

Report for: Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

Item number: 9

Title: Supported Housing Review

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Lead Officer: Dan Hawthorn, Assistant Director for Regeneration

Ward(s) affected: All

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report describes the activities and findings of the Supported Housing Review and the steps required to take the project to its completion.
- 1.2 This report will be complemented by a presentation to the Panel. The presentation is intended to enable Panel members to contribute to the final recommendations of the Supported Housing Review.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel:

- 2.1 Notes and considers the activities and findings of the Supported Housing Review.
- 2.2 Provide comment and insight based on their site visits and best practice exploration on older people's housing in Autumn 2016. This will contribute to the development of the final recommendations of the Supported Housing Review.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 Comments are required for the successful completion of the Supported Housing Review. In turn, this will enable the achievement of the Council's strategic priorities for vulnerable adults as part of the Corporate Plan (2015-18).

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 Housing support is a preventative provision designed to reduce and respond to homelessness, social exclusion and social care needs. Supported housing is the main element of this provision, which is offered for a wide range of different needs, periods and purposes, including short-term refuge provision for survivors of domestic abuse, hostels for rough sleepers and sheltered housing for older people, amongst many others. It is offered as a lifetime home for some disabled adults and people with long-term conditions. Other types of housing support include floating support, housing advice and community alarm services.
- 4.2 The Councils Housing and Social Care departments commission approximately 3000 units of supported housing for vulnerable adults, with a total annual value of around £17.5m. Supported housing provides a spectrum of support and accommodation types, from low-level sheltered housing for older people to 24-hour high-support forensic mental health provision.
- 4.3 The Supported Housing Review is a project under Priority 5 of the Corporate Plan (2015-18) '*Building a Stronger Haringey Together*', which places emphasis on the impact of cross-cutting prevention, early intervention, independence and capacity building opportunities for Haringey residents to achieve positive housing outcomes.
- 4.4 Additionally, supported housing and therefore the review, has clear links to Priorities 1 & 2, '*enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education*' and '*enable all adults to live healthy, long and fulfilling lives*'. As a joint project, the review sought to identify how supported housing contributes to the achievement of housing, health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable adults and young people in need of housing support.
- 4.5 In November 2015, the Supported Housing Review was commissioned as a joint project between Housing and Adult Social Care. The aim of the project was to review the capacity, availability, quality and cost of supported housing in Haringey, as well as to identify it's alignment with refreshed priorities brought about by the Corporate Plan. Periodic strategic reviews are standard commissioning practice and ensure that the local authority is responsive to emerging need and population change.
- 4.6 The review was led by a dedicated Project Manager with agreement and monitoring of outcomes, scope and milestones governed by a Project Board of senior Council officers from Adults, Housing & Public Health. As a Priority 5 objective, progress of the review was also monitored by the P5 Operational and Strategic Boards.

- 4.7 The scope of the review included short and long term supported housing services commissioned by the Council for people vulnerable due to;
- a mental health issue
 - a substance misuse problem
 - offending behaviour
 - survival of domestic abuse
 - rough sleeping
 - young age (16 - 25 years old)
 - increasing age (over 55 years old)
 - a learning or physical disability
 - teenage pregnancy/parenthood
- 4.8 Services were excluded from review if they were not accommodation based, did not provide housing support as part of the service or where personal care rather than housing support was the primary offer; residential and nursing care, temporary accommodation, floating support and housing advice services. However, the relationship between supported housing and these types of provision was clearly identified and it was expected that the outcome of the review would be beneficial to ongoing projects seeking to reduce the burden in these areas.
- 4.9 Completion of the Supported Housing Review was anticipated to achieve five key outcomes within a one-year period;
- A robust understanding of the current and future need for housing related support services and supported living
 - An assessment of the condition and suitability of the local authority's designated supported housing stock
 - Generate solutions for service models and schemes that are assessed as not meeting current or future need effectively
 - Present recommendations for change that have strong strategic fit, are future-focussed and provide best value for the authority and local residents
 - Develop a case for change in commissioning practice if required, to meet current and emerging support needs

Local Policy Developments

- 4.10 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (2017-22) sets out the Council's proposals to make savings of £20 million of the next two years. Protecting the needs of vulnerable residents is a key priority in the strategy as is a commitment to invest in prevention and early help for those with additional needs. With a real-term reduction of 40% in Council budgets since 2010 and increasing demand for emergency housing and adult social care, the outcome of the Supported Housing Review will provide evidence and recommendations

to inform difficult decisions that improve efficiency and relieve demand in these areas.

- 4.11 The recently adopted Housing Strategy (2017-2022) sets out the Council's commitment to developing strong and thriving communities by not only building more homes, but improving housing quality and reducing homelessness. The strategy sets out commitments to build specialist housing for those with additional needs alongside other housing types. The Supported Housing Review is a key project in identifying the demand for specialist housing and how best the Council can use existing supported housing assets to deliver the Housing Strategy's objectives for vulnerable adults.

National Policy Developments

- 4.12 Following the general election in 2015, major changes in national housing, planning and welfare policy were introduced, for example, in the Housing and Planning Act. This context is recognised in the framework, which seeks to find relevant solutions amidst a changing housing and welfare landscape that has a significant impact on key strategic priorities including:
- (a) Making our prevention of homelessness work more difficult, as a result of:
 - Welfare reforms including the introduction of Universal Credit which will make those on benefits less likely to be housed by private landlords
 - Reduced benefit caps which will make increasing private sector rents less affordable for those on benefits
 - Changes in the funding for temporary accommodation subsidy, with the replacement of the current management fee per unit with a fixed grant
 - The additional responsibilities proposed by Homelessness Reduction Bill
 - (b) Destabilising our supported housing sector as a result of:
 - Proposals to reduce supported housing rents to Local Housing Allowance rates which will make this type of provision unviable for some registered providers
 - (c) Creating additional demand for supported housing for people with very specialist housing needs as a result of:
 - *Transforming Care* agenda which seeks to find community based housing support and care solutions for adults with learning disabilities and additional challenging behaviour who are currently living in hospital
 - *Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme* placing an emphasis on managing demand for residential care and finding community based alternatives to this type of provision

Findings of the Supporteded Housing Review

- 4.13 The Supported Housing Review undertook an in depth Needs and Gaps analysis, including a range of quantitative research activities, including but not limited to; population analysis, voids and utilisation performance, financial modelling, cross-borough benchmarking and performance monitoring analysis. The aim of this was to create a baseline of numerical data about vulnerable individuals and services to compare the availability, quality and success of services for different groups.
- 4.14 The review prioritised engaging with a wide range of stakeholders. The experiences, needs and insights of vulnerable residents and specialist staff were central to the review's findings. More than 200 supported housing service users and carers were engaged in different aspects of the review through a survey, service visits, engagement events and 1:1 meetings. A stakeholder group made up of Council, statutory and voluntary sector staff from a range of related disciplines met quarterly as a critical-friend to the review; challenging findings, sharing insights and generating ideas and options for the future.
- 4.15 Elected members were engaged in the review via regular 1:1 meetings, a full-day Scrutiny in a Day session on older people and a dedicated Members Working Group. The Working Group has considered data and intelligence about client groups and services within the scope of the review.
- 4.16 An initial appraisal of the Council's supported housing stock was commissioned as part of the review. This 'Pilot Sites Appraisal' was conducted by Ridge Associates using a comprehensive methodology that brought together questions about demand, utilisation, maintenance and site-density alongside best practice standards in housing for older people. In total 54 schemes were appraised and a report was produced.
- 4.17 From the range of review activities emerged a number of universal issues and priorities. Broadly these are as follows;
- **Cost-effective resource** - Supported housing is undoubtedly a cost-effective resource that reduces and manages demand on a range of other acute and reactive housing and social care provision. Currently though, valuable supported housing funding and assets in the borough are not used effectively to enable the Council to respond to vulnerability, housing, health and community safety issues swiftly. Supported housing services and assets could be better used to reduce the pressure on temporary accommodation, residential and nursing care facilities.
 - **Reactivity of service** - Despite the preventative intention of housing related support, it is clear that most people who access supported housing do so after a period of crisis rather than to prevent one.

Additionally, the majority of floating support is provided to people living in temporary accommodation rather than in the community and therefore is equally reacting to, rather than preventing, homelessness.

- **Ageing models of support** - Many of the supported housing delivery models in place have not changed for a long period of time and are no longer in line with best practice or the current or projected needs of vulnerable Haringey residents. This has resulted in an imbalance between the amount and type of housing support available and what is actually needed.
- **Low expectations** - Aspirations for vulnerable people in supported housing were typically felt to be low, with limited options for increasing independence and inclusion and high rates of eviction, abandonment and repeat stays in supported housing for some client groups. For people with particularly complex needs, there is very little encouragement to take positive risks to secure housing & health outcomes where traditional options have not been successful.
- **Inefficiency** - A lack of integration between housing support and social care services and strategies leads to inefficient use of resources both human and financial, with clear opportunity to find savings through improved practice. This lack of coherence across support and care pathways results in some supported housing being under-utilised even where demand is high elsewhere. Data collection, assessment and monitoring practices are inefficient and not contributing to early intervention and prevention priorities or intelligent commissioning.

4.18 As well as the universal findings, four client groups emerged as priorities. Data, intelligence and insights from service users and stakeholders evidences a need to modernise, rebalance and strengthen our housing support offer to these groups as a priority. The main needs and gaps for each group are identified as follows;

- Older People: there is a need to modernise the housing support available to older people in line with current best practice, this includes residents of sheltered housing and other tenure types across the borough. Demand for sheltered housing is low, void periods could be improved and valuable communal resources are under-used. There is higher demand for housing support that enables older people to stay in their homes for longer, making them feel more included and supported within their community. There is also unmet need for high support Extra-Care services for older people with more complex needs. Evidence from the Ridge Pilot Sites Appraisal highlighted opportunities to better use valuable supported housing assets by developing further Extra Care services, or creating additional much needed supported accommodation for other vulnerable groups, such as young families. Nine schemes were recommended for further appraisal on this basis.

- Young People: separate and unaligned commissioning of housing support for young people and care leavers creates gaps for those with particular vulnerabilities, including young women, offenders and those with learning difficulties. This has resulted in low-utilisation of the current pathway, high rates of eviction and abandonment and the purchase of costly alternative placements. The current physical environments providing supported housing for vulnerable young people are unsuitable in the long-term and might be better used for other groups and services. Support models and partnerships could do much more to break the cycle of homelessness for vulnerable young people by improving focus on education, employment and tenancy skills.

- Learning Disability: adults with learning disabilities have limited choices in supported housing and are not expected to live independent lives. Models of supported housing in place are no longer aligned with social care eligibility thresholds and some people are falling through the gaps. This results in more acute and costly health and care needs in future and adults who are not able to achieve their potential. There is a clear unmet need for independent living models and additional units of high-support supported living provision for those transitioning from residential care and Children's placements.

- Mental Health: housing support for this group is reactive to crisis and encourages dependence rather than intervening to prevent homelessness, hospitalisation and imprisonment much earlier. There is a clear need for housing support to take place outside traditional supported housing settings and to build on the success of the Housing First pilot. Simpler assessment processes and better partnership working for those leaving hospital, prison or residential care would better manage demand, reduce dependence and ensure supported housing was available for those who need it at the right time. A small cohort of women with complex needs related to gendered-trauma, abuse and substance misuse are in a cycle of repeat homelessness because services are not meeting their specific needs.

Proposed Recommendations

- 4.19 It is proposed to develop a Housing Support Transformation Framework, which will act as a driver for change in housing support commissioned by all areas of the Council. The framework will provide a set of underpinning principles and delivery recommendations to address the issues and opportunities identified by the Supported Housing Review.

- 4.20 The recommendations be based on a vision of included communities, where residents with additional needs are empowered to thrive. Building and strengthening networks of family, social and locality-based support will prevent housing and health crisis and respond proactively to help people avoid escalation of need and dependence.
- 4.21 To achieve this vision, the Council should adopt principled commissioning practice. This will create a spectrum of integrated and aligned housing support and care provision that meets short and long-term support needs with an overarching commitment to prevention.
- 4.22 Once agreed, these principles will guide the design and delivery of a refreshed housing support offer, initially for the four priority groups identified above but moving forward will underpin commissioning for other relevant client groups.
- 4.23 To ensure supported housing tenants are well informed, involved and assured of our commitment to meeting their needs, it is proposed that a Supported Housing Tenants Charter be produced alongside the final recommendations document.

Expected Benefits

- 4.24 Ensuring positive housing and health outcomes for the boroughs vulnerable adults and young people is of key importance and our current supported housing portfolio is no longer delivering this effectively. A refreshed strategic approach will bring about change to housing support provision that ensures vulnerable adults have opportunities to maximise and enhance their independence, social and personal relationships and housing options as part of more personalised and well-connected network of housing support and care.
- 4.25 Creating thriving mixed communities where people are included and valued is central to the commitments of the Corporate Plan. Housing support that focuses on resilience will help create communities in which our most vulnerable residents contribute and add value. A transformed housing support offer will prevent homelessness, reduce social isolation and loneliness and help people manage conditions which might have otherwise resulted in hospitalisation and unplanned admissions to nursing and residential care.
- 4.26 The recommendations will specifically address efficiency, funding duplication and joint commissioning opportunities. It is anticipated that this will bring about improved transitions from residential care into supported living and create more coherent supported housing pathways for young people, offering personal, social and financial savings.

- 4.27 By refreshing supported housing provision in line with data and intelligence about current and projected need in the borough, the Councils limited resources will be directed towards those most in need for whom we will be able to provide more targeted services to prevent homelessness, crisis and poor health outcomes.
- 4.28 The recommendations will also suggest improved integration of the Council's different commissioning functions, responsibilities and plans. This will build a strong foundation from which to forecast the resource requirements for supported housing over a minimum five year period. Equally important is the improvement of outcomes monitoring, recording and quality assurance processes to evidence the social return on investment that supported housing offers in relation to our most vulnerable residents.

Delivery of the Recommendations

- 4.29 It is proposed to take the final recommendations of the Supported Housing Review to Cabinet in March 2017. Work with Members, stakeholders and service users is proceeding at pace to achieve this.
- 4.30 Once approved, it is recognised that delivery of the recommendations is not just a matter for the Council; the role of partners and stakeholders has been crucial to the review and will be to delivering the changes it recommends. New ways of working, more innovative support models, community engagement and partnership working are all fundamental to successful commissioning and delivery of support and care services.
- 4.31 As a strategic document, the final recommendations of the review will not set out precisely how delivery of change will be achieved, although it will outline a number of key areas. Individual delivery plans will need to be developed to drive forward the recommendations for specific client groups and service types.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan for 2015-18 sets out the Council's overall priorities and programme of work for the period for 2015-18. It identifies housing as one of its five priorities, committing the Council over that period to '*Create homes and communities where people choose to live and are able to thrive*'. Supported housing is a small but important element of the Council's housing responsibility, one which plays a role in delivering across the other priorities in the Corporate Plan, for example through the role that supported housing has in enabling adults with additional needs to live healthy and fulfilling lives in their communities, or the role of specialist housing support to safeguard women made homeless due to violence and exploitation.

5.2 The Corporate Plan goes on to define specific objectives under each of its five priorities. The role of the recommendations of the Supported Housing Review will be to address in particular the objectives under Priority 5 and Priority 2: to say more clearly how vulnerable residents will be supported to achieve housing and health outcomes, how the Council will enable this and what it expects others to do; and to demonstrate clearly how housing support can play a role in meeting our objectives across multiple elements of the Corporate Plan.

5.3 The recommendations will help deliver the 6 strategic themes set out in the Corporate Plan. Examples of how this will be achieved are presented below:

- ***Prevention and early intervention.***

This will be the foundation of housing support, creating a more proactive support offer that intervenes to prevent crisis and delay escalation of need

- ***Fair and equal service***

This is reflected in the intention to redress unequal access to services and ensure those with protected characteristics receive a service specific to their needs

- ***We will work with communities***

The review has emphasised the need to build resilient and inclusive communities where vulnerable people are centred and involved, for example by co-producing any new services with those who will live in them

- ***Partnership***

Delivery will rely on a mutuality of commitment from all interested departments, organisations and individuals in the borough – Service Users, Carers, Housing, Social Care, Health, Voluntary Sector and Registered Providers

- ***Customer service***

This relates to the need to improve quality and reduce barriers to access for those in need of housing support.

- ***Value for money***

Our approach will engage more dynamically with the housing support market to generate economies of scale, improved pricing equity and innovative delivery models.

5.4 The Housing Strategy (2017-2022) sets out four strategic objectives to enable the delivery of new housing growth, improved quality and homelessness prevention in Haringey. The transformation of housing support will contribute to the four strategic objectives set out in the strategy.

6. **STATUTORY OFFICERS COMMENTS (CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (INCLUDING PROCUREMENT), ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, EQUALITIES)**

Finance and Procurement

- 6.1 The finance/procurement implications arising from this report will not be clear until a draft of the final recommendations is available detailing specific commissioning intentions.

Legal

- 6.2 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments as follows:
- 6.3 Supported housing and housing support would assist the Council in the discharge of its housing and social care obligations.
- 6.4 Under the Housing Act 1985 section 11A the Council may provide, in connection with housing accommodation provided by it, services for promoting the welfare of the persons for whom the accommodation is provided, according to the needs of those persons. The council may make reasonable charges for the welfare services provided.
- 6.5 Under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) the Council has various statutory duties to the homeless which include securing accommodation where the individual is eligible in terms of their immigration status, has a local connection with the Borough, is unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness and is in priority need of accommodation. A person who is vulnerable due to old age, mental illness or disability or certain 16/17 year olds will be regarded as being in priority need. Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires the Council to have a homelessness strategy which must include its strategy for preventing homelessness. Section 179(1) the Council has a duty to secure that advice and information about homelessness and homelessness prevention is available free of charge. The proposals including the early interventions will assist the Council in meeting its homelessness obligations.
- 6.6 Section 1 of the Care Act 2014 (*Promoting individual well-being*) requires the Council when exercising its care and support functions in respect of an individual, to promote the individual's wellbeing. "Well-being", in relation to an individual, includes individual's physical and mental health and emotional well-being; control by the individual over day-to-day life; social and economic well-being; and suitability of living accommodation. The Department of Health has issued statutory guidance under the Care Act 2014 named Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016 which the Council must have regard to in exercising its function under the Act. The Guidance (at Paragraphs 1.18-1.19) provides that "independent living" is a core part of the "wellbeing principle". Supporting people to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, is a guiding principle of the Care Act.

- 6.7 Section 2 of the Act (*Preventing needs for care and support*) requires the Council to “provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources, or take other steps, which it considers will” contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing individuals’ needs for care and support. The Guidance (at paragraph 2.1) provides that “It is critical to the vision in the Care Act that the care and support system works to actively promote wellbeing and independence, and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point. To meet the challenges of the future, it will be vital that the care and support system intervenes early to support individuals, helps people retain or regain their skills and confidence, and prevents need or delays deterioration wherever possible.” The Guidance emphasise the importance of preventative services.
- 6.8 Sections 3 (*Promoting integration of care and support with health services etc.*) and 6 (*Co-operating generally*) of the Act requires the Council in performing its care and support functions to promote greater integration with health and health related services such as housing and to promote cooperation between local authorities departments such as adult, public health, children and housing. The Guidance emphasise the importance of Housing and housing related support in preventing the need for care and support. The Guidance (at Paragraphs 15.61-15.62) provides that “Housing and housing related support can be a way to prevent needs for care and support, or to delay deterioration over time. Getting housing right and helping people to choose the right housing options for them can help to prevent falls, prevent hospital admissions and readmissions, reduce the need for care and support, improve wellbeing, and help maintain independence at home” “Housing and housing services can play a significant part in prevention, for example, from a design/physical perspective, accessibility, having adequate heating and lighting, identifying and removing hazards or by identifying a person who needs to be on the housing register. In addition, housing related support, for example, services that help people develop their capacity to live in the community, live independently in accommodation, or sustain their capacity to do so, such as help with welfare benefits, developing budgeting skills, help with developing social networks or taking up education, training and employment opportunities can prevent, reduce or delay the needs for care and support. Community equipment, along with telecare, aids and adaptations can support reablement, promote independence contributing to preventing the needs for care and support.”
- 6.9 The proposed activities and work streams may require statutory consultation or consultation with individual service users. The redevelopment or remodelling of existing supported housing schemes may require consultation with existing tenants under section 105 of the Housing Act 1985. This requires the Council to consult with its secure tenants who are likely to be substantially affected by a matter of housing management. Housing management includes matters which

relate to the provision of services or amenities in connection with their dwellings.

- 6.10 When carrying out its functions, the Council must have regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which is set out more fully in the Equality section of this report. The council will set out how it has had regard to the PSED in its Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for the review and that EQIA must be taken into account in making the decision to approve the final recommendations. Further EQIAs may be required when specific proposals which affect service users are decided.

Equality

- 6.11 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to; tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation); advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not; and foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 6.12 A needs and gap analysis has been undertaken which identified protected characteristics which are particularly in need for housing support. It identifies four client groups that are particularly in need of housing support. These are younger people, older people, people with learning disabilities and mental health issues. In addition to this, the needs and gap analysis identifies other housing vulnerabilities and how different protected characteristics intersect with these client groups. Other vulnerable groups identified as at risk of homelessness include women; physical impairments; particular Black and Ethnic Minority communities; lesbian, gay and bisexual young people; transgender people; young pregnant women and single mothers.

7. APPENDICES

None