

Item: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 16 April 2024

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
HS.17.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that a review of the new housing homelessness service structure is conducted to provide reassurance that it is meeting its intended outcomes and where these are not being achieved, that an action plan is developed to address these failings as a priority.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Completed</p> <p>The Housing Needs and Homelessness Service completed a formal review of the service structure in May 2024 and concluded that the new structure is agile, and the additional resources have been put in the right places to ensure the service fully complies with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</p> <p>To support staff, establish working standards and strengthen the 'one team' culture, a training programme is being delivered to ensure all staff working directly with people experiencing homelessness have the right skills. This is complemented by regular staff engagement events, held to bring the service together to collaborate, share successes and learn from each other. This will be monitored through all the priorities of the Strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Completed	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.18.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that prevention workstreams within the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are fast-tracked wherever possible, including hospital engagement.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>Some key homelessness prevention initiatives have already started which will be built on. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deployment of a dedicated caseworker in local hospitals to support homeless residents following discharge. 	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of	N/A	March 2026	TBC

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are working with the Voluntary Sector to find alternative accommodation with asylum seekers given positive decisions who have been asked to leave Home Office hotels or accommodation. A staff member is co-located within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to facilitate & promote joint working between Housing and Children's Social Services. These changes will be monitored through Priorities 1,2 & 6 of the Strategy. 	Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation			
HS.19.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council identifies high performing local authorities and engages with them to learn from best practice on how to build more effective working relations with private sector landlords to maintain tenancies where possible.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in progress</p> <p>The Housing Needs and Homeless Service meets on a monthly basis with Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Advisors who draw on best practice from other local authorities and provide support to improve service delivery. They are encouraged by the approach to service improvement being taken.</p> <p>The Council is also an active participant in Pan London Housing Directors, Housing Needs and Temporary Accommodation groups. Sub-regionally the Service participates in local professional forums between local boroughs. This will be monitored through all the priorities of the strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Already Implemented	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.20.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council introduces a gas, electrical and EPC document check for private sector tenants claiming housing benefits.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Rejected</p> <p>The Council is not lawfully allowed to check these documents but will review and implement enhanced ways of working with private tenants in the borough with a view to</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	N/A	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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			raising awareness so that tenants know their rights and the options available to them if their landlord acts unlawfully towards them. This will be monitored through Priorities 1,2 & 6 of the strategy.				
HS.21.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council establishes a designated point of contact for the charity and voluntary sector for all housing and homelessness-related matters.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>The Service is committed to working with the charity and voluntary sector organisations. As stated in 4.10.12, active engagement with organisations has started and it is intended to establish a 'Homelessness Prevention Partnership Board' to formalise the framework for constructive engagement with key partners including the charity and voluntary sector to deliver the objectives set out in the strategy. This will be monitored through Priority 6 of the strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	To be agreed with Partners Oct/Dec 2024	TBC
HS.22.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council takes a more proactive role to facilitating good practice amongst housing associations providing accommodation in the borough e.g. on nomination rights and organising estate walkabouts with tenants and local Councillors.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>The Housing Directorate has already re-established senior level meetings with all housing associations that work in the borough with a view to share good practice and enhance working relationships. This is a requirement of the new Consumer Standards published as part of the new social housing regulations. The Directorate will be monitored on this partnership work by the Social Housing Regulator.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Completed	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024