

Annex 2

A review of progress and challenges in management of statutory homelessness and Temporary Accommodation over the last 24 months

Action Plan

| Action No. | Action | Lead | Indicative Timescale | Notes |
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| 1 | Recommence regular corporate TA monitoring meetings | DPHEH | First meeting to be held by 1/4/24 | Incorporate into MT meeting as a corporate priority? |
| 2 | Revise the TA target to reflect the national pressures. Revised target is 90 with a range of 90 to 120. | DPHEH | Complete by 1/4/24 | Report into MT, H&PSSC and Cabinet. |
| 3 | Make permanent the Housing Solutions Service officers on fixed term contracts whose contracts are due to expire at the end of March 2024. | HoHH | Complete by 30/4/24 | Report into MT, General Purposes and Council. In meantime extend existing temporary contracts until 30/9/24. |
| 4 | Work with Human Resources to address workforce planning issues around remuneration, training and development. | HoHH | Ongoing | To link into corporate work on workforce strategy including retention focus. |
| 5 | An Accommodation Team to be established to be responsible for all aspects of temporary accommodation and accessing the private rented sector including the responsibilities for procurement, inspection, placement (including the test of suitability), and the managing of TA (including rent collection) and | HoHH | Complete by 31/12/24 | |

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| | accessing the private rented sector to discharge duty. The permanent TA Welfare post should be part of the new Accommodation Team along with consideration of a Move-On Officer role. | | | |
| 6 | There should be a simple process for allocating spending from the Council's 'Homelessness Prevention Grant' (HPG) to pay for additional staffing to tackle demand and other homelessness pressures. | HoHH/CFSO | Complete by 31/5/24 | |
| 7 | For all offers to resolve and prevent homelessness for any case that would otherwise be placed into TA a cost-benefit calculation should be carried out set against the net cost of Temporary Accommodation. This will require the introduction of a cost-benefit framework with clear guidelines for officers negotiating solutions. | HoHH/CFSO | Complete by 31/5/24 | |
| 8 | A second post for Triage should be recruited to on a temporary basis using TMBC's Homelessness Prevention Grant. | HoHH | Complete by 29/2/24 | Post already in place – proposal to extend by six months to go to MT |
| 9 | Review the work with families where there is a threat of homelessness to ensure thorough enquiries, including home visits, take place and actively use prevention tools to resolve homelessness. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | |
| 10 | Implement a formal Triage procedure | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | An example model procedure will be provided as part of this review. |
| 11 | All applicants referred through from Triage to the Housing Solutions casework team, where there may be a temporary accommodation | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | Liaison required with Customer Services/Duty Officers |

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| | duty must be seen in person. No applicant should be booked into TA as a result of a telephone interview unless there is a disability that prevents them from attending the office or it is an out of hours placement. | | | |
| 12 | Implement an expanded 'duty day' operational team which can be achieved within the existing resources (assuming the recommendation on the fixed term contracts is agreed and implemented) to better deal with and control the assessments of emergency presentations and pre-booked appointments. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | |
| 13 | Implement a casework control and monitoring procedure for managing casework once a household is placed into temporary accommodation. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | |
| 14 | Implement a new framework to strengthen statutory casework for parent and family exclusions | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/6/24 | Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. |
| 15 | Implement a new framework to strengthen statutory casework for section 21 and other tenancy notices cases | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/9/24 | Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. |
| 16 | Implement a new framework to strengthen statutory casework for applications due to a claim that an applicant is homeless due to being a victim of domestic abuse | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/9/24 | Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. Domestic Abuse Specialist |

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| | | | | Officer recruitment currently underway |
| 17 | Caseworkers should be required to use the relevant interview sheets to determine homelessness, eligibility, priority need, intentional homelessness, and local connection where there is any doubt as to whether an applicant should be accepted or not against these 5 statutory tests. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/9/24 | Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. |
| 18 | The Service needs to be more robust on decision-making regarding cases that have been issued with a notice for deliberate rent arrears or unacceptable behaviour and make intentionally homeless decisions where appropriate. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/9/24 | Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. |
| 19 | Unless there is information to indicate that a suitable vacant property in the applicant's preferred area of choice will become available within 1 month a direct offer should be made regardless of the applicant's choice as long as it is assessed as suitable and there is no assessed risk of domestic abuse or other forms of violence. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 29/2/24 | |
| 20 | Implement routine use of 'Prevention Pathways', which set out the actions that must be taken for each presenting reason that result in a TA duty being accepted. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/9/24 | Template prevention pathways to be provided. Support staff with refresher training on legislation and decision making. Ensure case review process is robust. |
| 21 | To implement a TA Control and Monitoring spreadsheet/system as a matter of urgency | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 30/4/24 | |

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| 22 | Add capacity for move-on focus and develop a move-on planning and recording process. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 31/12/24 | |
| 23 | Introduce a more realistic landlord incentive combined with a more flexible landlord deal | HoHH | Complete by 31/12/24 | Cabinet Member decision? |
| 24 | A dedicated PRS resource needs to be 'freed up' to put together flexible packages that meet the different interests and requirements of landlords. | HoHH | Complete by 31/12/24 | To link into new Accommodation Team |
| 25 | Undertake more work to get over the message that social housing will not be the end solution for more than a minority of households in TA. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 31/12/24 | Includes review of Housing Allocations priorities. |
| 26 | Focus on sourcing PRS properties out of borough and especially in areas with a larger PRS market. | HoHH | Complete by 31/12/24 | To link into new Accommodation Team |
| 27 | Consider implementing a 'find your own accommodation' scheme. | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 31/12/24 | To link into new Accommodation Team |
| 28 | Improve the performance framework and monitoring system using KPIs | HoHH/HSM | Complete by 31/12/24 | Link into improved monitoring available on Huume system |
| 29 | Consider creating new business intelligence capacity through reprioritising the responsibilities of an existing officer elsewhere in the Council who can work on business intelligence and performance. This will ensure dedicated expertise to produce information for analysis and planning including the development of a suite of Power BI reports | DPHEH/MT | Complete by 31/12/24 | Link to any review of central support services? |
| 30 | Seek to build up a portfolio with Clarion of up to 40 properties over an agreed time frame with Clarion. | DPHEH/HoHH | Complete by 31/12/24 | Discussion underway |

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| 31 | Seek to explore small scale leasing deals with one or more of the other major Housing Associations with stock in the Borough | HoHH/HSEM | Ongoing | |
| 32 | Identify appropriate site for modular homes to be used as TA - up to 40 units | DPHEH/HoHH/HSEM | Complete by 31/12/24 | Work underway |
| 33 | To consider that a reasonable number of HMO units should still form part of the Council's TA portfolio | DPHEH/HoHH | Ongoing | |

DPHEH – Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

HoHH – Head of Housing and Health

CFSO – Chief Financial Services Officer

HSM – Housing Solutions Manager

HSEM – Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager