



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title: **Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date: **Thursday 2nd March, 2023**

Time: **6.30 pm**

Venue: **Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Members: **Councillors:**

Gillian Arrindell	Patricia McAllister (Chair)
Robert Eagleton	Alan Mendoza
David Harvey	Cara Sanquest
Elizabeth Hitchcock	



Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda.

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Linda Hunting, Policy & Scrutiny Advisor.

**Email: lhunting@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Head of Committee and Governance Services in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

To note any changes to the membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any pecuniary interests or any other significant interest in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the Committee's previous meeting held on the 7 December 2022.

(Pages 3 - 8)

4. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

To receive an update from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Liza Begum.

(Pages 9 - 12)

5. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE ACTION, REGENERATION AND RENTERS

To receive an update from the Cabinet Membership for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters, Councillor Matt Noble.

(Pages 13 - 16)

6. PROVISION OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION TO MEET NEEDS OF HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

(Pages 17 - 38)

7. WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

To discuss and shape the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2022-2023.

(Pages 39 - 52)

**Stuart Love
Chief Executive
2 March 2023**



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **7 December, 2022**, Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Gillian Arrindell, Laila Cunningham, Robert Eagleton, David Harvey, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Patricia McAllister, and Cara Sanquest.

Also Present: Councillor Liza Begum (Cabinet Member for Housing Services), Councillor Matt Noble (Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters), Martin Crank (Communication and Engagement), Damian Hemmings (Climate Emergency Programme Director), Linda Hunting (Policy & Scrutiny Advisor), Debbie Jackson (Executive Director Growth, Planning, and Housing), Gelina Menville (Head of Regeneration) and Neil Whiteman (Head of Housing).

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Alan Mendoza

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Committee noted that Councillor Laila Cunningham was attending as substitute for Councillor Alan Mendoza.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 2.1 The Chair welcomed the Members of the Council and Cabinet Members Councillor Matt Noble (Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters) and Councillor Liza Begum (Cabinet Member for Housing Services) to the meeting.
- 2.2 The Chair requested that Members of the Committee introduce themselves when speaking and to provide responses in a clear and sufficient volume for the recording.
- 2.3 The Chair advised Members that senior officers would be attending the meeting virtually and reminded Members to mute their microphones when not speaking.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 The Committee noted there were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES

4.1 The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting held on 14 November 2022.

RESOLVED:

4.2 That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November be signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

5. PORTFLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING SERVICES (Councillor Liza Begum)

5.1 The Committee received an update from Councillor Liza Begum, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, on priorities for the portfolio and any updates that have arisen. The Cabinet Member responded to questions on the following topics:

- Working with residents in forming a resident's repair charter.
- Mould and condensation plans in Council properties, including the pilot scheme of the installation of smart metre's, the positive input ventilation (PIV) system, and whether it is mandatory in residents' homes, including, potential issues, and how these repair works are being prioritised by the Council.
- Housing officers, how residents know who they are, consistency with housing officers, issues with recruitment and retainment, covering housing officer absence, and the priorities on the Mozart estate, including the length of time Mozart has been without a housing officer and where there are gaps with housing officers on Estates.
- How housing issues on Estates could be avoided with more regular and consistent visits from housing officers and the length of time for officers to respond and resolve case work matters.
- The rollout of the RAPID App system to track details of residents in Council owned properties and as a management tool to ensure better responsiveness and communication with residents about housing issues, including, how the success of this will be measured.
- Green-flag status on the Hallfield Estate.
- The 10-year residency point scheme and how points are to be allocated and can be claimed by residents.
- Where the Council is the most exposed in delivering the repairs service with the rising costs of labour and materials.
- Security measures on the estates, including the six-month pilot scheme.
- Rough sleepers, the rough sleeping strategy, the assessment process, eligibility criteria, the statutory obligations of the Council, referrals and finding appropriate accommodation, and relocating people where appropriate.

- That guidance is needed about the use of tents and other dwellings in public places by rough sleepers and what services can be called upon for assistance.
- That Street Link is slow in sending reports to all Local Authorities, and the problems associated with other services for rough sleepers.

ACTIONS:

1. Information to be provided to the Committee about the request from the Secretary of State regarding category 1 and 2 hazards in privately rented sector homes, what the Council is doing with its own housing stock, and the response the Council provided.
2. Information about where the Council is the most exposed in being able to deliver the repairs service and how the ability to deliver is affected with the rising costs of labour and materials.
3. Information to be provided to the Committee about the 10-year residency point scheme and how residents are informed, would apply, and are granted points at 10 years.
4. Information to be provided to the Committee about what company will be used to cover and improve security measures on the estates.
5. Data to be provided to the Committee (if available) on the increase (if any) in bigger / more complex repairs because of weather conditions, the types of repairs, and whether there has been a spike in these repairs.
6. Information to be provided about the Mozart Housing Surgery.

6. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE ACTION, REGENERATION AND RENTERS (Councillor Matt Noble)

- 6.1 The Committee received an update from Councillor Matt Noble, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters, on priorities for the portfolio and any updates that have arisen. The Cabinet Member responded to questions on the following topics:
 - Short term lets and a potential compulsory licensing or registration scheme and possible funding to devote more resources.
 - Gathering evidence and assistance from the public in order to expedite issues around short term lets.
 - Data on air quality, including the number of statutory air quality monitoring devices, and assistance and advice for residents.
 - The Councils plans and priorities on regeneration of business properties versus residential properties in each ward, as well as the regeneration of other community infrastructure.

- The Environmental Justice Measure indicators across the City and what will be done with this information, such as, informing the Councils priorities and opportunities for funding.
- Funding from the GLA (Greater London Authority), the dates for commencing construction in sites such as Church St and Ebury Bridge estates, the markers that need to be satisfied, and other regeneration work that will be carried out alongside construction.
- Mandatory House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licencing and other licencing applications.
- An update on the plans at Lillington Estate.
- Green Doctors and how residents are being informed about it, such as, energy efficiency, the available information in leisure and community centres, and interventions such as warm spaces and the hardship fund.

ACTIONS:

1. That information will be provided to the Committee about how the information received from the Environmental Justice Indicators across the borough are used to rectify and implement plans to deal with the issues highlighted.
2. That the Committee will receive a briefing about Green Doctors so this information can be disseminated to residents by Councillors.
3. That information be provided to the Committee about the Warm Public Spaces and Places initiative in the borough and where they are located.

7. EBURY REGENERATION PROJECT AND SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH ESTATE REGENERATION.

7.1 The Chair welcomed Gelina Menville (Head of Regeneration) and Martin Crank (Communications and Engagement Manager - Regeneration and Development) to introduce the report on the Councils' regeneration programme of the Ebury Bridge Estate and provide an overview of the report. The Head of Regeneration and the Communications and Engagement Manager - Regeneration and Development, responded to questions on the following topics:

- The responsibilities of the Council and officers to residents in the regeneration process, as well as ensuring they have active participation and knowledge in the process and facilities.
- The challenges for residents in a regeneration project, such as Ebury Bridge, particularly those residents with longevity on the estate, the relationship with residents, and the ballot process.
- The schedule of existing tenants and new leaseholders returning to the site, including, the number and different types of accommodation that will be available, and the quantity of affordable housing.
- Design features of the estate, such as, availability of natural light, mechanical ventilation and low-carbon heating, insulation, open spaces and balconies,

resident parking and disabled and emergency services access, and interior features for elderly or residents with mobility issues.

- Sustainability and biodiversity features of the estate and the savings and efficiency that is created.
- How the new estate features fit in with the local community framework and facilities and the potential social costs with the development, including feedback from residents and social cohesion considerations.
- The valuation process of the properties, when this was carried out, the price points available, and any potential risk implications to the Council, including, how the affordable housing and private housing sections will be set out on the estate and provision of loans to residents.
- The facilities on the estate and relevant service charges.
- Potential training and employment opportunities created.

8. 2022/2023 WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 The Committee reviewed potential items to be prioritised for the 2022/23 work programme.

8.3 The Committee agreed the following items to be considered for the remaining two rounds of this municipal year's Work Programme:

- Temporary accommodation
- Out of Area Housing
- An update on the PDHU (Pimlico District Heating Undertaking)
- Future funding for housing retrofitting
- Homelessness and the Rough Sleeping Commissioning strategy

8.4 The Committee agreed that future potential items for 2023/24 would be considered by the Committee and reviewed prior to the next Committee meeting.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 The Committee agreed there were no other business items to be discussed.

10. TERMINATION OF MEETING

10.1 The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____



City of Westminster

Climate Action, Regeneration and Housing Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2 March 2023
Portfolio: Housing Services
The Report of: Councillor Liza Begum
Report Author and Contact Details: Alexandra Deolinda Severino

adseverino@westminster.gov.uk

1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 7 December 2022:

- No decisions have been taken in this period.

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date:

2.1. Rough Sleeping Update

Our last street count took place on 1 February 2023 where we recorded 182 individuals, down from 250 as recorded in November 2022. Reductions were recorded across all demographics as compared to the last November street count. Area trends show a majority of rough sleepers seen throughout the borough localised on the Strand / Embankment, Victoria North, Pimlico and Soho. Major trends are as follows below:

- UK and ROI Nationals – A decrease to **59** from 76
- EEA Nationals – A decrease to **63** from 113
- Rest of the World - A decrease to **12** from 20

During the count 36 tents were recorded across the borough, but it was noted at least 15 appeared to be unoccupied. Though tents do act as a hindrance to our approach to dealing with homelessness/ rough-sleeping and makes it difficult for police and others to properly identify those residing in tents, there is currently no specific legislation with regards to the removal of tents, where a tent is clearly being used/contains personal belongings and is not causing an obstruction.

2.2. Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

The aim of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) is to prevent loss of life and to reduce rough sleeping during extreme weather conditions (below 0°C). Everyone who is sleeping rough or experiencing homelessness in Westminster has the opportunity to come in to one of our hotels listed below and engage with our services who are there to help.

In line with previous practice, we have been working collaboratively with partners this winter to ensure additional winter pressure funding is implemented effectively across the Rough Sleeping

Service with our aim to reduce the numbers of homeless rough sleepers. This year we will access up to three separate hotels between November 2022 and March 2023. The hotels we will operate are:

- **St Giles** Bedford Avenue, London WC1B 3GH (West End)
- **The London** 32 Sussex Gardens, London W2 1UL (Hyde Park)
- **Comfort Inn** 73 Queensborough Terrace, London W2 3SU (Bayswater)

2.3. Anti-Social Behaviour Update

Open ASB Cases	Total – 185 cases West – 36 cases South – 60 cases South – 60 cases North – 48 cases Central – 41 cases
Top 3 Categories (No. of cases)	Noise – 47 cases Verbal abuse / harassment – 42 cases Drug use / dealing – 40 cases
Top 3 Wards/Estates	Mozart / Lydford & Avenue Gardens – 21 cases Pimlico – 18 cases Church street – 16 cases
ASB Case Handling Resident Satisfaction	Year to date - 65% (as of January 2023)
Number of Legal Cases	40 (including cases waiting for court hearing dates)

2.4. Update on Moving Estate Security Pilot

On 28 November 2022 we began a roaming security pilot and appointed The Way Forward Services (TWF Services) to support the programme. As part of the pilot 4 key estates were identified to benefit from the service, Lisson Green, Hallfield Estate, Lydford Estate and Lillington and Longmore with flexibility to move the service to other areas of concern as identified by the Housing ASB team, Housing Management and Estate Services.

The service runs 7 days per week and shifts are 10 hours long, with hours of operation from 6pm to 4am, but there will be some shifts held at an earlier time so that joint visits with local Housing teams or the Police can also take place. The service consists of two uniformed patrol officers (SIA licensed) in a dedicated branded patrol vehicle. They will be equipped with mobile devices enabling constant communication, to log any issues, and their whereabouts during shifts.

The officers are to patrol designated blocks and estates to identify, remedy and deter Anti-social Behaviour (ASB). It is important to note that the service is not intended to be a policing enforcement role when dealing with ASB, as the main objective of the pilot is to observe, deter and gather intelligence, communicate where it is safe to do so and inform relevant Council teams and local law enforcement of any conflict, to enable them to formulate a plan to alleviate any issues. We plan to consult with relevant Residents Associations and Ward Members within the last month of the pilot (May-June 2023) to seek feedback about the service. At that point a decision will be made on the possibility of extending the pilot for a further 6 months.

2.5. Temporary Accommodation

We have recently purchased 68 properties linked to the Right to Buy Back programmes (RTBB) including all properties purchased in borough, either for use as social rented or temporary accommodation. From this activity to date we have benefited from a £5 million grant from the Greater London Authority (GLA) under the RTBB programme. An additional 27 properties are agreed with vendors in borough that will also be included in the RTBB programmes with a further 10 in negotiations. Once we have delivered our full allocation of 88 units under the RTBB our GLA grant will be raised to £6.3 million in support of our efforts to house those who need it throughout the City.

2.6. Repairs Service Update

At the time of writing (15 February) the Repairs Teams currently has a total of 3,817 live repairs in the system with 2,794 of those being routine repairs and 692 being classified as urgent. A majority of the repairs that are currently live regard plumbing, carpentry, electric and painting works. Currently our estates with the highest concentration of repairs are Churchill Gardens, Mozart, Little Venice, Queen's Park and Lillington & Longmore.

Since January 2023 we have had completed 3,973 repairs of which 1,652 jobs were raised as a 4 hour or 24-hour priority which all require follow on jobs as we only attend and make safe under this priority. Officers continue to work with residents and contractors to ensure all repairs are completed in a safe and timely manner.

2.7. Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) Update

Cross-Cabinet discussions continue to progress regarding the future of the PDHU network which provides heating and hot water to 3,306 homes and 50 commercial units and schools. The Council currently spends £1.97 million per year maintaining and repairing the network and a further £1.7 million on flat repairs related to PDHU. We are in the process of separating Morgan House which will reduce water pressure from the PDHU network resulting in fewer leaks. A full substantive item on PDHU will be brought to the April date of this Committee.

2.8. Managing Mould and Damp

Each winter Housing residents across Westminster struggle to keep condensation and mould out of their homes. This is a particular challenge in homes with insufficient insulation, heating and ventilation, and this year the problem is compounded by the cost-of-living crisis. To help with this problem, we are trialling innovative solutions such as rolling out a pilot of 300 condensation sensors in Council owned properties, and we have invested £2.2 million in Specialist Ventilation systems over the last three years to address mould and condensation in 3,500 homes across the City, with a further 750K allocated for 22/23 financial year to install systems in an additional 420 homes.

We encourage our housing tenants to report damp, condensation, and mould. We advertise both a telephone number and an online form to be completed on our website to resolve these issues. Once the issue has been reported, we will be in touch within three working days to arrange a visit.

2.9. Fire and Building Safety Update

As a requirement of the new Building Safety Act 2022 all multi-occupied residential buildings have regulations that require the Council as the responsible person to provide residents with fire safety instructions and information on the importance of fire doors. Housing Officers have already begun planning for these changes and have a robust plan in place to ensure we are going above and beyond to keep our tenants and leaseholders safe.

A brief summary of new requirements is as follows, in high-rise residential buildings the Council will be required to provide up-to-date electronic and hard copy building plans / information about the design and materials of the external wall system for the local Fire and Rescue Service and inform them of any material changes to these walls. We will undertake monthly checks on the operation of lifts intended for use by firefighters, and evacuation lifts in the building and check the functionality of other key pieces of firefighting equipment and install signage visible in low light or smoky conditions that identifies flat and floor numbers in the stairwells of relevant buildings.

In all multi-occupied residential buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises, the Council will provide relevant fire safety instructions to their residents, which will include instructions on how to report a fire, and provide residents with information relating to the importance of fire doors in fire safety.

2.10. Housing Surgeries

Talks continue to progress on the creation of additional localised Housing estate offices and creating more frequent Housing surgeries throughout the borough. Currently drop-in Housing surgeries are taking place at the following dates and times:

- Lillington and Longmore Residents Hall: Tuesdays 10am to 1pm
- Soho & Covent Garden Estate Office: Wednesdays 9am to 12pm
- Beethoven Centre: The first and third Monday of every month 2pm to 4.30pm

2.11. Community Thursday's Update

Since the Community Thursday's initiative began on 9 June 2022, as of 1 February 2023, there have been several key highlights to note. We have visited 78 estates across 17 wards, knocked on roughly 8,000 doors and spoken to nearly 3,000 residents. 201 different officers across the Growth, Planning and Housing Service have joined these walkabouts in an active effort to be more visible in our communities.

All frontline Housing Officers now have access to Rapid (our mobile reporting solution) ensuring swifter and better monitoring of issues being reported. We will be further integrating Rapid into existing systems to improve functionality and tracking cases, adding risk flags, and capturing feedback from residents. We have taken on feedback and improved communications for Community Thursdays, with posters, texting residents in advance and full information on a website page advertising the future programme of dates/estates, and we are continuously improving the calling cards given to residents with more useful information and will add the local Housing Officer's details.



City of Westminster

Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	2 March 2023
Portfolio:	Climate Action, Regeneration & Renters
The Report of:	Councillor Matt Noble
Report Author and Contact Details:	Alexandra Deolinda Severino adseverino@westminster.gov.uk

1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 7 December 2022:

- 07/12/2022 - Review of Fees for House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licences
- 16/01/2023 - Ebury Estate Renewal – Delivery Strategy & Viability Position – Called-in on 23/01/2023
- 23/01/2023 - Church Street Procurement Strategy
- 23/01/2023 - MEES Plus Grant Policy
- 13/02/2023 - Westminster Community Homes (WCH) Revised Funding Arrangements

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date.

2.1. Climate Action

2.2. Sustainable City Charter Update

The Sustainable City Charter which aims to encourage Westminster businesses of any shape or size to reduce the City's carbon footprint has currently 49 expressions of interest and 11 full Charter participants since its launch on 15 November. We and the Westminster Property Association (WPA) continue to promote the Charter on our corporate channels and are currently developing an improved public relations pack for our partners.

2.3. Climate Essentials for Business

Climate Essentials for Business provides free tools and support to help businesses work towards net zero emissions, which includes an online platform to calculate your carbon footprint, a report outlining your emissions and reduction strategy, an energy audit of your premises and crucially access to networks of like-minded businesses. Seven small businesses in Westminster have signed up for the pilot and attended the first onboarding sessions.

2.4. Energy Advice & Support (Green Doctors)

A Warm Homes Advice Service is available this year and will be provided by a company called Groundwork. Following receipt of a referral, Green Doctors will visit the occupant to provide energy advice. This service is available to anyone over the age of 65, on a low income or who has a long-

term health condition or disability. Housing Colleagues will reach out the Green Doctors and ask if they would be willing to join CAB Housing Surgeries and engage with residents face-to-face. As of January, 142 households have received Green Doctor support over the 2022/23 financial year. The Green Doctors will explain how to make your home energy efficient, can install energy saving devices and offer impartial advice on switching energy providers. They can also support by helping to switch your energy tariff, supporting with accessing the Warm Homes Discount or Priority Services Register, support with applications for energy or water debt relief, and can provide referrals for the installation of larger energy saving measures if needed. Further information on the Green Doctors including how to register for a consultation can be found on our Council Website or on their website at <https://london.greendoctors.org.uk/>.

2.5. Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) Update

Our new Fairer Westminster strategy highlights the Council's ambition to take action on climate change with the aim of becoming a net zero Council by 2030. PDHU accounts for over a third of the Council's direct emissions making it a key focus area for emission reduction. PDHU is a critically important asset due to its significant economic, environment and political impact. Cross-Cabinet discussions are ongoing regarding the future of PDHU, however, it is noted there are several strategic reasons to invest PDHU such as to improve the overall condition of the network which will result in fewer leaks, and to become more energy efficient specifically in regards to the energy price crisis.

2.6. Biodiversity Update

I am pleased to announce we have now been recognised by the Pesticide Action Network for our work in banning the use of glyphosates on our estates and all Council owned land. The Green Infrastructure Audit Tender Applications closed in early February and are now being assessed. We hope to receive recommendations on planting and further opportunities for biodiversity and greening in Westminster with the results of the submission.

Officers are currently working on consolidating greening and biodiversity activity, opportunities, and advice into one webpage on the Council's main website, which will include how individuals can contribute individually to these aims. Officers are also in discussions with other Local Authorities including City, H&F, and RBKC to discuss ecological expertise and recruitment.

3. Regeneration

3.1. Updates to the Truly Affordable Housing Strategy

Work continues to progress at pace with work on the Truly Affordable Housing Strategy which aims to align the Council's own housing delivery with the Fairer Westminster programme and help to meet the demands of the housing waiting list by increasing the number of truly affordable homes in the borough.

Currently we have converted an additional 143 units in our Development Programme to Council homes for social rent as a result of our initial Truly Affordable Housing Strategy changes. These units are comprised from our development sites at Luton Street, Ashbridge, Luxborough, 300 Harrow Road, Torridon, West End Gate and Westmead. With those initial changes including homes we have purchased for social rent use under the Right to Buy Back Scheme, changes to tenure at Church Street Site A and Ebury Bridge our total stock of social rent homes has risen to 1,600 in our current Development Programme.

3.2. Church Street Programme Update

The successful Church Street Residents Ballot on Sites A, B and C ran from 28th November – 20th December. 73% of voting residents in neighbourhoods known as sites A, B and C voted yes in favour of the proposals for the regeneration. With a voter turnout of 56% which includes residents who have moved off the estate but have the ‘right to return’, a positive result means the council is now able to move forward with plans to build new high quality, affordable homes by unlocking funding from the Greater London Authority, create new pedestrianised routes and high quality green public spaces, create new community facilities, play spaces and a new, enhanced library, and create new jobs and training opportunities. The Church Street Regeneration Programme will deliver around 1,100 homes overall, including the replacement of all existing council homes at social rent levels, and genuinely affordable homes will make up over 50% of the homes delivered in the scheme.

3.3. Ebury Programme Update

Residents were asked their view on revised plans as Westminster City Council held a resident ballot on the Ebury Bridge estate. The ballot ran from 23 January – 13 February, and residents voted yes in favour of the plans with a voter turnout rate of 66.7%. Although the regeneration of the estate is already underway, the Council wanted to give residents the final say on how the scheme will be delivered and a chance to endorse the Council’s proposals to increase the number of new affordable homes for social rent.

3.4. 300 Harrow Road

Following change of tenure resulting from the Truly Affordable Housing Strategy, this scheme will now be delivered as a 100% affordable scheme, providing 77 social rent homes and 35 intermediate tenure homes. A funding bid seeking £9.3 million additional affordable housing grant has been made and has been approved in principle by the Greater London Authority (GLA). Construction continues on site with initial handover work underway with a particular focus on landscape, external and highways works to ensure a smooth transition to the next phases of work.

3.5. 291 Harrow Road

The recently acquired 291 Harrow Road site located in Westbourne Green/Maida Hill and is part of the Harrow Road Place Plan. It consists of 24 specialist housing units leased from the National Health Service (NHS) to Westminster Society & Yarrow Housing and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). The site is currently undergoing a feasibility study and we are reviewing three architect’s proposals to redevelop the site into a high-quality mixed-use scheme, which will include improved landscaping, connectivity to the canal, transport connections, and enable future opportunities for Ascot House.

3.6. Torrison Development Update

On Friday 13 January, a letter was issued to all local residents inviting them to a public meeting which took place on Thursday 19 January at Tollgate House Residents Hall to discuss concerns around the Torrison Development project. The letter signposted residents to the most recent RSK compilation report which is accessible via the Torrison website – with a high level summary of safety measures/working practices.

The council carries out rigorous safety checks prior to any development to make sure soil on a construction sites is completely safe before works begin. We recognise there are very low levels of contaminates in the soil. This is normal for a construction site in an urban area such as London. We would like to offer reassurance that the small risk posed by these contaminates has been carefully considered and mitigated against. They do not pose a health risk to residents in the surrounding area during construction or in the future.

4. Renters

4.1. Private Rented Sector (PRS) Charter Update

Officers continue to meet our PRS Working Group monthly which is comprised of registered providers, cross-Council services, and advocacy groups. During our late January meeting officers noted that stakeholders across the board are seeing very high rents in Westminster, which is a local and national trend.

As a part of the Fairer Westminster Strategy, this group continues to work on our Private Rented Sector Charter and is discussing what to include in the Charter such as key facts, current legislation, and where tenants can seek help / advice.

4.2. Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)

The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations set a minimum energy efficiency level for domestic private rented properties. In early January 2023 we launched our MEES Plus Grant Policy pilot scheme which will offer financial support to landlords to make energy efficiency improvements to their properties in line with the criteria set out by the MEES Plus Grant Policy.

Our adoption of the MEES Plus Grant Policy aims to deliver carbon savings that would not have occurred through MEES enforcement alone, provide a case study on how to overcome unique challenges to Westminster's ageing housing stock, complex mix of listed buildings and conservation areas, future proof Westminster properties to comply with a potentially increasing minimum energy efficiency standard (EPC E to C) and to inform future strategy, policy development and service delivery toward achieving net zero 2040.

We have secured £158,149 from the Carbon Offset Fund to apply the pilot to approximately 8-10 properties. Two of the guiding principles for the administration of grants are that landlords are expected to match fund works and grants will be capped at £10,000 per property (excluding landlord contribution).



City of Westminster

Committee Report

Meeting or Decision Maker:	Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date:	2 nd March 2023
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Provision of Temporary Accommodation to meet needs of Homeless Households
Wards Affected:	All
Policy Context:	Maximising the availability of quality accommodation in and close to the borough to meet housing need thus delivering Fairer Westminster commitments
Financial Summary:	The gross Housing General Fund homelessness budget for 2022/23 is £54.5m. Of this sum approximately £48.1m relates to the provision of temporary accommodation
Report of:	Debbie Jackson – Executive Director of Growth, Planning and Housing

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the issues that drive the provision and management of Temporary Accommodation (TA).

Part A: Introduction and Policy Framework

- 1.2 This section sets out the key policy framework that determines how TA is allocated. The policies reflect the challenges in securing accommodation, which is affordable to households on low incomes, both in Westminster and across London, whether to prevent homelessness or to provide TA. The overall strategy remains to increase the supply of good quality accommodation available for households in housing need, maximising the availability of this in and close to Westminster and then across London.

Part B: Funding Temporary Accommodation

- 1.3 This section describes the financial arrangements for TA, the gross and net costs to the Council and the rent charging regime that determines the Council's income which has remained at the same level (per property) since 2011.

Part C: Demand for Temporary Accommodation and Moving on

- 1.4 The demand for TA is driven by numbers of households in housing need approaching the Council's Housing Solutions Service for assistance and requiring housing. This section sets out the changing demands, the main causes of homelessness and projections for the future. Also illustrated are the levels of homeless rehousing into social housing and a brief summary of homeless prevention initiatives.

Part D: The Supply of Temporary Accommodation

- 1.5 A summary of how the Council secures TA and the different organisations that are engaged to supply accommodation including Registered Providers, Charities and voluntary sector organisations and the private sector. From this a summary of the location of TA and breakdowns of provision by bedsize and waiting times.

Part E: Directly Purchasing Accommodation

- 1.6 A summary of the TA purchase programme and the plans to expand this to invest an additional £168m 2023 – 27 to purchase an additional 270 homes

Part F: The provision of support to households and meeting quality standards of Temporary Accommodation

- 1.7 A summary of how the Council manages standards in TA and supports residents

Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The report describes the supply and demand for Temporary Accommodation across Westminster, how the accommodation is sourced, the make-up of the stock and standards delivered and households supported. The Committee is asked to consider how accommodation to meet housing need can best be delivered in the future

1. Part A: Introduction and Policy Framework

1.1 The purpose of this briefing is to provide an overview of the supply and demand for Temporary Accommodation (TA), the challenges in meeting the need and the options for changing the mix and location of TA. The Council has a statutory duty to provide suitable accommodation to meet demand and so must be able to maintain sufficient emergency and long-term TA to meet demand. The function for determining homelessness duties and the provision of TA is carried out under contract by the Homelessness Solutions Service (HSS) a part of the Residential Management Group (RMG) whose parent company is Places for People.

1.2 Provision of TA poses significant challenges for all London boroughs in terms of:

- securing sufficient accommodation to meet demand
- providing affordable accommodation
- ensuring good standards
- managing the overall cost to the General Fund

1.3 When a household is placed into TA following a homeless application there are two types of accommodation provided:

- Stage 1 accommodation generally used for households who require somewhere else to live whilst HSS try to relieve their homelessness and pending an assessment of a homeless application. It is short-term emergency accommodation which allows for a comprehensive assessment of the household circumstances so that the Council can prevent homelessness wherever possible and consider whether it has a full statutory housing duty under the housing legislation.
- Stage 2 It is longer term, more settled temporary accommodation which is provided where we can't relieve homelessness and we have a main homelessness duty. Households can bid for social housing through Choice Based Lettings and/or be offered private rented sector accommodation.

1.4 It is a statutory requirement that TA is suitable for homeless households in terms of size, cost, and location. Every unit must comply with the Council's TA Standards, which have developed over time with environmental health services and in line with legislation. Suppliers of TA are required to meet these standards, to routinely inspect the properties, with photographs taken. In addition, the Council has signed up to the pan London 'Setting the Standards' inspection regime of short-term and studio accommodation. HSS also has a rolling programme of inspections.

2. Policy Framework

- 2.1 This section sets out the key policy framework that determines how TA is allocated. The policies reflect the challenges in securing accommodation, which is affordable to households on low incomes, both in Westminster and across London, whether to prevent homelessness or to provide TA. The overall strategy remains to increase the supply of good quality accommodation available for households in housing need, maximising the availability of this in Westminster and then across London.
- 2.2 The annual *Supply and Allocation of Social housing Report* reviews the demand for and supply of social rented housing and low-cost home ownership and considers supply and demand projections for the coming year. The report makes proposals for the allocation of the supply of social housing to meet the Council's statutory obligations, meet the varying demands for social housing and to reduce the numbers of people living in TA. The report sets out projected supply and the proposed allocation of social housing for the next year. This reflects the demand from homeless households for social housing such that over 80% of lettings of 2 bed and larger properties to housing register applicants are to homeless households in TA.
- 2.3 The policies that determine how properties are procured and allocated are:
- The *Accommodation Placement Policy* prioritises homeless households in three location Bands (Band 1 is Westminster and adjoining boroughs, Band 2 is Greater London and Band 3 is anywhere outside Greater London.) Given the limited supply of properties the criteria for Bands 1 and 2 were based around health and welfare needs which were agreed with Adults and Children's Services and Counsel. This needs-based approach was to help ensure those with the highest welfare needs had the best chance of remaining in Westminster with every household having a Personal Housing Plan as a legal requirement.
 - The *Accommodation Procurement Policy* sets out the challenges in obtaining sufficient TA to meet demand, which is affordable to households (within benefit levels) and to the Council (within TA subsidy levels). It includes an action plan to provide sufficient accommodation to meet demand and the principles the Council will follow when procuring private sector properties.

3. Part B: Funding Temporary Accommodation

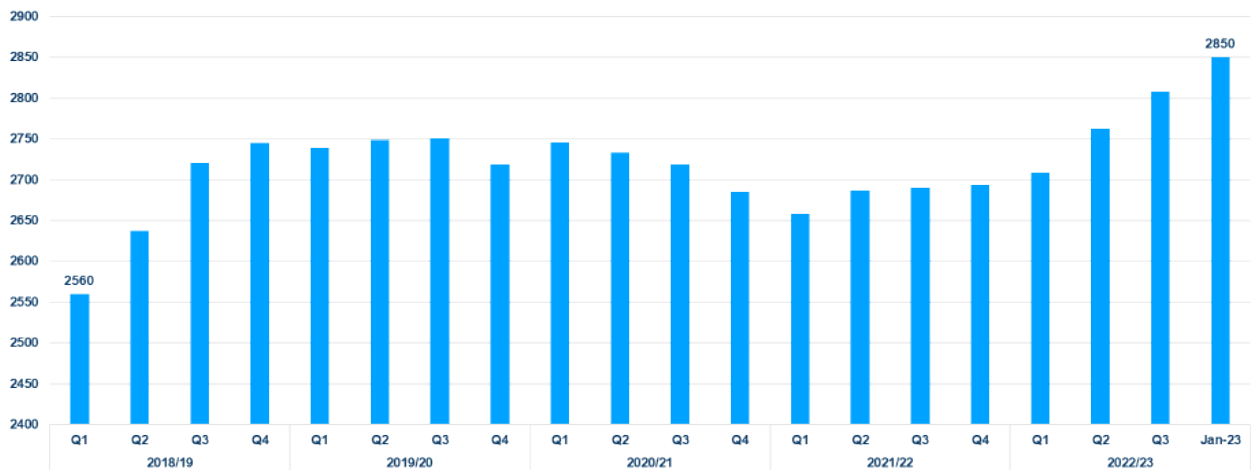
- 3.1 TA is managed as a trading account reflecting the government set model for the provision of TA with the Council paying money to suppliers for accommodation and charging households rent for the property, which can be claimed if eligible from Housing Benefits.
- 3.2 The level of charges to households is through a government set formula of 90% of the 2011 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) subject to a cap of £500 per week. Up to 2017 this formula also included a management fee allocation of £40 per week, reflecting the costs of property management. This is now paid through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which is ring fenced for homeless prevention activities and is annually paid in lump sum by the Department for Housing Levelling up and Communities.
- 3.3 This formula has remained unchanged since 2011 notwithstanding the increase in private sector market and management costs. As a result, given the statutory duty to provide suitable accommodation and the challenges of sourcing this within the current market, there is a trading deficit on TA, which is a direct cost to the general fund:
- 3.4 When negotiating cost levels with suppliers, the core market advantage the Council has is the guaranteed income from a public body. However, the increasing strength of the private rented sector market has eroded this advantage over time with property owners having a wider choice of tenants.
- 3.5 In addition, larger schemes for several households (e.g. Newman Street (close to Oxford Circus) that provides 76 self-contained studio units for single households, Look Ahead's Southwark Bridge Road scheme, Frampton Street managed by NHG) require 24 hour staff cover, reflecting the complex needs of the single homeless and the importance of providing a safe environment. Provision of such management is at an additional cost to the Council.
- 3.6 Most properties are leased for periods of 3-5 years and then renewed. The market has made it increasingly challenging to renew leases on existing properties at the same or similar terms as when a lease was originally taken out, given the alternatives that owners have and the level of private sector market rents. There are significant challenges procuring affordable TA which meets the needs of larger households, particularly when they have mobility issues.
- 3.7 The latest projections indicate that WCC will spend over £58m on TA in 2022/23. Income has only risen in line with the number of households in TA, and as such, the overall pressure the Council faces, primarily driven by increased lease costs, is projected to be over £7.5m this financial year.

4. Part C: Temporary Accommodation demand

4.1 The demand for temporary accommodation is complex. Most, but not all, households who approach WCC as homeless are placed into TA. This excludes those cases where we can negotiate additional time to stay or prevent homelessness where someone is staying with friends or family or privately renting. In addition to this a very small number will not be provided TA pending a full decision, but this is exceptional. The chart below sets out the change in total TA since 2018

Key Issues:

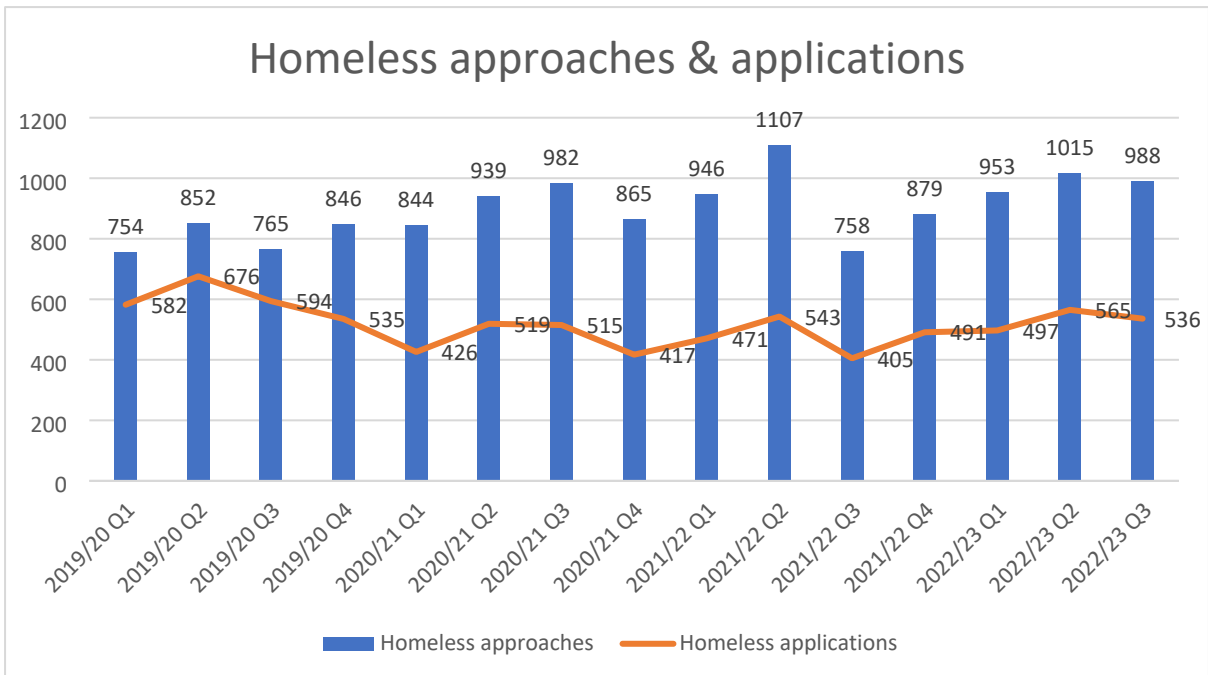
Increasing numbers in Temporary Accommodation



**As measure at the end of the quarter*

4.2 Approximately 18-20 households per week are placed in Stage 1 emergency short-term accommodation whilst we seek to prevent homelessness whilst assessing the homeless application.

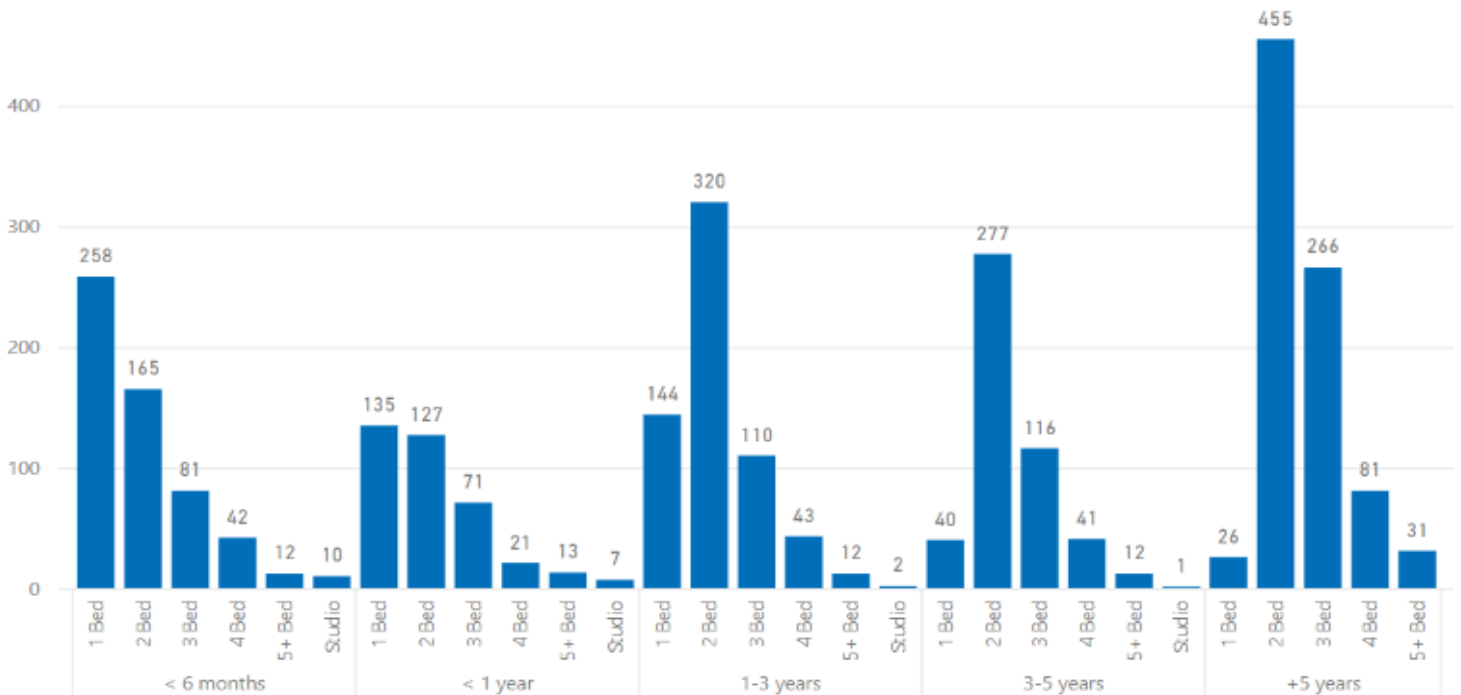
4.3 The figures for those accepted as homeless are therefore lower than those placed into TA, and it is these accepted cases that we have an enduring duty to provide temporary accommodation to. The table shows that over the last ten years we accepted almost 6,000 households



4.4 Length of time living in TA

The following table summarises the length of stay of households in TA. The length of time living in TA varies greatly according to the property size, reflecting the availability of larger properties in the local housing market.

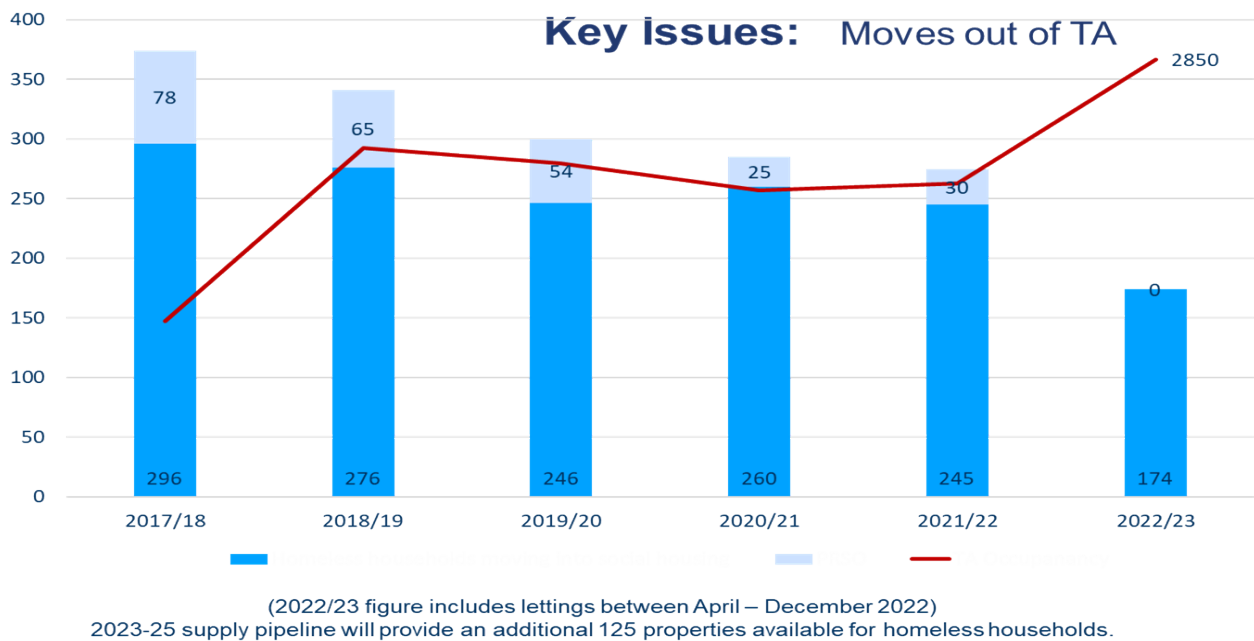
Time spent in current tenancy by Bedsize_Grouping



4.5 Moves out of TA

The principal route to move out of TA is into social housing to end the Council's homelessness duty and the table below sets out the number of moves into social housing by homeless households since 2017. Properties are allocated in line with the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme with generally bids for properties submitted through Choice Based Lettings. The Allocations Policy itself is being reviewed during 2023.

It should be noted that, reflecting the profile of social housing in Westminster, the majority of moves of homeless households into social housing is into smaller units due to availability which is not the same as the profile of acceptances into TA, driving the longer waiting times for larger homes.



4.6 Temporary Accommodation Forecasts

Forecasting total TA is complex reflecting the wide range of supply and demand with the principal factors below:

- 18% increase in approaches since 20/21
- Average monthly placements increased by 22% from 54 in 2021/22 to 66

4.7 Factors driving the increase in TA

- Increase in rents leading to rent arrears and homelessness
- Increase in singles and Domestic Abuse

- New demand e.g. Ukrainian families, cost of living crisis - opportunity to maximise new £500m Local Authority Housing Fund
- It's harder to prevent homelessness – negotiation with existing landlords, friends and family
- Fewer households moving out – fewer being rehoused or voluntary moves to the Private Rented Sector (PRS)

4.8.1 Regional and national trends

- 36% increase in homeless presentations in the North London Sub Region (October 2021 – October 2022)
- An increasing need to use commercial hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation. Jan-Oct 2022 there were 1,010 placements into commercial hotels across the sub region which was 21% of all placements at an average cost of £90pn, rising to £210pn in central London.
- The Inter Borough Accommodation Agreement (IBAA) is a pan London agreement between boroughs setting the maximum amounts that can be paid for emergency accommodation in each borough. Breaches of the agreement have significantly increased. In 2022 between Jan and March there was 3.74% increase in the average % paid above the agreed rates, April to June 10.9% and July to Sept an 18.4% increase

4.9 Contracting private rented sector

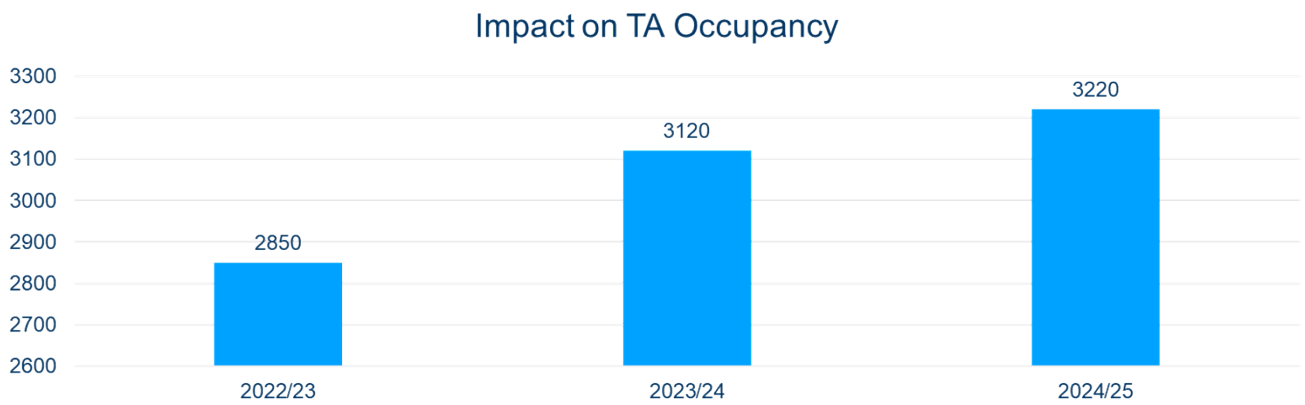
- WCC is very reliant on the Private Rented Sector leased (PRS) for its TA, with a lower supply of nightly charged PRS, compared to other local authorities.
- The general PRS market is contracting as landlords are moving out of the market - tax changes, possible change to PRS legislation
- 35% decrease in available PRS properties recorded in Q1 2022 (Source: Savills Report as commissioned by Capital Letters, 2022)
- 46% decrease in the number of PRS units procured in October 2022 compared to October 2021 (London School of Economics (LSE) Sub Region report) 2022
- Only 8.8% of all available properties listed for rent were affordable on LHA (Source: Savills report commissioned by CL, 2022)

4.10 More reliance on B&B and increasingly commercial hotels

- Sub regionally there was a 43% increase in use of B&B and commercial hotels (Oct 2021 to Oct 2022)

- In Westminster between January and October 2022 we placed 184 in commercial hotels (34% of all placements) at an average price of £268pn. In the whole of 20/21 the figure was less than 10
- There is also additional competition from other agencies such as the Home Office who procure hotel accommodation across London

The impact of the above is that the total requirement for TA is forecast to rise to c. 3220 by 2025.



5 Part D: Temporary Accommodation supply

5.1 The current 2850 properties used as Temporary Accommodation (TA) are managed by c. 25 different provider organisations with just over 40% in-borough. Most properties are leased for periods of 3-5 years and generally are renewed where demand continues, and properties meet standards. An exercise is currently taking place led by legal services to update all agreements. The financial arrangements are set out in section 3 above with the principal advantage the Council has within the market is the ability to offer management and guaranteed rents (albeit below market levels.) The table below provides a high-level summary of current TA provision followed by more detailed information.

	In Borough		Out of Borough	
	Families	Singles	Families	Singles
Properties leased from Registered Providers (who have leased them from the PRS) *	393	66	208	19
RP and voluntary sector owned	287	73	43	0
Privately Sector Providers (e.g. directly owned blocks and individual properties and leases of single units)	92	111	852	378
Directly purchased units	118	9	122	10
Regeneration Areas	43	18	0	0

* Total numbers of households in TA vary and the reports set out in this paper do show small differences in total numbers according to when the chart was developed; all are recent and there are no significant differences in total numbers

5.2 Registered Providers that supply TA to the Council are principally:

- Notting Hill Genesis who primarily lease accommodation in borough from private landlords for use by the Council as TA
- A2 Dominion who own properties purchased generally in 1990s and early 2000s specifically for use as TA
- Places for People through RMG as providers of the Council's Housing Solutions Service also have a specific function to source and manage some TA. As a result, RMG leases predominantly out of borough properties from private landlords for use as TA

5.3 Private Management companies that either lease accommodation from the private sector for use as TA or own properties directly for use as TA, located principally out of the borough e.g., AJ Bush, Theori, Altwood, Steff and Philips

5.4 Owners of standalone blocks of accommodation, leased to the Council for TA; e.g. Centrica pension fund own Newman Street block; Abbotts emergency accommodation in Willsden

5.5 Voluntary sector organisations who own properties for use as TA e.g., Look Ahead scheme on Southwark Bridge Road; St Mungo’s Francis Street (although this is moving to supported housing under RSI)

5.6 The table below lists our largest suppliers of TA which comprises over 80% of total stock.

Landlord	Units
Notting Hill Genesis	418
A2 Dominion	353
AJ Bush	347
RMG Ltd	267
WCC Owned TA	222
Theori Management	204
Stef & Philips	211
Centrica	76
Westminster Community Homes	55
Total	2112

5.7 The following table breaks down current TA by property size. Most TA is family sized units, 2-bedroom properties accounting for 1300 units and almost 900 properties being 3 bed or larger.

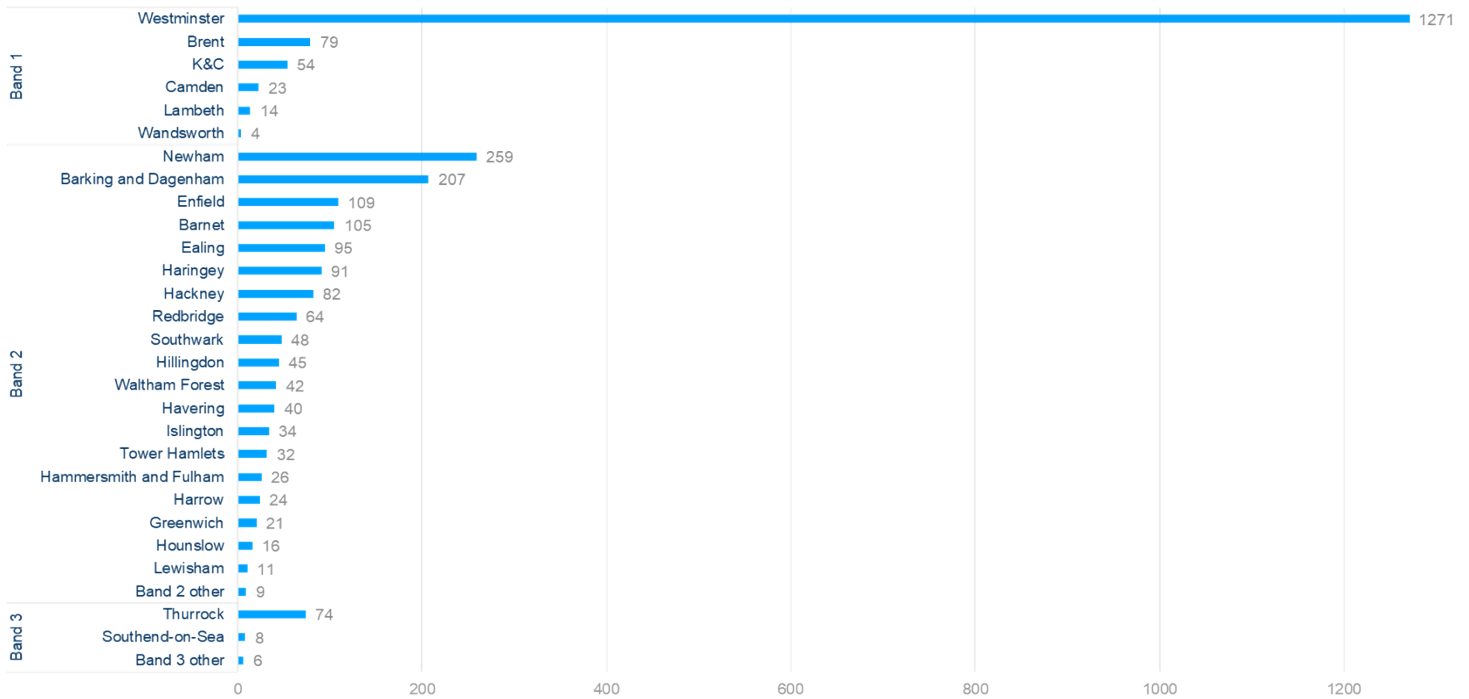
Bed size	Out of Borough	Westminster	Total
Studio/ 1 Bed	331	282	613
2 Bed	696	652	1348
3 Bed	376	265	641
4 Bed	170	58	228
5 Bed +	69	11	80
Total	1642	1268	2910

5.8 43% of Westminster’s TA is located within the borough and the table below breaks down the current provision by borough. 85 properties are located outside

of London, principally in Greys (in Thurrock, Essex). The provision of accommodation outside of the borough is reflective of the limited availability of private sector housing, particularly family sized, available to be leased and purchased for use as TA.

Temporary Accommodation by location

Location of TA



5.9 All London councils place outside of their boroughs, largely driven by cost but also the need to procure quickly. As every borough acquires properties outside their borough London Councils led the development of the pan London agreement on maximum costs and incentives payable, known as the IBBA, and led also to the formation of Capital Letters as the pan London procurement vehicle. More detail on this is included in section 7.

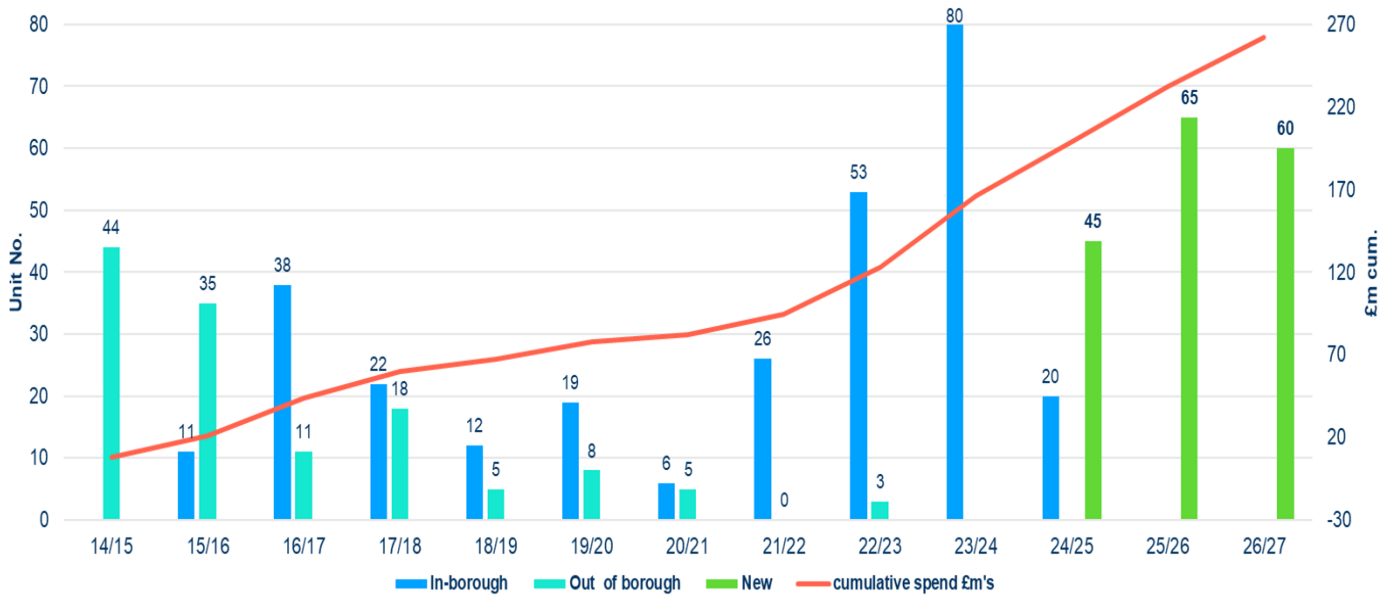
6 Part E: Direct Purchase Scheme

The Council has been directly purchasing properties for use as TA since 2014:

- Since 2014 289 properties purchased, 159 in borough and 130 out of borough at £112.4m
- From 2023 – 26/27 the programme to be significantly expanded to complete a further 270 properties
- Total investment 2023 - 27 £168m, including an £85m uplift in budget

- All properties to be purchased in or near to Westminster with the catchment area currently being defined
- New property purchase team being recruited

The chart below sets out the previous and future property purchase programme details, highlighting the additional investment and delivery of new properties.



7 Part F: The provision of support to households and meeting quality standards of Temporary Accommodation

- 7.1 The Stage 1, Temporary Accommodation (TA) Out of borough Support Pilot is proposed to focus on the immediate housing needs of the family. The service will also address issues that may place the security and stability of the family and household at risk, for example, financial capacity, physical and mental health challenges, and domestic abuse.
- 7.1.1 The expansion of this service through developing a multidisciplinary outreach operations team formed through the expertise of our existing Housing Solutions Service (HSS) and our contracted Floating Support Service (FSS), will provide an intensive support to residents in temporary accommodation to enable them to live more independently.
- 7.2 The resident and family will be supported by a designated families coordinator, who will assess and review the early information of the households' circumstances, consider the cumulative impacts of their placement in TA, location and information relating to their homeless approach, why they have presented to WCC as homeless and to develop a plan from the offer of TA and what heightened support can be offered within a few hours of their accommodation placement.
- 7.3 For some households, signposting to voluntary services such as CAB may be adequate at this stage of the assessment, but this process may also highlight the cumulative factors of the family's needs, children, and travel issues back to Westminster, health needs, language barriers, risks of violence and domestic abuse encountered by the adult, all of which will require the family to receive an immediate referral to the SHP support worker. This will enable face to face meetings, communication, and support to be put in place immediately to ensure a single point of contact for the family is secured and their support offer is consistent and responsive to their needs from the earliest point they take-up the TA placement.
- 7.4 A personal budget plan will be available to the family to ensure additional expenses encountered due to the placement out of borough will be available to support travel costs, essential housing needs and a response to their individual circumstances in the early days and weeks of the placement. This will not be a financial payment to the household but SHP providing vouchers, arranging payments on behalf of the family and sourcing goods and supplies when required. This is to ensure the household's benefits and income is not affected by this source of financial support that will be made available.

7.5 The delivery of this support plan will be key to coordinating the actions with a more flexible approach that can tailor services more easily to the needs of each family. Creating a personal and support plan that includes:

- Provide budgeting advice and income maximisation, including support to obtain bank accounts and ID, debt advice
- Support to access grants and other funding to help families to make applications including food banks, fuel costs etc.,
- Support to claim relevant welfare benefits including Universal Credit
- Options for local schools, new placements for children and access to breakfast and after school arrangements for working families
- Access and support to GPs, NHS registration and services
- Signposting to voluntary and faith organisations
- Transport, operational costs to the family and a management plan to enable options and access to effectively manage this with the family
- Financial assistance through available routes

Each family will be allocated a single key point of contact to manage support while their homelessness application is investigated by HSS and they settle into Stage 1 TA accommodation. Appendix 1, demonstrates the family journey through the process of the pilot.

7.6 The pilot was launched on 9 January 2023 and will operate until 30 June 2023. During this period feedback and communication with families will be completed to establish the key benefits of the work, learning and improvements to be considered.

7.7 Analysis and reporting will be presented to the Cabinet Member in March 2023, to consider future proposals for this service moving forward in 2023, with the financial package required to embed the provision of this service into future TA management. Standards in Temporary Accommodation

Temporary Accommodation Inspections and Standards

7.8 The provision of all TA must be suitable for homeless households in terms of size, cost and location and is a statutory requirement for all local authorities. Every unit must comply with the TA Standards and all the TA Providers are required to meet these standards.

7.9 Once a property becomes void as a re-let and let, the TA Provider must confirm that the property complies with standards and as part of the procedure, a certificate of supply is submitted to Housing Solution Service including property details e.g. gas/ electric certificates etc. Providers are also required to take photographs/ videos of vacant properties before letting. Two examples of photographs submitted are attached

- 7.10 Once a property is let, there is a requirement that properties are inspected by the provider organisation on a regular basis, generally quarterly. Such inspections require arrangements to be made with and the consent of the tenant and provides the opportunity both for the household to raise issues they have and for the supplier to identify and address issues.
- 7.11 In 2020, the Council adopted the Setting the Standard (STS) grading and inspection system as a Pan-London approach to ensure TA, specifically Bed and Breakfast (B&B), Hostels, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and studio apartments used by local authorities meet minimum quality standards. The project links together a dedicated central inspections team, with a purpose-built STS IT system to share data across the participating authorities.
- 7.12 The benefits of the programme include: annual inspections ensuring that all properties meet a suitable and safe property standard across London, properties are suspended from use until the provider can demonstrate the requirements have been met, official accreditation with the Setting the Standard's guidelines and Performance reports on outcomes.
- 7.13 Officers also receive details of inspections undertaken across other boroughs which is helpful in seeing any quality issues elsewhere for organisations supplying Westminster with properties and whether issues with property quality are more widespread
- 7.14 As part of the HSS contract, there is a team of inspection officers that inspect 500 stage 2 (i.e. the longer term TA) properties per year. This team also responds to specific enquiries and complaints by households themselves, ward councillors etc. as required (in addition to the response by the provider organisation themselves)

8. Financial Implications

The financial implications are included within the body of this report, primarily within section 3.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 The council has a duty under the Housing Act 1996 (Part VII), as amended, to ensure that accommodation is made available for homeless applicants who are owed a full housing duty by the council.
- 9.2 Where the council determines under the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 Part VII (as amended) that a person/household is eligible for assistance,

homeless, in priority need and not homeless intentionally, it has a duty to secure suitable accommodation (unless it refers the applicant to another authority under the local connection provisions): s193(2), s206(1). The suitability of accommodation is governed by s210 of the 1996 Act, a number of statutory instruments made under that provision (SIs 1996/3204, 2003/3326 and 2012/2601) and by the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities.

- 9.3 When discharging its housing duties under Part VII, the council must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure that accommodation is available for the applicant's occupation in their own district: s208(1) of the 1996 Act.
- 9.4 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a duty on Local Authorities to intervene at an early stage to help prevent homelessness and take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, not just those in priority need.

10. Carbon Impact

There are no carbon impact implications directly arising from this report. Properties directly purchased by the Council will be at SAP rating B.

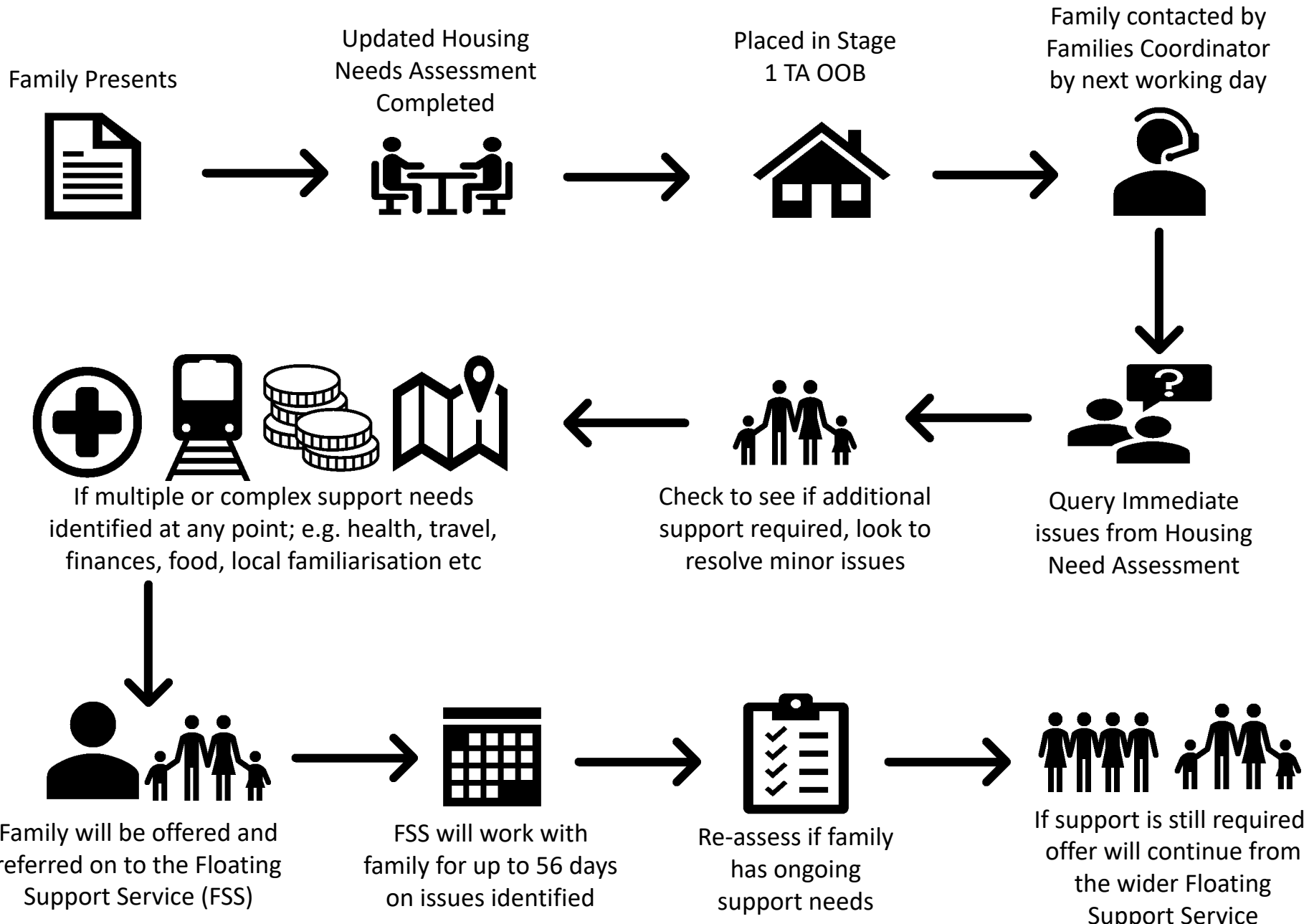
If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact:

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hclarke@westminster.gov.uk

Gregory Roberts – Head of Accommodation and Commissioning;
grobert2@westminster.gov.uk

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Stage 1 Temporary Accommodation Out Of Borough Support Pilot



New post responsible for working with and overseeing new TA placements

Families Coordinator will day review information provided and deal with issues connected to their TA placement. The role will not deal with the families homelessness case as this is managed by the HSS caseworkers

Improved joint working between the Housing Solutions Service and the Floating Support Service, will ensure families receive the support they need in a timely fashion

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Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	2 March 2023
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2022/2023 Work Programme
Report of:	Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison
Cabinet Member Portfolios:	Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Linda Hunting lhunting@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1. This report requests the committee members to consider the work programme for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

2. Meeting dates for the 2022/2023 year

- 2.1 The Committee is advised that the scheduled meeting dates for the 2022/2023 year are:

- 19 April 2023

3. Suggested topics

- 3.1 The Committee's agenda for the meeting on 2 March includes a report on the provision of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless households. The Committee is therefore asked to reflect on and discuss the suggested work programme for the forthcoming meetings.

- 3.2 It is suggested that the Committee may also wish to consider other items currently listed as unallocated to add to future Committee meetings.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact

Linda Hunting, Policy & Scrutiny Advisor

lhunting@westminster.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Work Programme

Appendix 3: Action Tracker

CLIMATE ACTION, HOUSING AND REGENERATION POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMPOSITION

7 Members of the Council (4 Majority Party Members and 3 Opposition Party Members).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(a) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny functions, as set out in Chapter 4 of the Constitution in respect of matters relating to all those duties within the terms of reference of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Housing Services and the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters.

(b) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny function in respect of matters within the remit of the Council's non-executive Committees and Sub-Committees, which are within the broad remit of the Committee, in accordance with paragraphs 18.2 and 18.3 as well as section 19 of Chapter 4 of the Constitution.

(c) Matters within the broad remit of the Cabinet Members referred to in (a) above which are the responsibility of external agencies.

(d) Any other matter allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.

(e) To have the power to establish ad hoc or Standing Sub-Committees as Task Groups to carry out the scrutiny of functions within these terms of reference.

(f) To scrutinise the duties of the Lead Members which fall within the remit of the Committee or as otherwise allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.

(g) To scrutinise any Bi-borough proposals which impact on service areas that fall within the Committee's terms of reference.

(h) To oversee any issues relating to Performance within the Committee's terms of reference.

(i) To have the power to scrutinise those partner organisations under a duty to that are relevant to the remit of the Committee.

(j) To consider any Councillor Calls for Action referred by a Ward Member to the Committee.

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Appendix 2 - Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

ROUND 5 2 March 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Matt Noble, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing Raj Mistry, Executive Director of Environment and City Management
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Liza Begum Cabinet Member for Housing Services Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing
Temporary Accommodation	To review the Council's approach to temporary accommodation, to include homeless households and the support given to residents who are placed out of borough.	Councillor Liza Begum Cabinet Member for Housing Services Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing
Work programme	To review the work programme in light of events and recent discussions	n/a – report of Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison, drafted in conjunction with relevant senior officers
ROUND 6 19 April 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Matt Noble, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing Raj Mistry, Executive Director of Environment and City Management

Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Liza Begum Cabinet Member for Housing Services Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing
Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) Strategic Options Paper	To review an update on the Council's plans for the PDHU.	Councillor Liza Begum Cabinet Member for Housing Services Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Growth Planning and Housing
Work programme	To review the work programme in light of events and recent discussions	n/a – report of Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison, drafted in conjunction with relevant senior officers

Appendix 3 - ACTION TRACKER
Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

ROUND 1
18 July 2022

Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up	Comments
Item 4 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Housing Services	That the bidding process for housing is reviewed, and an update be provided to the Committee in due course.	Completed	On the Work Programme under 'unallocated items'. (This is part of a larger piece of work of which the Policy & Scrutiny Advisor will liaise with Officers on the prospective timeline of when this may be brought to the Committee).
	That the Committee be informed of the PDHU strategic options paper when it has been published.	Completed Jan 23	Report will be provided for the April 23 meeting.
	That the Committee be updated about the new rough sleeping commissioning strategy in due course.	Completed Jan 23	Report will be provided for the April 23 meeting
	That the Fire and Building Safety Bill be kept on the agenda to be looked into in due course.	Completed 04.11.22	Added to the work programme for new municipal year.
Item 5 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration & Renters	That Scope 3 emissions are investigated so a stricter definition can be implemented to ensure sustainable procurement of supply chains.	Ongoing	30.01.23 Advised by officers and PA this is developing in the Council's Climate Emergency Programme and there is no update to be provided presently. Updates will be provided, when possible, in the lead member report.

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Item 6 Work Programme	That the Co-Chair of the Low Carbon Transport Programme Steering Group be invited along to the Committee at a relevant time to provide an update.	Ongoing	Advised by PA and officers this would be part of the City Management and Air Quality Committee - Cllr Dimoldenburg. Chair to steer.
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ROUND 2 18 October 2022			
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up	Comments
Item 7 Work Programme	The creation of a Biodiversity Task Group - Councillor Cara Sanquest is to lead this work.	In progress	Chair put task groups on hold in Dec 22 until the 2023/ 24 year.

ROUND 3 14 November 2022			
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up	Comments
Item 5 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Housing Services	That information will be provided to the Committee regarding the number of additional properties that will be required as a result of the waiting lists and the Allocation Policy.	In progress	See below.
	That information will be provided to the Committee about how the Allocation Policy is currently working for the 10-year residency point scheme and how residents are informed, would apply, and are granted	In progress	Update provided from officers / PA 14.02.23 The review of the Allocations Scheme has started, and this programme of work will be led by the recommendations of the Housing Commission and decisions made by Cllr Begum. Themed meetings with the Commission have taken place and it is

	points at 10 years and how the waiting list for housing stock may be affected following the legal challenge of WCC Allocations Scheme.		understood they are producing a report, but no definite date has been shared yet, estimated summer 23. It is recommended major milestones be provided to the committee in due course, as available.
	That information will be provided to the Committee about which organization / s have been employed to cover the security patrols on the estates.	Completed	To be provided in the CM update for the February 23 meeting.
	Officers will consider and feedback to the Committee regarding the prioritisation of retrofitting voids that are larger, 3-bedroom properties for families and how many will be available.	Completed	[Response provided by Jim Patterson 17.02.23] Committee updated 21.03 Regardless of the size of the property, if it is suitable to have retrofit works undertaken, this would be completed as quickly as possible. The turnaround times for retrofitting voids are currently 4-5 weeks from date of receipt. Since June 2022, following receipt of £3.3m grant funding from BEIS, via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 grant funding, we have completed over 280 properties, 125 of these properties were void, of which 21 have been 3-bed properties. Works include, internal wall insulation, secondary glazing, improving heating arrangements etc.
	Briefings will be provided to the Committee in due course for intermediate housing, fire safety, and building regulations.	Completed	Committee updated 29/11/22 [Response: Neil Wightman] These items will need to be in the forward plan for P&S. It is hoped that we can move to become more rotational between the three areas for scrutiny.
	Information to be provided to the Committee about which channels Ward Members will be informed about Community Thursdays.	Completed	To be provided in the March CM update.

<p>Item 6 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration & Renters</p>	<p>That information will be provided about the effect on emissions following the replacement of the boiler at the Lillington estate.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>[Response provided by Anthony Jones] Committee updated 21.02.23</p> <p>I am not aware of any boiler replacement works that has happened at Lillington. The old oil back-up boilers on the estate have been removed. As they were only back-ups and have not been required to be used, they will not create any carbon savings.</p>
	<p>That information be provided to the Committee on how much Government Local Authority (GLA) funding is expected for the Queen's Park Court infills site and if there is any further funding available for other infill projects.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	
	<p>That information about possible further actions could be taken to ensure Green Doctors service is proactively promoted to residents.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>To be provided in the March CM report.</p>
	<p>To provide the Committee with information about the criteria that is used for the food recycling scheme on estates and how the scheme works.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>[Responses provided by Sarah Labriola 17.02.23, Jon Lock 21.02.23 and Eleanor Fox 22.02.23] Committee updated.</p>
	<p>Information to be provided about the height and size of the development at Carlton Dene Estate.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Advised that officers responded directly to relevant Members.</p>

Agenda Item	ROUND 4 7 December 2022		
	Action	Status/Follow Up	Comments
Item 5 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Housing Services	Information to be provided to the Committee about the request from the Secretary of State regarding category 1 and 2 hazards in privately rented sector homes, what the Council is doing with its own housing stock, and the response the Council provided.	Completed 12.01.23	Responses provided by Neil Whiteman 15.12.22 and 12.01.23 and committee updated, with attachments.
Page 49	Information about where the Council is the most exposed in being able to deliver the repairs service and how the ability to deliver the service is affected with the rising costs of labour and materials.	Completed	[Response provided by John Hayden / Neil Whiteman] Committee updated 17.02.23
	Information to be provided to the Committee about what company will be used to cover and improve security measures on the estates.	Completed	Confirmed by PA 31.01.23 that a response will be provided in the CM update March 23.
	Data to be provided to the Committee (if available) on the increase (if any) in bigger / more complex repairs because of weather conditions, the types of repairs, and whether there have been any spikes in weather condition related repairs.	Completed	[Response provided by John Hayden / Neil Whiteman] Committee updated 17.02.23
	Information to be provided about the Mozart Housing Surgery.	Completed	[Response: Chris Shoubridge] Committee updated 23.01.23
			A Housing surgery is running at the Beethoven Centre. It is the first and third Monday of every month. 2pm to 4.30pm. It is part of the CAB Advice + sessions.

			<p>We are also looking to set up a Housing presence at the Bruckner Street Housing Solutions Office TBA.</p>
<p>Item 6 Cabinet Member Updates Policy and Scrutiny Portfolio Overview: Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration & Renters</p>	<p>That information will be provided to the Committee about how the information received from the Environmental Justice Indicators across the borough is used to rectify and implement plans to deal with the issues highlighted.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>[Response Damian Hemmings, Ceridwen John and Ruth Beddow] Committee updated 10/ 01/ 23</p> <p>The EJM will certainly be used to support Open Spaces, Greener Places (name TBC) funding allocations, as well as guiding how we fund, resource and implement environmental projects across the board – e.g. around air quality, retrofit, flood resilience. Officers in Place Shaping are well informed about the EJM via our Greening & Biodiversity Working Group. They are developing a new model for OSPG which places greater emphasis on community co-production, increasing the number of projects chosen and led by the community. This will be presented to Cabinet Members in January.</p> <p>Similarly, we have already used the EJM to select Westbourne Green as the target location for £85k Levelling Up Parks funding from DLUHC. This is in an area of combined environmental risks such as poor air quality, limited open space access, lower tree canopy cover and high levels of deprivation. We are working with partners including Tomorrow’s Forests on additional tree planting and planning to engage under-represented groups, such as teenage girls and those with disabilities, in the co-design of the space and outdoor gym.</p> <p>Another example in practice is the EJM being used to help inform air quality policy and funding decisions. The council has applied for around £80k of Defra Air Quality Grant funding to create and promote clean air walking routes across the city. Should we be successful, the EJM will help maximise the impact of the funding by helping select areas where clean air walking routes (with their co-benefits related to access to green space and sustainable transport indicators) will be most beneficial. It will also be used in conjunction with the forthcoming air quality data platform and existing pollution mapping to guide decisions related to new AQ monitoring locations. Similarly, residents and other stakeholders can now propose sites where they feel monitoring would be beneficial, and the EJM is signposted as a tool for residents to understand where new monitoring would be beneficial before they make their application.</p>

	<p>That the Committee will receive a briefing about Green Doctors so this information can be disseminated to residents by Councillors'.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Confirmed by PA 31.01.23 this will be provided in the CM report at the March 23 meeting.</p>
	<p>That information be provided to the Committee about the Warm Public Spaces initiative in the borough and where they are located.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Committee updated 01/02/23 [Response from Cllr Roca]</p> <p>To combat the Cost of Living crisis, the Council developed an alliance of organisations across the city that are committed to offering engaging activities and options, which will also help keep people warm this winter.</p> <p>The Winter in the City Programme is a directory of free council, community, and cultural activities over the winter months that has been promoted to residents. The activities are being held in warm and safe locations around the city, including museums and local libraries.</p> <p>Information and locations across the borough can be found at: Winter in the city, free warm public spaces and places Westminster City Council</p>

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