

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF DECISION

SUBJECT: PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVED CROSS LONDON PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Notice is hereby given that the Cabinet Member for Housing Services has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

Summary of Decision

1. That the Cabinet Member for Housing Services noted the £38 million over four years being made available by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government specifically for pan-London collaboration on the procurement of accommodation for homeless households.
2. That the Cabinet Member for Housing Services approved in principle for the Council to join a letting company to be named Capital Letters London Ltd, a Company Limited by Guarantee that will be established by the London boroughs, as an 'A' member
3. That the Cabinet Member for Housing Services delegated authority to the Director of Housing and Regeneration, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, the following:
 - a) Finalising and agreement of the Articles of Association, authorising the agreeing and entering into the council's membership of Capital Letters Limited
 - b) Payment of up to £90K from Flexible Homelessness Support Grant to fund 2 officers within Capital Letters
 - c) the nomination of an Officer to be appointed as the council's representative on the Capital Letter board.
4. That the Cabinet Member for Housing Services noted the draft Articles of Association at Appendix A of the report.
5. That the Cabinet Member for Housing Services noted the draft Members Agreement at Appendix B of the report.

Reasons for Decision

1. This initiative is required to deliver additional affordable, suitable private sector accommodation to allow the Council to meet its homelessness duties at a cost it can sustain against the background of:

- A challenging market with limited availability of accommodation for households on low incomes
 - The likelihood of increased numbers of households accepted as being homeless
 - A shift in emphasis in homelessness policy towards use of resources to prevention.
 - The importance of working closely with other London boroughs to collaborate to secure accommodation
2. This decision is necessary in order to fulfil the Council's statutory duties to house persons who are defined as homeless under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and reduce the costs of fulfilling that duty.
 3. Capital Letters (with MHCLG funding) is designed to provide a cost effective source of sustainable Temporary Accommodation and an additional source of good quality private sector accommodation within London for households in housing need. Currently boroughs are, in many cases, competing against each other for properties. Being jointly owned by London boroughs is designed to improve collaboration and provide more sustainable accommodation.

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Reference: CMfHS/2018-2019/1