Officers confirmed that it would be updated on a five-year rolling programme.
- c. The Panel commented that the Plan was due to be adopted in 2027, by which time some of the schemes would already be in place. In response, officers acknowledged that this was the case but provided assurances that even though it was in draft format, the Plan still gave a clear signal to developers about what the Council expected in terms of future developments. Even though the full weight of the Plan couldn't be given through the Planning process until it was adopted. Officers added that in terms of a longer term view, the Council was holding a call for sites that might become available for future development.
- d. The Panel commented that the Plan talked a lot about equity and fairness, but queried why the fairness element was hyper-localised around neighbourhoods,

given that people often lived and worked in different parts of the borough or even in different parts of London. In response, officers advised that the Plan could do both, it could deal with the hyper-local as well as the need to think beyond the borough and across the wider city. Officers elaborated that in the consultation received to date, there had been a lot of feedback around the importance that people attached to their neighbourhood, and so the service had tried to develop a Plan with neighbourhoods that people could relate to and recognise on the ground. Officers acknowledged that people often lived and worked in different parts of London.

- e. The Panel welcomed references to 15 minute cities and having local urban centres, commenting on the necessity of having local services and amenities.
- f. The Chair commented on the circular relevance of the plan and the extent to which the different elements intersected, given its importance to Placemaking. The Chair sought assurances around the extent to which there had been partnership working across different service areas and across the Cabinet Member portfolios for Housing and Placemaking. In response, the Panel were advised that like a lot of council activity it sat across more than one portfolio, but that it was ultimately a planning document. The draft Local Plan reflected placemaking priorities, but it also reflected priorities for tackling climate change, priorities around parks and green spaces and priorities around aging well. It was suggested that there were a range of strategies that ran through the document. The Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy emphasised the importance that Shaping Wood Green and Shaping Tottenham had on the development of the draft Local Plan.
- g. The Panel queried whether it was appropriate to include the extension of the Victoria Line to Northumberland Park in the Plan. In response, officers advised that it was certainly appropriate to include the organisation's infrastructure priorities, and that there was a live discussion ongoing about what those infrastructure priorities should be. Officers commented that these should be better reflected in final version of the Local Plan next year.
- h. The Panel queried what the trade-offs might be in future or which of the priorities were seen as most important in the Plan, given it would be impossible to deliver on all of the aspirations without some trade-offs. In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing advised that it wasn't a document about trade-offs, rather it set out the Council's aspirations and how it saw the borough developing. The Local Plan was about what residents wanted to see, rather than what developers may want, and it was framed those terms. The Cabinet Member commented that there would have to be prioritisation on a site-by-site basis, as not all sites were the same and not all sites could deliver the same things. Officers added that by adopting a placemaking approach, the Council was acknowledging that each neighbourhood had its own priorities and characteristics. The Local Plan was currently out for consultation, so that residents could tell the Council what the priorities for their local area should be.
- i. The Chair welcomed the Local Plan's focus on culture. In relation to social infrastructure, the Chair sought comments on the tension between pushing developers to build social infrastructure and the pressure on the local authority to maintain that infrastructure at some point, such as parks and green spaces. In response, officers advised that they were doing a lot of work behind the scenes around infrastructure delivery and that they were pulling together a digital infrastructure delivery plan over the next 12-18 months, which would look

- at the infrastructure needed in the borough and possible gaps in the future. Officers commented that they were looking to develop an interactive map tool on the website as part of this.
- j. The Panel queried what the other areas were that officers thought may need most work on in the Plan in the coming 18 months. In response, officers advised that the aforementioned infrastructure piece was one and that there was a big stream of work going on the background. The second was around viability of development. Officers set out that the organisation had a requirement to make sure that the plan was deliverable and that the priorities as a whole and did not put future development at risk. The service would be undertaking a piece of work around viability and what was deliverable.
  - k. The Panel queried what the elements were in the plan that would ensure the delivery of affordable housing. In response, officers noted that they had sought to acknowledge in the Plan that not all affordable homes were equally affordable. The Plan set out a clear explanation of what was meant by genuinely affordable homes and what the Council expected in that regard. In terms of what was delivered on a site-by-site basis, that would be determined by the specifics of that development and the site. Officers provided assurances that there would be rigorous criteria to ensure that the borough would get as much genuinely affordable housing as it could. There was also a new London Plan in development with its own targets relating to affordable housing and the government had also introduced new targets in this area.
  - l. The Panel queried an expected announcement by the government about council's being unable to call-in schemes of over 150 units, and questioned how that might affect the Local Plan. In response, officers advised that, as it was an announcement they didn't have all of the details, but that it was expected that that the changes would be around giving the Secretary Of State powers to call-in applications if the authority was minded to refuse them. It was commented that the changes seemed to be more aimed at problematic authorities who weren't proactive in developing a Local Plan and who were not building enough homes. Officers commented that they did not believe that Haringey fell into this category. In terms of how it would affect the Local Plan, officers advised that the mooted changes wouldn't affect the Plan at all, as the Local Plan set out the Council's statement of planning policy and what it wanted to see in its borough. The Secretary of State couldn't override it too much, and they still had to use the Local Plan as the basis of their decisions. Officers commented that the Local Plan would go through an independent inspection, appointed by the Secretary of State, prior to its adoption.

## **RESOLVED**

That the report was noted.

## **271. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

### **RESOLVED**

That the work programme was noted and any amendments were agreed.

## **272. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

N/A

**273. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Noted as:

15 December 2025  
9 March 2026

CHAIR: Councillor Adam Small

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....