



AGENDA FOR THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Housing Scrutiny Committee are summoned to an Informal meeting on,
20 September 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Enquiries to : Ola Adeoye
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Despatched : 12 September 2022

Membership

Councillor Jason Jackson (Chair)
Councillor Marian Spall (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Valerie Bossman-Quarshie
Councillor Ilkay Cinko-Oner
Councillor Mick Gilgunn
Councillor Benali Hamdache
Councillor Michael O'Sullivan
Councillor Rosaline Ogunro
Dean Donaghey (Resident Observer) (Co-Optee)
Rose Marie McDonald (Resident Observer) (Co-Optee)

Substitute Members

Councillor Jilani Chowdhury
Councillor Phil Graham
Councillor Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong
Councillor Ben Mackmurdie

Quorum is 4 Councillors



1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declaration of Substitute Members
3. Declarations of Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

***(a) Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

(c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) Licences - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to **all** members present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting 1 - 8
5. Chair's Report
6. External Attendees (if any)

7. Order of Business
8. Public Questions

For members of the public to ask questions relating to any subject on the meeting agenda under Procedure Rule 70.5. Alternatively, the Chair may opt to accept questions from the public during the discussion on each agenda item.

B. Items for Decision/Discussion	Page
1. Fire Brigade -Verbal Update on Fire Safety by the Borough Commander	
2. Main Scrutiny Review - Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington (Witness Evidence)	9 - 26
3. Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q1 2022/23)	27 - 32
4. Work Programme 2022/23	33 - 34

C. Urgent non-exempt items (if any)

Any non- exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgent by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, any of them are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E. Confidential/exempt items	Page
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F. Urgent exempt items (if any)

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee will be on 3 November 2022

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London Borough of Islington

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 18 July 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber on 18 July 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Jackson (Chair), Bossman-Quarshie, Cinko-Oner, Gilgunn, Hamdache, O'Sullivan, Ogunro and Donaghey (Co-Optee)

Councillor Jason Jackson in the Chair

357 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)**

Apologies were received from Councillor Spall and Co-Optee Rose McDonald.

358 **DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)**

There were no declarations of substitute members.

359 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

360 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2022 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

361 **CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 5)**

The Chair on behalf of the Committee expressed their thanks to Maxine Holdsworth, Islington's Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhood for her 17 years service to the Council and in particular her support of the Housing Scrutiny Committee, wishing her well in her new position as the Chief Executive of the Kensington and Chelsea Council.

362 **ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item 6)**

The order of business would be as per the agenda.

363 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 7)**

None

364 **MAIN SCRUTINY REVIEW - STRATEGIC REVIEW OF OVERCROWDING IN ISLINGTON - TO AGREE SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT AND RECEIVE PRESENTATIONS (Item B1)**

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 18 July 2022

Ian Swift, the Director of Housing Needs presented the Scrutiny Initiation Document, copy interleaved and the Committee received 2 presentations regarding Overcrowding in Islington and the following issues were highlighted:

The Director advised that following Committee decision to review overcrowding in Islington, a draft Scrutiny Initiation Document has been produced with details on how the exercise will be carried out.

Members were advised of the scope of the review, that the review involves taking evidence from external organisations and analysing data to help understand the scale of overcrowding in the borough and the impacts of overcrowding on residents health, education attainment, well-being, housing conditions, safety and the wider impact on the community. Evidence will be taken from different stakeholders such as Islington officers, RSL, statutory agencies such as Children Service's tenants, Adult Services, Health Agencies etc.

Ramesh Logeswaran, Head of Housing Needs gave a presentation and the following points were highlighted:

- Overcrowding is categorised as a household needing one additional bedroom and severe overcrowding is when a household requires two or more additional bedrooms.
- Overcrowding needs to be tackled as it is associated with increased physical and mental health problems, poorer educational achievement by children, increased risk of infectious or respiratory diseases, increased risk of accidents and fires, reduced stature in children. It is also evident that poor diet and nutrition is higher in people living in overcrowded conditions which can have an impact on family life and relationships which in some instances lead to family breakdown and increased social tensions with neighbours.
- Overcrowding may be as a result of a number of factors including family size growth with additional children, other wider family members joining the existing household, guardianship orders and foster arrangements etc
- Housing Needs supports families in overcrowded households, providing advice on mutual exchanges as one of the best ways for tenants to alleviate their overcrowding irrespective of housing points awarded. Advice is provided on how to prevent damp and mould formation as well as support to rent storage space from the council and to manage energy costs.
- For severely overcrowded tenants, the service can arrange for the provision of space saving furniture to alleviate the effects of severe overcrowding, undertake home visits with tenants to signpost tenants to other services e.g. Social Care, Bright Spark, SHINE, Property Services (re repairs).
- Advice is also provided on bidding, local letting schemes and mutual exchanges
- The Service supports downsizers to move to create voids, in particular offer personalised service to support tenants who are typically vulnerable through the process of downsizing. This generally comprises advanced identification of properties and joint viewings with tenants.

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 18 July 2022

- To promote downsizing, there is also support with financial incentives for each room 'released', support to access a decoration allowance, moving support, utilities re-connections etc.
- Mutual exchanges is a great way for residents to downsize, thereby releasing their larger home for a larger household. Housing Needs support tenants who wish to exchange properties with another social housing tenant and this is a joint exercise between Housing Needs and Homes and Communities.
- Within Housing Needs, officers advise residents on how to register online for the service and explain how tenants can entice others registered looking to move. There are also incentive provisions around decorative/white goods, what is referred to as 'works in occupation'
- In terms of performance, the meeting was advised that the Service was unable to meet its target of assisting both overcrowded families and underoccupiers move into appropriate or suitable housing, however it met its target for moving households into appropriate housing via mutual exchange.
- The demand for social housing is on the rise due to high rents in the private sector, 2922 households approached the council for advice during 2021/22 financial year.
- In June 2022, 907 households live in temporary accommodation, of which 472 households are living in private sector accommodation. As of April 2022, 15,402 households are on the housing register.
- In 2021/22 financial year, the council let 829 LBI (Islington Council) properties and 193 Housing Association properties totalling 1022 properties.
- Meeting was advised that in 2021/22, 30% of lettings were social housing tenants moving home, 36% to homeless households and 34% are to households on the Council waiting list.
- Members were informed of the budgetary pressures on the Housing General Fund with the result that the Service will need to significantly reduce the number of households in private sector temporary accommodation to below 300.
- With regards to the 39 Islington Council New builds in 2021/22, meeting was advised that 9(23%) allocated to downsizers, 8(21%) to tenants seeking a transfer from their existing homes,11(28%) were for like for like transfers and not regarded as overcrowded and 11(28%) were let to applicants on the housing register.
- Meeting was advised that of the 28 Social housing transfers, multiple chain of moves were progressed leading to households in housing need being placed in suitable homes and this comprises of both overcrowded and severely overcrowded families, homeless families, downsizers, tenants with significant health and welfare issues, domestic abuse survivors, new generation scheme and care leavers.
- In the case of the 16 Housing Association new builds, 5 were let to waiting list cases, 8 were for overcrowded of which 2 were severely overcrowded, 1 for welfare/medical, 1 for medical/wheelchair need and 1 for downsizer.

Helena Stephenson, Islington's Head of Housing Partnership informed the meeting of the issues of overcrowding from the tenants perspective and they include :

- 1396 LBI Overcrowded tenants are registered for rehousing due to fire safety concerns, noise and anti-social behaviour complaints and other wellbeing and safeguarding issues. Another reason for seeking to move is related to damp and mould and additional 'wear and tear' repairs
- Meeting was advised that with regards to fire safety, there is a Fire Risk Assessment programme to address items left in communal areas and associated Fire Safety advice which promotes storage solutions.
- A suggestion to include as part of the review exercise community groups such as the Somali Welfare Centre was noted. Officers were advised to contact GLA about the Seaside and Community Homes Schemes which provides social housing for over 55's.
- The Director acknowledged that overcrowding is a national crisis and as the private sector is unable to meet high demand for housing there will always be instances of overcrowding in households and only building more homes will address this issue.
- On the issue of living rooms being designated as a bedroom, the Director noted that legislation dates back to 1950's and successive governments have not passed a new legislation.
- With regards abandoned properties, meeting was advised that the Council will have to investigate the circumstances first as in some cases tenants may be admitted to hospital temporarily or Nursing homes, after which the property can then placed into void status.
- On the issue of language being a barrier for tenants interested in mutual swaps, the meeting was advised that the Council has a team in place and information is available online.
- Meeting was informed that the Service works with its housing partners to address overcrowding and especially in identifying voids.

The Chair thanked Ian Swift, Ramesh Logeswaran and Helena Stephenson for their presentations.

RESOLVED:

- That the Scrutiny Initiation Document be agreed subject to inviting representatives of community groups as part of the review and for officers to liaise with GLA officers on any funding/initiative available to address overcrowding.
- That the presentations be noted.

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HOUSING REPAIRS - OFFICER UPDATE (Item B2)

Matt West, Director Housing Property Services gave a presentation, copy interleaved on the repairs carried out on the Council Housing stock. The following issues were highlighted:

- Repairs of Council owned properties include plumbing, electrical, gas and carpentry which are completed within either 2 hours, 24 Hours or 20 Working Days.

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 18 July 2022

- The majority of repairs are carried out in house, the council employs 160 direct operatives and 32 contractors to carry out the repairs with over 75,000 repairs completed every year (more in 2021-22).
- The Service is primarily focused on customer service and resident safety.
- In terms of performance targets , meeting was advised that although first time fixes for the 2022/23 financial year is lower comparable to the 2021/22 however it is still on target.
- It was noted that Repairs is dependent on the call handling personnel and it is noticeable that performance for the 2022/23 year is on target.
- On the issue of resident satisfaction about repairs undertaken. feedback from residents, compiled by an independent company shows that the Service is on target.
- The 3 main priorities of the Service are providing best experience for residents, creating opportunities for residents and improving diversity and better communication
- On the issue of providing best experience for residents, the meeting was advised that the Service recently undertook mystery shopping exercise which identified a number of learning, such as sharing complaints with resident's panel and also providing better communications to residents and councillors especially during large repair incidents
- In terms of creating opportunities for residents and improving diversity, meeting was advised that Improvers Role has been created and the Service is using Housing Ambassadors Programme and local initiatives to increase representation within the work force. In addition to this the Service is offering work experience, apprenticeships and training to not only Islington residents.
- Meeting was advised that there is scope for better communication on all aspects of repairs, with the online translation service called 'big word' and also the Service has introduced the 'what next card' for repair operators when work is uncompleted and requires a follow on.
- In terms of operations, the Director updated the meeting that recently following the Ombudsman Damp Report, that a programme of work is to be commissioned over the summer to compare report recommendations to current process, that there are plans to pilot of an app, Localz to improve the resident experience which is to be rolled out Autumn 22.
- In terms of Insourcing, meeting was informed Set up voids team and PF12 team in 2022. Working with estate champions to provide opportunities to feedback on service
- Fire Safety is of huge concern, that there are lots of new responsibilities, that a new team for compliance has been established and the Service has started pilot of door checks.
- Meeting was informed that in light of the new Housing Regulator, the Service is working as part of large Service Improvement Programme to ensure that regulators standards are exceeded
- It was also noted that in light of the cost of living crisis, prices are rising and causing pressures on contractors and budgets.

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- Meeting was advised that repairs are up approximately 10% compared to pre covid period.
- The Service is working with Capital Delivery to deal with complex jobs in a better way as these tend to be the areas generating complaints
- Meeting was advised that following a review in to repairs some years ago, there have been a number of improvements such as ,The ring and Bring Service is now fully imbedded with voids, the use of Electronic Notice Board (ENB), a new phone systems to improve user experience, the Improver Pilot has been completed and roll out of wider programme due this year.
- Members were reminded that following the review , other improvements include having a Leak team in place to deal with complex leaks, that the new online systems Localz is being tested this year, New Materials and practice group to agree materials between New Build, Capital and Repairs.
- Meeting was advised that during Covid period, repairs operated with minimal disruption to residents, however not the case with the call handling centres in comparison to when operatives operated from the office. It was noted that operatives were incredibly brave by undertaking repairs in PPE so as not to compromise residents welfare carrying out work.
- The Director acknowledged that the Service is not just a 'Repair Service' that it undertakes DIY Work shops and job taster sessions run on estates and offers work placements.
- On the issue of Improvers and internal development, 2 Repairs Coordinators have been trained to become surveyors, 1 Driver trained to be a plumber, 2 operatives trained as surveyors, multiple operatives trained and successful in obtaining management roles and multiple apprentices are in a number of trades
- In light of the Ukraine/Russia, Repairs staff undertook over 200 property surveys in a 6 weeks.
- The Director highlighted the DAHA , domestic abuse support accreditation which Islington received in December 2021, in regards to Repairs approach and response to helping prevent domestic violence.
- The Service welcomes resident feedback, noting that residents can contact the Service directly to provide feedback and would encourage residents interested in procurement contract management to join Islington Panels involved in selecting contractors and managing them.
- With regards to Service Improvement Panels, the Service welcome resident feedback on ideas for service improvement. Also meeting was advised that residents are encouraged to become mystery shopper and to drop in to events and big community events to provide feedback and engagement.

The Chair thanked Matt West for the update noting that there is a likelihood that this issue will be revisited later in the municipal year subject to Committee's workload.

RESOLVED:

- That the presentation be noted.

366 **HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23 (Item B3)**

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm

CHAIR

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Overcrowding in Islington

We provide a range of advice and assistance to Islington residents regarding their housing and specifically run two outreach projects with Islington Council to provide accessible housing advice to residents. A significant number of enquiries we receive relate to residents in the Borough who are seeking to be moved to more appropriate accommodation due to overcrowding.

One of the major ways in which to achieve a move to larger size appropriate premises is to apply to join the housing register of LBI. The council uses a choice based lettings scheme and points are awarded to residents based upon their circumstances and in line with the Council’s Housing Allocation Scheme.

We comment below on the workings of the scheme and some generic issues that arise constantly.

Not meeting the average threshold of points to be able to successfully bid for a larger property:

Our experience is that residents living in severely overcrowded conditions are highly unlikely to be able to successfully bid for size appropriate accommodation.

Allocations schemes are required under the Housing Act 1996 to be framed to secure that reasonable preference is given to overcrowded households.

The following points are awarded under LB Islington’s allocations scheme for overcrowding:

Type of Overcrowding	Points Awarded
Opposite sex overcrowding; where two people of the opposite sex have to share a bedroom and one is 10 years or older (unless they are over 16 and living as a couple.)	10 points
Where there is more than one occurrence additional points will be given per occurrence	5 points
For each additional bedroom required	20 points
Additional points for households lacking 2 or more bedrooms (per household).	30 points

One of the main problems that we see on outreach is that overcrowding alone is unlikely to result in the tenant having sufficient points to be able to bid for and move to larger accommodation.

Council literature confirms the following average points were required in 2020/21 to bid for alternative accommodation:

2 bedrooms – 226

3 bedrooms – 252

4+ bedrooms – 289

Case study – Mr H

LB Islington secure tenant since 2013. Lives with wife and 3 children. 1 bedroom property. The following points have been awarded:

Overcrowding	Bedroom Lacking	40
Overcrowding	Opposite Sex	20
Overcrowding	Overcrowding	30
	Severe Overcrowding	100
	Residence	
		TOTAL 190

The bedroom need is 3 bedrooms. Mr H is therefore unlikely to be able to bid for a suitably sized property given he would require 252 points.

We seek in such cases to see whether there are any other issues faced by the tenant that may result in further points and improve the chances of bidding e.g. a medical problem, a welfare/social issue/a disrepair/decant issues, harassment/ASB from a neighbour. However, some tenants have no such problems, only the overcrowding, and so there is little prospect of them moving.

The Lack of available larger properties – 4 plus bed rooms. The need for joined up working between Housing Options, social services and the disrepair team.

Even if medical and welfare points are awarded, for larger households with disabled members seeking to move to more size appropriate accommodation it is virtually impossible to obtain rehousing through the Housing Allocations Scheme. The availability of larger properties is very much limited and highly sought after. This can leave families stuck in unsuitable and severely overcrowded conditions indefinitely.

Case Studies:

1. A couple live in a two bed flat with their four children (one of whom is disabled) and an elderly disabled relative. They are unable to cope in severely overcrowded

conditions. Social services have assessed and recommended special equipment and adaptations but these cannot be carried out or used in the current accommodation. The couple are no longer able to cope with caring for the elderly relative and social services are currently assessing him for residential care. As a result of the overcrowding the property is subject to condensation dampness. Although they have points with which to bid, 4 bed level access properties rarely become available.

2. A single parent of six children, two of whom are disabled, lives in a 3 bed flat which is severely affected by damp. The two double bed rooms are no longer habitable due to the damp. The tenants two sons sleep in the single room where the damp is not as severe. Four of the children and the tenant sleep in the living room on sofas and on the floor. Ms. B has a total of over 430 points with which to bid but has not been able to bid successfully as yet. The bed need is six bedrooms. Ms. B will accept 4 bed rooms because 5 and 6 bedrooms are highly unlikely to become available. The council has agreed to carry out the work but the family cannot remain in situ and would need to be decanted whilst the work is carried out.

We are of the view that such scenario's require joined up working from all departments involved to reach a resolution and that the council should in such severe cases consider making direct offers.

Condensation in overcrowded homes:

Condensation in severely overcrowded accommodation is common and is usually aggravated, if not caused by overcrowding. This is often recognized by an award of welfare points but sometimes only after our involvement and submissions to this effect. When tenants make comments regarding condensation they can sometimes be wrongly informed this is not something for which rehousing points can be awarded and is a disrepair issue.

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Overcrowding Enforcement in the Private Rented Sector

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Residential Environmental Health

Overcrowding

The Legislative Framework

Overcrowding Legislative Background

Statutory Overcrowding (Part X Housing Act 1985):

- The Room/Space Standards:
- “a dwelling is overcrowded if the number of persons sleeping in it exceeds a permitted number, based on the room or space standard.”
- **The Room Standard:** Persons per room
- **The Space Standard:** Floor Area calculations
- Relatively few households are assessed as statutorily overcrowded and hence quite rare or useful in practical use. Standards are very low and prescriptive, outdated and does not reflect modern day standards
- Note: Space and Room standards are not used by Residential Teams to enforce overcrowding

Housing Act 2004: Crowding and Space Hazard

- LA's regulatory teams have been advised to use their powers under Part 1 of the HA 2004 and follow the **Enforcement Guidance (EG)** rather than Part 10 of HA 1985
- LA's need to consider the following:
 - Meeting statutory duties vs. duty to rehouse occupiers
 - Homelessness implications and compensation
 - Clarifying enforcement options under Housing Act via the Most Appropriate Course of Action (MACA)

Powers Available under Part 1 Housing Act 2004

- Hazard Awareness Notice
- Improvement Notice
- Prohibition Order
- Suspension of Prohibition Order's (most commonly used power for crowding and space hazard)
- Emergency Action

Powers contd: HMO's

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- HHSRS can be used but there are more specific regs:
- **HMO Licence conditions:** limits occupation levels
- **HMO standards:** LA's HMO space standards
- Specific powers for overcrowding in non-licensable HMO's
- Future occupation of non-licensable HMO's:
- Notices for where a non –licensable HMO is is likely to be overcrowded
- Maximum levels of occupancy can be set for overcrowding

Overcrowding Powers contd.: Housing and Planning Act 2016

Civil Penalty Notices & Rent Repayment Orders

- LA's can impose a civil penalty as an alternative to prosecution for the following offences (in both dwellings and HMO's):
- Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions (over occupation for example); all offences attract an unlimited fine or penalty of up to £30k
- Failure to comply with selective licensing conditions (as above)
- **Rent Repayment Orders** (RRO's) for following offences:
 - Failure to comply with a Prohibition Order
 - Illegal eviction and using violence to secure entry
 - Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice

Rehousing Obligations & Prohibition Order Implications

- There are implications for some types of enforcement:
- Duty to rehouse if PO made under s20/21 of Housing act 2004
- Land Compensation Act 1973: Council duty to secure all persons displaced by a PO are provided with suitable accommodation, this duty applies to all displaced persons

Compensation

- **Owners:** Compensation paid to owners where certain relevant PO's become operative (Housing Act 1985 & 2004)
- **Home Loss Payments** (compensation to occupiers: LCA 1973): Paid when a person is displaced from a dwelling as a result of a PO
- **Disturbance payments:** These are mandatory payments to assist persons displaced from land (LCA 1973) as a consequence of a PO. Includes reasonable costs of moving home

Regulatory action taken by Res EH in last 5 years

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- 5 x overcrowding notices (non-licensable HMO's)
- 5x PO's for overcrowding in SFO's
- 2x Hazard Awareness Notices in SFO's
- Selective Licensing Scheme (SFO's): 952 applications received
- HMO Licensing: 2647 apps received
- Note: Licensing Schemes regulate permitted nos per dwelling and also for all types of HMO's

Questions and Answers

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- Contacts: Residential EH Team 020 7527 3083
- Email: property.licensing@islington.gov.uk
- Email: Residential.Envh@islington.gov.uk

Appendixes

• **Aid Memoir for Officers Dealing with Overcrowding Cases in RSL properties**

- Islington's policy when dealing with overcrowding cases in RSL properties is to serve a Suspended Prohibition Order (SPO). However, the service of this notice may have a number of effects on the tenants of the properties concerned. This Aid Memoir is designed to ensure that officers are able to inform tenants of the possible outcomes of serving a SPO so that tenants are made aware of the positive and negative aspects of the service of the notice and procedures involved.
- On review any SPO served will become a full Prohibition Order (PO). Tenants may or may not receive an offer of re-housing from the Housing Aid Centre (HAC) and this offer may or may not be agreeable to the tenants.
- As a result of serving the SPO, Environmental Health will inform HAC. HAC will contact the tenant and landlord with the options available to them. These options will include an offer of a council property, an offer of a private landlord property or no offer at all.
- The removal of the suspension may result in the lawful eviction of the tenants and the potential for them not to receive any state assistance.
- The service of a SPO will not entitle the tenants to any additional points under the council's system.
- Serving a SPO is not likely to speed up any re-housing claim.
- The Housing Department assess applications according to their housing allocation policy.
- Tenants should be advised to contact the Rehousing Team immediately to arrange a housing options interview/home visit to discuss all their housing options.
- Contact details for the Re-Housing Team: 222 Upper Street, 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR

Appendixes

- Rent Repayment Orders:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/606654/Rent_Repayment_Orders_guidance.pdf
- Civil Penalty Guidance:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/697644/Civil_penalty_guidance.pdf
- Enforcement Guidance:
[190206_Note_on_LA_enforcement_powers_with_flowchart_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190206/190206_Note_on_LA_enforcement_powers_with_flowchart_FINAL.pdf)
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Chief Executive Department
Town Hall, London N1 2UD

Report of:

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Housing Scrutiny Committee	20 th September 2022	All

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Quarter 1 Performance Report: Housing

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The council has in place a suite of corporate performance indicators to help monitor progress in delivering the outcomes set out in the council's Corporate Plan. Progress on key performance measures is reported through the Council's Scrutiny Committees on a quarterly basis to ensure accountability to residents and to enable challenge where necessary.
- 1.2 This report sets out Quarter 1 progress against targets for those performance indicators that fall within the Housing outcome area, for which the Housing Scrutiny Committee has responsibility.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note performance against targets in Quarter 1, 2022/23 for measures relating to Housing.

3. Background

- 3.1 A suite of corporate performance indicators has been agreed, which help track progress in delivering the seven priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan - *Building a Fairer Islington*. Targets are set on an annual basis and performance is monitored internally, through Departmental Management Teams, Corporate Management Board and Joint Board, and externally through the Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.2 The Housing Scrutiny Committee is responsible for monitoring and challenging performance for the following key outcome area: Housing: Delivering decent and genuinely affordable homes for all.

4. Quarter 1 performance update – Housing

4.1 Key performance indicators relating to Housing.

#	Indicator	2019/ 20 Actual	2020/ 21 Actual	2021/ 22 Actual	2022/ 23 Q1	Targets	On target ?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
H1	Number of planning permissions agreed for new council housing	0	43	30	0	0 (Q1)	YES	30	N/A
H2	Number of new council homes started on site	New	New	47	0	0 (Q1)	YES	0	N/A
H3	Number of affordable new homes (social rented or shared ownership) completed by the council	63	53	10	46	102 (Q1)	YES	0	N/A
H4	Number of affordable new homes (social rented or shared ownership) completed by Developers	89	118	40	0	0	YES	0	N/A
H5	Percentage of homeless decisions made in the target timeframe	New	40%	68%	77%	90% (annual)	YES	62%	BETTER
H6	Number of households in nightly booked temporary accommodation	316	468	403	446	365 (annual)	NO	455	BETTER
H7	Number of homeless preventions	717	947	701	250	850 (annual)	YES	141	BETTER
H8	Number of people sleeping rough	New	11	6	14	0	NO	11	WORSE
H9	Percentage of all lettings provided to council tenants securing a transfer	38%	35%	29%	39%		YES	32%	BETTER
H10	Percentage of LBI repairs fixed first time	87.7%	92.9%	88.5%	88.4%	85% (annual)	YES	89.6%	WORSE
H11	Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll - LBI (%)	3.9%	4.7%	4.50%	4.9%	Target TBC	NO	4.67%	N/A*
H12	Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll - partner properties	3.7%	4.9%	5.38%	4.7%	Target TBC	NO	4.91%	N/A
H13	% of residents who are very satisfied or satisfied with whole experience of having works carried out	N/A	N/A	N/A	74%*	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW

*NB Q1 figures for this year are not directly comparable to Q1 of last year as the Council took back management of the PF12 housing stock, approximately 3,000 properties from the first quarter of this year.

** Results relate to schemes ending in Q4 of 21-22

4.2 *H1: Number of planning permissions agreed for new council housing*

This figure is on target at this point in the year as no new planning permissions for council housing were planned for Q1. For 2022/23 there is a target of 82 planning permissions to be granted for new council housing in Q2 (Bemerton Estate South (Including Orkney House)) and Q3 (Vorley Road).

4.3 *H2: Number of new council homes started on site*

This figure is on target as there are no new council homes planned to start on site in Q1. A total of 77 new council homes units are planned over Q2, Q3 and Q4.

4.4 *H3: Number of affordable new homes (social rented or shared ownership) completed by the council*

46 council homes completed in Q1 out of a planned 102 for Q1. Q1 planned completed (Charles Simmons Hse 25 units) is currently due to complete 28th September 2022 (Q2). Stacey Street (30 units) is now occupied but completion will be in Q2.

4.5 *H4: Number of affordable new homes (social rented or shared ownership) completed by Developers*

No new affordable homes completed by Developers are planned for Q1. There is a target of 171 new homes to be completed during Q3 and Q4.

4.6 *H5: Percentage of homeless decisions made in the target timeframe*

77% of homeless decisions were made in the target framework. Though this is 13% below the annual target of 90%, it is a significant improvement compared to Q1 of last year. Performance has been affected by a combination of the increased demand for the service which has increased significantly over the quarter and the complexity of the homeless cases presenting that require more detailed inquiries and lengthier enquiries. The increased demand has been reflected nationally that has seen an increase of 5.4% in statutory homelessness presentations for the same quarter. The mitigating actions that are underway include continuing weekly focus on performance on this indicator, increasing the officer target for decision reached and provision of overtime for high performing officers to reach decision within the target time frame. The service has set an ambitious target and if achieved this will result in the council being placed in the top quartile of performance.

4.7 *H6: Number of households in nightly booked temporary accommodation*

There were 446 households in nightly booked temporary accommodation in Q1 compared to 455 in Q1. The annual target is 365. There has been a significant increase in homeless approaches due to domestic abuse, including those fleeing threats of violence/gang violence [this represents a marked shift from what has been the most common reason for homeless to date- being asked to leave by friends/family]. Q1 2022/23- 79 approaches due to domestic abuse vs 61 approaches due to being asked to leave by friends and family. In contrast, Q4 2021/22- 53 approaches due to domestic abuse vs 60 approaches due to being asked to leave by friends and family.

The team are continuing to work to discharge ineligible households as quickly as possible, to bring the number down further.

In London, there are 15.7 households living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households, compared with 1.9 households per 1,000 in the Rest of England. In Islington there are 8.1

households per 1,000 living in temporary accommodation. Newham had the highest rate of TA in London with 48.3 households per 1,000 households and Luton had the highest rate of TA outside London with 13.7 households per 1,000 households. Therefore, Islington Council's overall performance in managing temporary accommodation is excellent. However, further reductions in the use of private sector properties are urgently needed going forward and we should not be complacent. The council has set a stretching target to eliminate the use of expensive nightly paid temporary accommodation to provide greater security for our homeless residents.

4.8 *H7: Number of homeless preventions*

In Q1 there were 250 households that were prevented from being homeless. This is 18% above the target for this quarter (213) and better than Q1 of the previous year. The annual target is 850. Whilst on target for this quarter there are wider factors of concern that may impact on homelessness prevention success in future quarters. These include, increase in rents in London which will make securing private sector accommodation more challenging, corresponding decrease in affordability due to the cost of living crisis, energy costs, inflation etc which will impact more acutely on those on low and moderate incomes, concerns about the affordability of social housing properties owned by Housing Association and a further increase in homeless presentations from September 2022, as initial six-month placements through the Homes for Ukraine scheme end. Homelessness is expected to increase during the remaining part of 2022/2023 and throughout the 2023/2024 financial year as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and people in Islington being unable to afford the basics of heating their homes, food for the households, and stable/secure accommodation.

4.9 *H8: Number of people sleeping rough*

The number of people sleeping rough this quarter is higher compared to Q1 last year. Rough sleeping is increasing across London. However, Islington Council continues to re-house people from the streets as no one should be sleeping on the streets of Islington. The increase in people sleeping on the streets is being driven by a number of councils closing covid accommodation in particular for people with no recourse to public funds and Councils going back to business as usual and assessing people under the Homeless Reduction Act for interim temporary accommodation. This has led to rough sleepers moving into Islington due to the lack of provision in the boroughs the rough sleepers were previously in. Islington Council has raised this gatekeeping approach with these council's and Islington Council have escalated this gatekeeping with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities for the past six months without any noticeable success.

4.10 *H9: Percentage of all lettings provided to council tenants securing a transfer*

This indicator shows how many of the council's existing tenants have been successful in moving to a more suitable social rented home, alleviating overcrowding for example and freeing up council homes for those in need. The lettings target has been exceeded by 4% during Q1 as a result of the completion of a key new build scheme at King Square. This has meant that the service achieved a higher number of social housing lettings (for council tenants) than in the previous quarter. The service continues to focus on under-occupiers to release larger properties for households that need them and encouraging social housing tenants to consider the mutual exchange scheme to increase the lettings to those seeking a transfer. However, with the cost of living crisis and the demand for accommodation for homeless households, plus Children's Services and Adult Services statutory clients it is anticipated this target will not be met during this financial year.

4.11 *H10: Percentage of LBI repairs fixed first time*

88.4% of repairs have been fixed first time in Q1 of this year, although this is lower than Q1 of the previous year it is above the annual target of 85% for 2022/23.

4.12 *H11: Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll – LBI*

In April 2022 the Council took back the management of PFI2 housing stock, approximately 3,000 properties which has resulted in the proportion of rent arrears of the rent roll for LBI increasing. 37% of the former PFI2 accounts are in arrears, which represents between 4% to 8% more arrears accounts than for LBI patches. Rent values for PFI properties are up to 25% higher than pre-existing LBI managed stock and the average arrears value of these accounts is also £417 higher compared to pre-existing LBI managed properties. A detailed review of PFI2 accounts has been undertaken since handover resulting in a significant number requiring enforcement action to bring them in line with the LBI arrears process.

Reducing rent arrears over the next year will be a significant challenge, due to the increase in the cost of living and fuel bills, which will adversely affect a majority of our residents and limit their ability to make rent payments.

4.13 *H12: Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll - Partner properties*

Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll for partner properties is down compared to Q1 of last year due to many properties been brought back in-house in April 2022.

4.14 *H13: % of residents who are very satisfied or satisfied with whole experience of having works carried out.*

Satisfaction for capital works is collected quarterly by an independent satisfaction monitoring company. Due to the long-term nature of capital programmes Q1s results will relate to schemes ending in Q4 of 21-22. We are hoping to increase the number of surveys working with residents and the sampling company as sample rates are low. The Satisfaction measure is new, so we have not set targets this year. It is also important to note that Q4 was the last month some of our legacy contract work was completed (old Breyers and Mears contracts)

5. **Implications**

Financial implications:

5.1 The cost of providing resources to monitor performance is met within each service's core budget.

Legal Implications:

5.2 There are no legal duties upon local authorities to set targets or monitor performance. However, these enable us to strive for continuous improvement.

Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:

5.3 There are no environmental impact arising from monitoring performance.

Resident Impact Assessment:

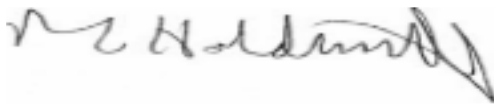
5.4 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010).

5.5 The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

6. **Conclusion**

6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out a clear set of priorities, underpinned by a set of firm commitments and actions that we will take over the next four years to work towards our vision of a Fairer Islington. The corporate performance indicators are one of a number of tools that enable us to ensure that we are making progress in delivering key priorities whilst maintaining good quality services.

Signed by:



Corporate Director, Homes and Neighbourhoods

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HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

20 SEPTEMBER 2022

- 1) Fire Brigade update on fire safety – from the Borough Commander
- 2) Main Scrutiny Review – Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington - witness evidence/presentations
- 3) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q1 2022/23)
- 4) Work Programme 2022/23

3 NOVEMBER 2022

- 1) Main Scrutiny Review: Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington-Peabody Housing Association
- 2) Private Rented Sector – 12 month report back
- 3) Tenant Satisfaction Measures Government Consultation
- 4) Work Programme 2022/23

1 DECEMBER 2021

- 1) Main Scrutiny Review: Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington-Witness Evidence
- 2) Allocation Scheme Policy – Officer update
- 3) Work Programme 2022/23

2 FEBRUARY 2023

- 1) Main Scrutiny Review: Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington – Draft Recommendations
- 2) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q2 2022/23)
- 3) Housing Association -TBC
- 4) Work Programme 2022/23

16 MARCH 2023

- 1) Major Scrutiny Review: Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington -Draft Recommendations and Report
- 2) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q2 2022/23)
- 3) Work Programme 2022/23

8 MAY 2023

- 1) Major Scrutiny Review: Strategic Review of Overcrowding in Islington - Final Report
- 2) Preparing for the end of PFI2 – 12 month report back
- 3) Communal Heating Mini-Review – 12 month report back
- 4) Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q3 2022/23)
- 5) Work Programme 2022/23

6 JUNE 2023

- 1) Membership, Terms of Reference and Dates of Meetings
- 2) Draft Work Programme 2023/24 and Potential Scrutiny Topics