

Scrutiny Café – 24 September 2026

Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

Top Priorities from Survey from within terms of reference:

- 1) Homelessness & rough sleeping – 106 (49%)
- 2) Local renewable energy & community energy – 80 (37%)
- 3) Council housebuilding – 78 (36.1%)
- 4) Housing strategy & development – 72 (33.3%)
- 5) Housing needs – 55 (25.5%)

Top Priorities from the Scrutiny Café:

- 1) Voids
- 2) Aids & Adaptions / Allocations policy for residents with additional needs.
- 3) Resident Voice
- 4) Repairs and Maintenance
- 5) Major Works

Specific Suggested Issues or Concerns:

No.	Suggestion	Comments and Feedback from Café	Priority – High, Medium or Low	Proposed Action (Item for Panel meeting/potential review/Cabinet Member Question/no further action)
1.	Aids and Adaptations	Delays in aids and adaptations. Allocation of able-bodied people into already-adapted houses. Done on need, but is this a sensible way to allocate if the work has already been done? Does the council have a proper database of adapted-houses (level access, no steps, etc.) – they certainly never used to. Also adaptations cover a wide range of works - different adaptations are appropriate for different people. The need for joined-up thinking: adaptations aren't just about what happens inside the property. E.g. there's a new development with 6 wheelchair accessible homes, but there are giant kerbs, tree damaged pavements, no disabled parking.	High	Item for future Scrutiny meeting. Questions to Cabinet Member

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		In cases where the resident is likely to need adaptations in future, make sure that the property is suitable for adaptation so there doesn't have to be a move further down the line. Can the Major Works Programme be used to deliver properties that are easily adaptable in future.		
2.	Allocation Policy and Disability	Work has been done in the past with Haringey Disability First Consortium about the allocation policy and how appropriate this is for disabled people. Is it really taking into account the needs of disabled people. Eg there's a 5-day window for residents to inspect a house before taking it but if you aren't mobile or whatever then this may not be practical.	Medium	New Allocations Policy to come to a future Scrutiny meeting
3.	Voids	Impact of voids on repairs and overall availability of housing. If significant expenditure is required to bring a void back into use anyway then could this be an opportunity to do aids and adaptation work at the same time – avoids retrofitting down the line	High	Item for future Scrutiny meeting and possible review topic.
4.	Repairs	Housing repairs is obviously a big issue. But want to make sure scrutiny goes a bit deeper than just going 'how long does it take to answer the phone' or 'how long does it take to get a plumber'. Complaints data is a very good indicator for prevalence and extent of repairs issues. Need to differentiate in repairs between bad maintenance and things that are just broken. Important to look at trends in repair data. Things which are persistent problems in an estate, not just timescales to fix things.	High	Item for future Scrutiny Panel meeting. Repairs will form part of a future update to the Panel on the Housing Improvement Programme.
5.	Major Works	Are major works programmes available to tenants so they can see what's coming?	Medium	An update on the Major Works Programme will be brought to a

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		Are we using major works programmes as an opportunity to do upgrades. E.g. do insulation at the same time as replacing roofs/fire doors.		future Panel meeting.
6.	Homelessness	Preventions. Role of Housebuilding Programme. Waiting lists for moved temporary accommodation – what progress is being made There are also the hidden homeless, e.g. people who are put into a private sector flat	Medium	Questions to Cabinet Member.
7.	Local renewable energy and community energy	One of the most popular responses in the scrutiny survey, but haven't really come up in the panel in the past. Need to reduce energy costs – can solar panels can be on the council. High response rate on the survey may be about the failures of the District Energy Network on Broadwater Farm.	Medium	Questions to the Cabinet Member and possible future report to the Panel.
8.	Resident Voice	How do we hear from the voices of residents as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme. Issues of access and availability of services. Communicating with residents. Is there a better way of getting residents' voices heard, not just the same community groups. Need to create systems to talk about rents and affordability – it was felt to be missing at present. Engaging with people without English as a first language, people with accessibility issues (old, disabled, not tech-savvy), the young who find it boring. Could ask residents from a recent project (e.g. Northumberland Park) so we can look at it in hindsight.	Medium	Broader cross cutting piece of work across Scrutiny. Questions to Cabinet Member. Questions as part of Annual Feedback and Engagement report.

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		Getting more resident voices to help shape housing/ regeneration and development. - Including culturally sensitive support - At Broadwater Farm they had the neighbourhood moves scheme, but it was people filling in a form online. Was it really based on need or on ability to navigate the system?		
9.	Annual complaints and feedback	Need to examine the data thoroughly. Are there trends in what fines and compensation we are paying? Can we dig into these and try and fix an underlying issue with how a service is performing. Is there a proactive approach to dealing with complaints (e.g. if someone complains of a leak then they are dealt with in isolation, but could be that the same issue affects everyone on the floor). This is never thought of.	Medium	A Future report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
10.	Impact of no car Developments	Seem good from an environmental perspective, but can there be a deep dive into how they actually work – not just people who move into the development, but how this affects people in surrounding areas (e.g. do residents of the new development end up causing parking chaos).	Low	To be included as part of the Panel’s consideration of the Local Plan consultation.
11.	Placemaking	Need to be strategic and need for ‘joined up’ placemaking.	Low	Question to Cabinet Member
12.	London Plan	Haringey’s submission to London Plan. Suitability of the housing being built in the borough to the needs of the borough. Anecdotal account of Approving an 8 bedroom HMO in a 2 bed house in a ‘family protection zone’ – all done through delegated decision.	Medium	An update on the outcome of the Consultation around the London Plan and Final report will come to a future Panel meeting.