

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010

### Cabinet Member Questions: Agenda Item 6 - Councillor Bevan, Cabinet Member for Housing

No	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
<b>Questions from Cllr David Winskill</b>			
1	P1 – private sector housing supply	Please tell us whether there has been any recovery in the private house building sector in Haringey. What were the number of starts/completions for 2009/10, and what are the estimates for this year and next year.	<p>Although the number of starts and completions for 2009/10 will not be confirmed until September or October 2010, a total of 706 housing units were approved in 2009/10 and, based on the information available to date, the number of completions is likely to be around 574. This is substantially fewer than the 828 completions achieved in 2008/09.</p> <p>It is too early to reliably estimate the number of starts and completions for 2010/11 and 2011/12. However, given the impact that the economic downturn has had on the construction industry (and the constraints placed on government investment in new affordable housing), we do not expect housing delivery to recover during the next 2-3 years. These impacts will be reported in forthcoming Annual Monitoring Reports.</p>
2	P1 – private rented housing	Please give the figures for the numbers of units available for rent from the private sector for last year, currently and an estimate of the market for next year.	<p>Although the Council continues to play an influential role in the leasing of private sector housing (for use as temporary accommodation) and the procurement of assured shorthold tenancies (to prevent homelessness and discharge the Council's homelessness duty) there are signs that, in some areas, the supply of private rented accommodation is no longer meeting demand.</p> <p>During 2009/10, the Council's Private Sector Lettings Team helped 1,002 households to secure suitable private rented accommodation. Although the Team continues to enjoy a good working relationship with private landlords, it is anticipated that the number of households placed in the private rented sector will fall to around 800 in 2010/11 and to between 700 - 800 in 2011/12.</p> <p>From our conversations with landlords and rental agents, it appears that many landlords are currently reluctant to increase the size of their property portfolios and, although some private rented accommodation is being sold, a growing number of tenants are now choosing to stay put and renew their tenancies (rather than move) due to the uncertainty surrounding their employment and financial situation. This has led to a decrease in supply.</p>



**Haringey Council**

3	Social Housing stock	Have there been any discussions with RSLs and HAs operating in the borough to determine their ability to increase supply of stock?	<p>Officers have regular discussions with the Council's social housing partners, both individually (at 1:1 review meetings) and collectively (at meetings of the Registered Provider &amp; Developer Forum) to discuss a wide range of issues relating to development and stock management, including the development of individual sites and their ability to increase the supply of affordable housing in Haringey.</p> <p>The Registered Provider &amp; Developer Forum is attended by registered providers (housing associations), private developers and representatives from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Council's Housing, Planning and Property Services teams. It has improved liaison and afforded the opportunity for stakeholders to share information and ideas, including details of new initiatives and policy developments in relation to grant funding policy.</p> <p>New development and regeneration in the borough is being assisted by the HCA's Single Conversation process, one of the outcomes of which is Haringey's Borough Investment Plan which will be considered by Cabinet on 14 September 2010.</p>
4	P3 rents paid to housing suppliers	What initiatives are being pursued to drive down rents paid housing suppliers to house homeless families? Are there any initiatives with neighbouring councils?	<p>In February 2010, meetings took place with the suppliers of nightly-charged Emergency Accommodation and, following successful negotiations, the nightly rates charged for three quarters of the accommodation were set at or below Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates and, since March 2010, all Emergency Accommodation has been procured at these rates. Where suppliers have been unwilling to reduce their charges, the Housing Service has successfully moved a large number of homeless households out of their more expensive accommodation.</p> <p>Since May 2010, negotiations have been taking place with the owners of hundreds of properties that the Council is currently leasing for use as TA, with a view to persuading them to accept a rent reduction. To date, this has proved quite successful, with the owners of only 84 properties refusing the rent reduction and asking for their properties to be handed back.</p> <p>Housing Association partners have been set reduced maximum rent guidelines and have been asked to renegotiate lower rents on existing stock. As the Council's existing leases have expired, Officers have negotiated reduced rents, where possible, at the point of renewal.</p> <p>On 14 July 2010, Haringey hosted a successful sub regional TA Summit to share information about the impact of the housing subsidy changes and the action that the local authorities have taken to drive down the rents paid for temporary accommodation. Follow up action (including exploring the feasibility of sub regional procurement) is being progressed.</p>



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5	Leader's briefing 05/07/10 Housing	Empty properties – how many are there in the borough, empty for more than 12 months, suitable for occupation?	<p>It is difficult to determine the exact number of empty properties at any one time, since the number is continually changing and many owners fail to report changes in a timely manner.</p> <p>Earlier this year, an exercise was undertaken using council tax records of properties for which no council tax or reduced council tax was being paid. Following analysis, Officers identified just under 1,000 properties that were thought to have been empty for at least six months. The list was further divided into houses and flats. The houses numbered in the region of 420 and the remainder were flats, mainly to the middle and west of the borough.</p> <p>Concentrating on the 420 houses, the Housing Improvement Team (Private Sector) visited every house on the list and verified that approximately half were empty. Officers are now undertaking further investigations, including making contact with the owners.</p> <p>As most of the borough's empty homes have not been inspected internally, it is not possible to assess their condition or estimate how many might be suitable for occupation.</p> <p>Over the past 2 years, we have concentrated on the worst empty properties, both in condition and those causing local nuisance. Many have been improved through the threat of compulsory purchase and/or enforced sale and by providing advice, assistance and grants. We believe that a large percentage of the remainder could be brought back in to use without excessive cost, bearing in mind the sale or rental value following completion of the necessary works.</p>
<b>Questions from Cllr Karen Alexander</b>			
6	Leader's briefing 05/07/10 P2 Housing	Can you give more details on how bullet 4 "seek new, affordable homes in all parts of the borough" will be achieved please?	<p>This will be achieved through the planning gain (Section 106) process and Haringey's new Borough Investment Plan which sets out the spatial and thematic priorities to address specific issues identified in the borough.</p> <p>The 3 spatial priority areas identified in the Borough Investment Plan (Haringey Heartlands, Tottenham Hale and the Wider Tottenham area, including Seven Sisters) reflect the Council's 'Place-making' approach to regeneration, and the Plan seeks to reinforce the distinct nature and values of these areas whilst also reducing inequalities between them. The 6 thematic priorities seek to address specific issues such as homelessness, the lack of affordability, and the ageing and increasingly vulnerable profile of the local population.</p> <p>The priorities inter-relate with an expectation that, where a spatial area is the focus for investment (in Wider Tottenham, for example), provision in that area will address the key thematic priorities as well, such as the need for extra care supported housing or a foyer.</p>



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7	Leader's briefing 05/07/10 Housing	How does the Council monitor standards of non-council stock used for temporary accommodation?	<p>A 'minimum standards' document is attached to all of the Council's temporary accommodation contracts and is copied and explained to all suppliers of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>All temporary accommodation is inspected, before it is first used, in order to ensure that it meets the Council's published standards. Housing Inspectors and Contracts Negotiators undertake spot checks of occupied TA to ensure that standards continue to be complied with.</p> <p>A team of Tenancy Support Officers visit all households in the Council's temporary accommodation at least once a year to check on the condition of the property and to report any concerns about disrepair. They will also respond to households' complaints about repairs and, where appropriate, investigate and resolve repairs issues with landlords and suppliers.</p> <p>If the performance of a landlord or supplier gives cause for concern, they will be told to improve and, if problems persist, the Council will stop using them and/or their accommodation.</p> <p>Any issues with standards in housing association properties are raised both immediately and at regular liaison meetings, escalating to a senior level if concerns persist.</p>
8	Leader's briefing 05/07/10 Housing	There has been instances where illegally converted, unsuitable houses have been used by the Council, including the Children's Service, have been used for temporary accommodation – how is the Council addressing this?	<p>Although Housing Services would not knowingly use accommodation that does not have the necessary planning permission and building control consent, Emergency Accommodation is very occasionally booked where it is subsequently discovered that it may not meet these conditions. In such instances, suppliers are advised that, unless they provide evidence of the necessary permissions and consents, the property will be vacated as soon as practicable.</p> <p>In recent months, Housing Services has been working closely with Children's Services to ensure that all accommodation procured by the Council is suitable, of a good standard and, where appropriate, it has planning permission and building regulations consent.</p>
9	2	Homeless households living in temporary accommodation: What strategies are in place to further reduce these figures?	<p>During the past three years, Haringey has reduced by 40% (more than 2,400) the number of households living in its temporary accommodation (TA). This has been achieved through more effective homelessness prevention, the procurement of good quality private rented accommodation (as a means of avoiding the need for TA and, where a household is already living in TA, as a means of discharging the Council's homelessness duty), by providing customers with the advice they need in order to make informed decisions about their future housing, and by maximising the number of households in TA who are able to move into a permanent council or housing association home. We have also introduced 'auto bidding' to ensure that all highly-pointed applicants in TA play an active role in their search for a home.</p>



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			<p>Government changes to the housing subsidy system have meant that, during the past year, the Council's priority has been to reduce the cost of TA. However, the Council remains committed to halving the number of households in TA, since this will reduce the Council's financial exposure and improve homeless households' life chances.</p> <p>To this end, the Council is seeking to reduce the number of households in TA from its current figure of 3,392 to 3,000 by the end of March 2011 and to just 2,600 during 2011/12.</p> <p>In order to meet these targets, the Council will continue with the approach it has adopted during the past couple of years, and also make the most of the opportunities to discharge its homelessness duty through the conversion of TA to assured shorthold tenancies.</p>
10	2	<p>(a) How many properties are currently under-occupied? (b) How many properties are currently classified as overcrowded?</p>	<p>Although a significant amount of work has been undertaken to tackle under-occupation and overcrowding in social housing, the Council is still over reliant on the housing register when estimating the number of properties that are currently under-occupied or overcrowded.</p> <p>The problem is compounded by the fact that the accuracy of the data is dependent on households providing the Council with accurate, up-to-date information about the size and composition of their household, any changes in their circumstances and who is living with them.</p> <p>Based on the information provided by applicants on the housing register, together with analysis of the information collected by Homes for Haringey and the Homeswapper mutual exchange scheme, we estimate that in Haringey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Between 1,000 and 1,500 council and housing association tenants are under-occupying their accommodation</li><li>(b) Between 2,500 and 3,000 council and housing association tenants are overcrowded, and approximately 500 of these tenants are living in accommodation that has at least 2 fewer bedrooms than they require.</li></ul> <p>In preparation for the implementation of the new Housing Allocations Policy (which awards additional priority to the transfer applications of social housing tenants that are under-occupying family-sized homes or are severely overcrowded), the Council is checking on the accuracy of the information supplied by housing applicants. This will inform the Council's understanding of the level of under-occupation and overcrowding in the borough.</p>



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11	2	<p>Decent Homes Programme: How will this programme be affected by proposed government cuts (bearing in mind that this is only year 2 of a 5 year plan)?</p>	<p>The Decent Homes programme is currently in its third year of delivery. More than 4,000 units have been made decent, resident satisfaction to date is high and the programme is on target.</p> <p>In December 2007, the government agreed to allocate Haringey £198.5million for its Decent Homes programme. The funding is confirmed by the government on an annual basis and, to date, we have no news that this is set to change. Nationally, there have been no announcements from the government regarding the future of Decent Homes funding although we expect more information about funding for the period 2011/12 onwards following the completion of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in October 2010.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Spending Review could have a significant impact on the options available to the Council to access the additional resources required to deliver its Decent Homes Programme, one of Haringey's strategic housing priorities. In particular, the CSR refers specifically to proposals for moving "from Decent Homes to Sustainable Communities" and indicates that the current financial regime may not be maintained.</p> <p>Based on the information currently available, however, the programme can deliver the Decent Homes standard to all stock within available resources. However, there are some significant areas of risk and challenges that will need to be managed in discussion with the HCA.</p> <p>In determining a future strategy to secure long-term and sustainable funding to meet and maintain the Decent Homes standard in its housing stock, the Council will need to consider a range of options in the future, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Pursuing a strategy, in the short-term, to redirect a proportion of its future capital resources to meet any shortfall in the Decent Homes Programme resulting from a change in the government's policy and financial regime.</li> <li>(b) Undertaking a further options appraisal for its entire housing stock in order to determine a sustainable strategy for the period beyond 2014 by reviewing sites and identifying those that have development potential and could realize a capital receipt.</li> </ul>
12	4	<p>Outward Migration: If the predicted "outward migration" to Haringey happens, what plans and strategies are the council putting in place to deal with</p>	<p>Haringey has already taken the lead by hosting a successful sub regional TA Summit in July 2010 and obtaining the agreement of neighbouring councils to work collaboratively to minimise the impact of outward migration from the Central London boroughs by adopting shared property standards, agreeing rent levels and sharing information on out-of-borough placements. Ongoing work is being carried out through the North London Housing Directors Partnership</p>





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		<p>this, particularly in the area of housing?</p>	<p>Board, the Sub Regional Homelessness Co-ordinator and London Councils in order to minimise the impact on Haringey's housing market and the number of homeless households placed in the borough by other London boroughs.</p> <p>At present, we are quantifying the likely impact of the 'outward mitigation' and the extent to which the Council might be able to mitigate its effects on the borough. As soon as this work is complete, we will develop firm plans and strategies for addressing the problem.</p>
13	4	<p>Why were the three sheltered housing schemes excluded from the Decent Homes Programme? Are the council confident that they can secure the necessary funding to do the necessary work to these places? In what way do these three places not come up to standards at this point in time?</p>	<p>Although 26 of the Council's sheltered housing schemes have already been included in the Decent Homes programme, 3 schemes have been excluded from the programme pending an options appraisal and further consultation as part of the Council's Supported Housing Review.</p> <p>Protheroe House, Larkspur Close and Stokley Court were excluded because they are unsuitable for supported housing, do not have modern facilities and/or require a substantial amount of investment to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard. In focusing on the future of these schemes, the Council is seeking to improve the quality of supported housing, increase the supply of 'extra care' housing in the borough, provide residents with more choice in how their housing and support needs are met, and help older people to remain independent.</p> <p>As the three schemes were included in Haringey's original funding bid to CLG for decent homes, funding for the decent homes elements of work to these schemes is within the £198.5m the Council was allocated in 2008. On top of the decent homes work, however, there are a number of other additional works which do not have funding available through decent homes or the usual capital programme. In addition we are awaiting the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review regarding the future of decent homes funding.</p> <p>In 2005 a Savills Stock Condition survey was commissioned solely for the Sheltered Housing Stock. The survey provided costings and recommendations for a number of options for these three schemes; for Protheroe House and Larkspur Close, refurbishment or conversion to general needs were not considered viable. They do not meet the decent homes standard, they need work to achieve Disability Discrimination Act requirements and there are further costs associated with items such as office facilities, alarm systems and communal laundry areas.</p>
14	Audit Commission Report	<p>Is the cabinet member happy with the amount of progress made between the last Audit Commission Report in December 2008? Is he happy that the</p>	<p>The Audit Commission found that "there has been good progress against the recommendations of the last inspection all but one of which have been completed or substantially met." This is detailed in Appendix 1 of the 2010 final report which shows that, of the 11 recommendations in the report of December 2008, six have been completed and four have been substantially met:</p>



recommendations in that report have been fully taken on board and dealt with by the council?

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Current Position</i>
<b>The Council should improve the customer focus of its service by</b>	
Setting up systematic methods of keeping applicants informed of the progress of their cases, measuring satisfaction, and involving users in service improvement, including through the complaints procedure.	<b>Substantially met</b>
Updating information provided to service users, improving telephone access to the service, and reducing the time taken to book appointments.	<b>Partially met</b>
Developing a proactive and holistic approach to preventions and options, linking outreach work carried out by the occupancy, preventions and options and housing management teams.	<b>Completed</b>
Reducing the use of temporary accommodation in the Midlands, while being mindful of the individual wishes of temporary accommodation residents currently living there.	<b>Completed</b>





			<b>The Council should improve the choice-based letting service by:</b>
		Developing a more efficient and equitable bidding process by: filtering out ineligible bidders, encouraging those with low points to seek alternatives, identifying and supporting those who have not bid, particularly vulnerable applicants.	<b>Substantially met</b>
		Making the verification process more simple, flexible and user-friendly, and ensuring that reasonable efforts are made to contact priority bidders to view properties.	<b>Completed</b>
			<b>The Council should improve its use of resources by:</b>
		Maximising the supply of permanent accommodation by: closely monitoring nominations to housing associations, facilitating a balance between transfer and homeless applicants, developing a comprehensive under-occupation scheme and increasing outcomes from mobility schemes.	<b>Substantially met</b>



Building an analysis of risk into the budgeting process in regard to subsidy changes, and maximising rechargeable income.	<b>Completed</b>
Improving data collection by ensuring that documentation is not lost; that data is input accurately onto IT systems and that information is consistent across different databases.	<b>Completed</b>
<b>The Council should improve its approach to staffing by:</b>	
Taking steps to reduce the reliance on temporary and agency staff, and addressing high levels of sickness absence.	<b>Substantially met</b>
Developing and resourcing a training plan for staff, clearly linked to the aims of the service.	<b>Completed</b>

For the one recommendation that has not been fully met (the systematic measuring of satisfaction and the speed of telephone access), the Commission found that “improvements are underway in these areas.”

As a further indicator of the progress that the Housing Service has made since the previous inspection in October 2007, the following table sets out the change in the Audit Commission’s judgement of strengths and weaknesses against the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE):



KLOE	2007 Inspection	2010 Inspection
Access and customer care	Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Balance of strengths and weakness
Diversity	Balance of strengths and weakness	Balance of strengths and weakness
Allocations and lettings	Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Balance of strengths and weakness
Homelessness	Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Strengths outweigh weaknesses
Value for money	Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Balance of strengths and weakness
Prospects for Improvement: Track record in delivering improvement	Balance of strengths and weakness	Strengths outweigh weaknesses
Prospects for Improvement: Performance management	Strengths outweigh weaknesses	Strengths significantly outweigh weaknesses
Prospects for Improvement: Capacity to improve	Balance of strengths and weakness	Strengths significantly outweigh weaknesses

I am pleased that the Audit Commission has acknowledged the Housing Service's strong track record of improvement over recent years (evidenced by the good progress that has been made in relation to the recommendations of the inspection of 2½ years ago) which the Inspectors agree "has enabled the Council to deliver improved outcomes for service users and tackle the weaknesses identified during our last inspection."

15 General Some of the housing stock provided by private landlords and used by the council for temporary accommodation is in a shocking state. What is being done to ensure that such housing meets minimum decent housing standards?

As explained in my answer to Question 7 (above), the Council has published a set of 'minimum standards' with which all of its temporary accommodation (TA) must comply.

All temporary accommodation is inspected, before it is first used, in order to ensure that it meets the Council's published standards. Housing Inspectors and Contracts Negotiators undertake spot checks of occupied TA to ensure that standards continue to be complied with.



**Haringey Council**

			<p>In its report on its inspection of our Allocations, Lettings &amp; Homelessness Services, published in August 2010, the Audit Commission concluded that the “standard of temporary accommodation used is generally satisfactory” (Para 124) and “the quality of temporary accommodation has been improved through more robust procurement and inspection” (Para 145).</p> <p>TA that is leased from private landlords and suppliers is inspected when it is procured, when the lease is renewed, when it becomes void and when the tenant reports serious disrepair. If it has fallen into disrepair and the landlord is unwilling or unable to effect the repairs, works can be carried out in default and/or the tenant can be moved and the property handed back.</p>
16	General	<p>HfH Estate visits: General comments from residents and councillors are that these visits are generally arranged in the week at short notice, they are of little benefit if residents and councillors are unable to attend. Can HfH take this on board when organising such visits please.</p>	<p>Homes for Haringey has taken on board these comments about the arrangements for Estate Inspections and I have recently sent a briefing note to all Members concerning this issue.</p> <p>Members receive a schedule of inspections in advance as will any resident representatives. All other residents will receive two weeks notice of an inspection. In order to improve this, Homes for Haringey will soon be introducing postcards. As well as notifying all residents of the inspection, these postcards will afford residents the opportunity to raise issues with Homes for Haringey if they are not able to attend on the day. Homes for Haringey has tried to be more flexible with the timings of inspections and will try to meet individual estate requests, but regrets that it cannot offer weekend estate inspections as a matter of routine.</p>
		<p><b>Question from Cllr Martin Newton</b></p>	
17	<p>Leader's briefing 05/07/10 p.3 Housing: General - Assured Short Term Tenancy</p>	<p>How does the Private Sector Letting Team pre-assess applications to ensure they are suitable to take an assured short term tenancy including checking records for any previous anti-social behaviour?</p>	<p>Assessment of households' eligibility for the Home Finder Scheme mirrors the assessment of homelessness applications and is carried out by one of the referring teams: Housing Advice &amp; Options, Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation. They will investigate the conduct of the tenant in their current or last settled accommodation (whichever is appropriate), and check on whether or not there have been any problems with anti-social behaviour or rent payments.</p> <p>In assessing the suitability of applicants for the Home Finder Scheme, Officers will consider their ability to sustain a tenancy, taking into account any vulnerability including any physical and/or mental health issues which, together with other factors (drug or alcohol addictions or gambling, for example) may affect their ability to successfully manage and retain a tenancy. In such cases, Officers will work closely with the Vulnerable Adults Team and, where appropriate, liaise closely with the Children &amp; Young People's Service (CYPS) to ensure that, where there are any child protection concerns, CYPS supports the family's placement in the private rented sector and that, in order to prevent any disruption to the child's schooling and supervision, they are provided with suitable accommodation in the same locality.</p>



Haringey Council

			Upon receiving the referral, the Private Sector Lettings Team will assess the applicant's likely Housing Benefit entitlement and ensure that private rented accommodation will be affordable.
		<b>Questions from Cllr Joseph Ejiofor</b>	
18	gen	How many new properties does the Council intend to build in the next 5 years?	Although the Council and Homes for Haringey are committed to the idea of building new council homes in Haringey (and this has featured in the Council's ongoing dialogue with the HCA concerning the Borough Investment Plan), the government is no longer providing dedicated funding for the building of new council homes. Indeed, the future funding situation remains uncertain and further work is needed in order to assess the feasibility of the Council building new council homes within the foreseeable future.
19	gen	There is currently a corporate property review being carried out. What discussions have you had with cabinet colleagues about the suitability of property that the Council owns, but no longer needs for office space, but might be suitable for conversion to residential use?	Cabinet has asked Officers to carry out a detailed appraisal of options for the delivery of development and regeneration in Haringey, including an assessment of the options and benefits of setting up a development vehicle as a method of taking forward our major housing and regeneration objectives. A Strategic Options Appraisal (assessing the Council's options for property disposal and development, and the way in which the Council manages its estate and facilities) has been commissioned to consider the full range of options in relation to the future use of the Council's property portfolio and the feasibility of incorporating the assets of public sector partners, especially the PCT. Cabinet will consider a report on this on 12 October 2010.
20	gen	How much, on average, does it cost to house a family in <b>five</b> bed roomed temporary accommodation per year? How many families are we currently housing in such accommodation? What was the average length of time that that families leaving <b>five</b> bed roomed temporary accommodation in the 12 months to 31/07/10 had lived in temporary accommodation prior to moving? What work has the Council done on investigating alternatives to this situation?	<p>Based on a snapshot as at 26 August 2010 (when 33 families were living in 4-bedroomed TA), the average cost of housing a homeless family in 5-bedroom TA is <b>£15,796 per annum</b>.</p> <p>The average length of time that families leaving 5-bedroomed TA during the 12 months period ending 31 July 2010 had lived in TA prior to moving was <b>8 years, 285 days</b>.</p> <p>There is a severe shortage of 5-bedroom social housing in Haringey and, during 2009/10, only three 5-bedroom council and housing associations became available for letting.</p> <p>It is for this reason that Haringey's new Housing Allocations Policy, due to be implemented in January 2011, awards extra priority to the transfer requests of social tenants who are willing to give up large family homes and move to accommodation that has at least 2 fewer bedrooms.</p>



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			<p>For those households that are capable of sustaining a tenancy in the private rented sector, there is the opportunity to avoid a lengthy stay in temporary accommodation by accepting an offer of suitable 5-bedroomed private rented accommodation through Haringey's Home Finder Scheme. Although this will result in the Council discharging its homelessness duty, the Home Finder Scheme allows households a choice of area and type of accommodation.</p> <p>During the past year, the Home Finder Scheme has enabled 4 households to move out of TA and into suitable 5-bedroomed private rented accommodation.</p>
21	gen	<p>How much, on average, does it cost to house a family in <b>four</b> bed roomed temporary accommodation per year? How many families are we currently housing in such accommodation? What was the average length of time that that families leaving <b>four</b> bed roomed temporary accommodation in the 12 months to 31/07/10 had lived in temporary accommodation prior to moving? What work has the Council done on investigating alternatives to this situation?</p>	<p>Based on a snapshot as at 26 August 2010 (when 73 households living in 4-bedroomed TA), the average cost of housing a homeless family in 4-bedroomed TA is <b>£16,218 per annum</b>.</p> <p>This is slightly <u>more</u> than the average for 5-bedroom TA, as 22 of the 73 households in 4-bedroom TA are living in more expensive nightly-purchased Emergency Accommodation, compared to just one of the 33 households living in 5-bedroom TA.</p> <p>The average length of time that families leaving 4-bedroomed TA during the 12 months period ending 31 July 2010 had lived in TA prior to moving was <b>7 years, 92 days</b>.</p> <p>There is a severe shortage of 4-bedroom social housing in Haringey and, during 2009/10, only forty 4-bedroom council and housing associations became available for letting.</p> <p>It is for this reason that Haringey's new Housing Allocations Policy, due to be implemented in January 2011, awards extra priority to the transfer requests of social tenants who are willing to give up large family homes and move to accommodation that has at least 2 fewer bedrooms.</p> <p>For those households that are capable of sustaining a tenancy in the private rented sector, there is the opportunity to avoid a lengthy stay in temporary accommodation by accepting an offer of suitable 4-bedroomed private rented accommodation through Haringey's Home Finder Scheme. Although this will result in the Council discharging its homelessness duty, the Home Finder Scheme allows households a choice of area and type of accommodation.</p> <p>During the past year, the Home Finder Scheme has enabled 17 households to move out of TA and into suitable 4-bedroomed private rented accommodation.</p>





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22	gen	<p>What involvement have you had in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Homes For Haringey's local procurement strategy?</p>	<p>The Council's Procurement Strategy requires all of the Council's partners to set out how their procurement will support the achievement of the key objectives in the Community Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achieving Excellent Services</li><li>• Building Safer and Stronger Communities</li><li>• Better Haringey</li><li>• Raise Educational Achievement</li><li>• Putting People First</li></ul> <p>Based on the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government, Homes for Haringey's Procurement Strategy strives to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The procurement of services and works has a major impact on local communities</li><li>• The principles of whole-life costing and paying the necessary cost to secure the best possible outcome for the local community are applied in line with 'Achieving Excellent Services'</li><li>• All construction projects deliver sustainable facilities that add value to Haringey's built environment and ensure that consultation with residents forms part of the procurement process in accordance with 'Building Safer and Stronger Communities'</li><li>• Its New Start apprenticeship scheme provides training that may develop into career opportunities for local people to achieve social and economic benefits in accordance with 'Raising Educational Achievement'.</li></ul> <p>The Council's ALMO Client Team plays an active role in supporting the implementation and monitoring of Homes for Haringey's Procurement Strategy through discussions at regular meetings with the constructor partners and the Council's Housing Capital Programme Board. It also facilitates benchmarking with other Councils with ALMOs, which has helped evaluate the Procurement Strategy and compare performance with other local authorities.</p>
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**Haringey Council**

23		<p>What involvement have you had in the overseeing the remuneration packages of the senior management team of Homes For Haringey. Would you care to comment on recent increases?</p>	<p>The Council currently does not have any involvement in overseeing the remuneration packages of Homes for Haringey's senior management team as Homes for Haringey is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) and adheres to the Company Act 2006 regulations.</p> <p>The current system in place delegates powers to HfH's Board in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association to determine remuneration of the executive directors, through the Board's remuneration panel.</p> <p>There is a new regulation that requires the Council to disclose this information for Homes for Haringey senior officers in its group accounts and to be published from 2009/10 onwards (which includes comparative information for 2008/09).</p> <p>Homes for Haringey senior officers have been defined by the Council as members of the Executive Management Team in line with CIPFA guidance. However no HfH staff will be identified by name in the council's group accounts for 2009/10. Following these guidelines, HfH will also disclose senior officers' remuneration in its accounts from 2010/11 onwards</p>
<p><b>Questions from Cllr Gideon Bull</b></p>			
24	<p>Leader's briefing 05/07/10  2</p>	<p>Is the Leader able to update the Committee on the progress of the supported housing review which was the subject of a call on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 re: CAB92?</p>	<p>Work on the Supported Housing Review is progressing well. A specialist on supported housing and extra care (who has previously undertaken work for the government) has been commissioned to provide the Council with independent, impartial advice and assist the completion of an appraisal of the options for Protheroe House and Larkspur Close. He has met with Officers and tenants to discuss the Extra Care options for Protheroe House. A progress report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 November 2010 and by the Cabinet on 16 November 2010.</p>
<p><b>Questions from Cllr Robert Gorrie</b></p>			
25		<p>How does our "fair" rating compare to other Boroughs and what, other than 40 years of Labour administration, is responsible for our poor score?</p>	<p>A like-for-like comparison with other local authorities that have been inspected in recent years is not possible because of the differences in the scope of inspections.</p> <p>Based on a snapshot as at 28 August 2010 (and excluding inspections relating to landlord services, repairs and maintenance, and ALMOs), the Audit Commission has published reports on 62 housing-related local authority inspections it has carried out, in relation to Strategic Housing Services, Allocations &amp; Lettings and Homelessness, since April 2007.</p>



Of these 62 housing-related services inspected and reported on the Audit Commission's website, none were assessed as providing a '3 Star' (excellent) service, 12 (19%) were assessed as providing a '2 Star' (good) service, 33 (53%) were assessed as providing a '1 Star' (fair) service and 17 (28%) were assessed as providing a '0 Star' (poor) service.

<b>Outcome: Since April 2007</b>	<b>Number of Boroughs / Inspections</b>
3* Excellent service	Nil
2* Good service with excellent prospects	3
2* Good service with promising prospects	8
2* Good service with uncertain prospects	1
1* Fair service with excellent prospects	2 (including Haringey: May 2010)
1* Fair service with promising prospects	22
1* Fair service with uncertain prospects	8
1* Fair service with poor prospects	1
0* Poor service with excellent prospects	0
0* Poor service with promising prospects	3 (including Haringey: Oct 2007)
0* Poor service with uncertain prospects	9
0* Poor service with poor prospects	5

Since April 2007, only 12 housing-related local authority services have been assessed as better than Haringey's Allocations, Lettings and Homelessness Service in May 2010.

In fact, of the 62 housing-related local authority services inspected by the Audit Commission since April 2007, Haringey's Allocations, Lettings & Homelessness Service is one of only five services that have been assessed as having "excellent prospects for improvement".

I do not agree with you that this is a poor score. Whilst there is certainly scope for improvement, the following paragraphs in the Audit Commission's report illustrate the significant progress that has been made since the last inspection in October 2007:



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The service has a strong track record in implementing change that benefits customers over the past three years. Most notably, the improvements in the approach to preventing homelessness and offering housing options ... quality of temporary accommodation has been improved through more robust procurement and inspection ... service delivery has improved significantly since the last inspection (Para 145).</li><li>• There has been increased partnership working ... Partners consider that the Council has made significant progress over the past two years in the inspected areas, and that the service has improved its attitude towards involving partners, which is now one of openness and inclusiveness. This involvement is helping to sustain improvements (Para 150).</li><li>• Leadership of the service by senior staff and politicians is effective. The restructuring of the service over the past three years has led to improved outcomes, while retaining skilled staff and enhancing overall staff confidence in the management of the service ... Staff are now clearer about their roles and how they contribute to the overall aims of the service. Also, the portfolio holder takes an active role in service improvement and championing the service among councillors. This has enabled the Council to deliver improved outcomes for service users and tackle the weaknesses identified during our last inspection (Para 162).</li></ul>
26		<p>How many temporary accommodation tenancies have been terminated as a result of landlords being presented with Council demands to pay less rent?</p> <p>Where have the previous tenants been rehoused?</p>	<p>To date, 84 leased properties have been earmarked for early handback, due to the landlord's refusal to reduce the weekly rent. Nine of these properties have already been handed back.</p> <p>Tenants with enough housing points may bid successfully for a permanent council or housing association home. Others may opt for a move into the private rented sector, using the Council's Home Finder Scheme. If the tenant is unable to secure settled accommodation, they will be offered alternative temporary accommodation.</p>



**Haringey Council**

27	<p>Leader's briefing 05/07/10</p> <p>2 Extra Question</p>	<p>If one of the aims of the decent homes programme is to “maximise the impact of every pound that we spend”, could the council leader attach a copy of the <b>local</b> procurement strategy through which it intends to do this?</p>	<p>The Decent Homes framework was set up in accordance with EU Procurement Law and HfH Tender requirements and is broadly based on cost and quality. Due to the nature, size, complexity and turnover etc. of the programme, it would restrict local businesses (unless contractor based in Haringey ) from tendering.</p> <p>However, the ITT Qualitative did ask the question of whether the Contractors have a policy on Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and how they would be engaged in the programme - the answer generally would be that they would endeavour to procure locally any services or supplies subject to price, quality of services and ability to deliver. Mattison Scaffolding are a good example of local procurement.</p> <p>The Decent Homes contractors tend to use the local builders merchants, including Travis Perkins, Buildbase, Jewsons, PTS etc (HfH has a local service level agreement with Jewson to facilitate kitchen supplies).</p> <p>Local Labour, Training and Apprenticeship schemes run locally, use of refurbished hubs etc would be representative of local procurement</p> <p>Homes for Haringey and its Partnering Teams continually strive to involve the local community at various levels, delivering cost efficiencies and added values for residents through value engineering and the HfH Strategic Cost Management Initiative.</p>
<p><b>Questions from Cllr David Browne</b></p>			
28		<p>What is the current state of play with regards to the Decent Homes programme? Is the funding secure for works planned for 2012/2013?</p>	<p>Haringey's Decent Homes programme is currently in its third year of delivery. Over 4000 units have been made decent, resident satisfaction to date is high and the programme is on target. Our overall allocation from the government for the decent homes programme was £198.5m. The funding is confirmed by the government on an annual basis and we have no news from the government to date that this is set to change.</p> <p>Nationally, there have been no announcements from the government regarding the future of decent homes funding although we expect more information on funding for the programme from 2011/12 onward following the completion of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October.</p>