

**RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 13 November 2018

Present:

Councillor Michael Rutherford (Chairman)
Councillor Suraj Sharma (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Yvonne Bear, Julian Benington, Aisha Cuthbert,
Josh King, Angela Page and Gary Stevens

Also Present:

Councillors Hannah Gray, Peter Morgan and Michael Tickner

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

No apologies for absence were received.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cuthbert declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 16 – Leisure Services Lease Proposal, as she was a Board Member of Mytime Active.

41 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

41a QUESTIONS FOR THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

No questions were received.

41b QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE

No questions were received.

42 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

43 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND UPDATES

Report CSD18151

Minute 36 – 18.09.18 – Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee
Work Programme (November 2018-March 2019)

As stated in the Minutes of the previous meeting, Councillor Benington requested that Penge and Beckenham BID Managers be invited to the next meeting.

All other actions arising from previous meetings had been completed.

RESOLVED that progress on matters arising from previous meetings be noted.

44 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO REPORTS

44A BUDGET MONITORING 2018/19

Report FSD18087

The Committee considered an update on the latest budget monitoring position for 2018/19 for the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio based on expenditure and activity levels up to 30 September 2018 which showed a projected underspend of £49k for the total portfolio budget.

In relation to the Summary of Major Variations on page 29 of the report, Members were informed that credits attributed to staffing vacancies in the Building Control and Planning departments were linked to the volume of work at any given time. Additional staff were employed when necessary to deal with heavy workloads. Interim measures had been put in place since the departure of the Head of Building Control.

Only one part-time Town Centre Manager post remained and cost-reduction issues had been resolved. Options for potential BIDS for West Wickham and Chislehurst would be brought forward in a report to the Committee in January 2019, subject to the outcome of the on-going feasibility study work.

Councillor Bear considered it would be useful for a percentage column to be added to the variance table on page 28. It was agreed that the Head of Finance would discuss the required format with Councillor Bear.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the latest 2018/19 budget projection for the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio.

44B PENGE AND ANERLEY LIBRARY CAPITAL SCHEME POST COMPLETION REPORT

Report DRR18/054

The Committee considered the post completion report for the Penge and Anerley Library Capital Scheme. As part of the Capital Programme Procedures it was a requirement that schemes should be formally reviewed within one year of completion and the outcome of the review brought to the Portfolio Holder for endorsement.

The Chairman was pleased to note that the Capital Scheme completed below budget and the original contract programme was met.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the findings of the Post Completion Review carried out in respect of Penge and Anerley Libraries.

45 PDS PRESENTATION - INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF HOUSING

The Director of Housing gave a presentation on the work of the Housing Division, including an overview of:-

- the housing vision and key responsibilities;
- key pressures;
- the definition of homelessness and the law; and
- key priorities and responses.

A full copy of the presentation can be viewed as attachment A to these Minutes.

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Housing reported that the latest London Plan for Bromley had established a need for 1320 new homes per annum; this was virtually double the target of 641 new homes set out in the previous London Plan for Bromley. If this target was consistently met, it was likely that the system would significantly stabilise, problems around temporary accommodation would be diminished and the housing register should begin to reduce.

Housing Benefit had been frozen for four years; this was the third year with one year remaining. Under the current regime, Universal Credit would never keep pace with real market rents. Whilst payment was defaulted to tenants, there was an option for registered providers and private landlords to request direct payment in specific cases.

Officers were working with providers on options to deliver increased accommodation for young people and also access to private rented accommodation for single people.

Members were informed that all persons approaching the Council (and they may approach any Council in England), would undergo an assessment for priority need. Unfortunately, due to the current high costs within the rental market, there had been a marked increase in the number of people approaching the Council without priority need. The vast majority of people in temporary accommodation (in and out-of-Borough), were those to whom the Council had a long-term statutory duty to assist.

Whilst fraudulent claims were tackled robustly, assessments were carried out in a fair and reasonable manner.

The requirement for developers to provide 35% affordable housing was achieved where it was deemed viable to do so. The Director of Housing agreed to provide Members with further details.

The Chairman advised Members to contact him about any housing items they would like to be considered at future meetings.

46 BUILDING CONTROL - SERVICE REVIEW

Report DR18/1057

The Committee considered a report which sought permission from the Executive to review the current Building Control Service. As part of the agreed Gateway process for determining the method that offered the best value and quality for delivering Services (in accordance with the Council's Corporate Operating principles), the report provided a high level options appraisal of the Building Control Service.

The key options to be considered included:

Option 1 – Undertake a review of the service with the intention of continuing an improved internal service;

Option 2 - Stop providing Building Control Services;

Option 3 – Commission Building Control Services; or

Option 4- Enter into a Shared Service with another Local Authority.

It was recommended that a full review of the service (Option 1) be undertaken including the potential to operate a Shared Service Model (Option 4). This would include updating and improving the service by using better technology.

The Strategic Commissioning Manager gave an overview of the report.

Members were informed that since September 2018, the Head of Building Control post was currently being filled by a secondment arrangement with the London Borough of Bexley. This had proved successful and Bexley were supportive of the service review proposal.

Paragraph 4.2 under the Options Appraisal (page 46), referred to recommendations from the Hackett Review (following the Grenfell tragedy). These recommendations were likely to be based on fire safety and the size of developments.

In regard to Options 2 and 3, it was reported that whilst there were organisations to whom the service could be commissioned, it was unlikely to attract interest due to the fact that the Building (Local Authorities Charging) Regulations 2010 prohibited contract providers from making a profit on chargeable services within Building Control.

It was possible for elements of the service to be outsourced, however the Council would first need to resolve issues within the Department before this could be considered. Alternately, the Council could privately operate the service but again, problems within the Department would require attention.

The Chairman considered Option 3 (to commission Building Control Services) should be disregarded. As the Team consisted of just seven staff, the need for a Head of Building Control was doubtful and he suggested a less senior position be established.

Members agreed that Option 1 – to review the service with the intention of continuing an improved internal service was worth undertaking.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

Members asked that the recommendations be approved and that consideration given in the longer term should include potential commissioning of the service.

47 TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT

Report DRR/18/1062

Members were updated on progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme.

The Chairman of the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group was in attendance and informed Members that the final meeting of the Group was scheduled for December 2018. Members were invited to attend an event to celebrate the completion and official opening of the Beckenham improvement works which would take place at 12.30 pm on Saturday 1 December 2018 at

Beckenham Green. He advised that whilst the scheme had been fraught with difficulties, the programme had completed on time and within budget. By April 2018, footfall to the High Street had increased by 4½% and a further increase was anticipated at the next count.

All retail units in the High Street were currently let or under offer. Several businesses above shops had been replaced with much needed housing. Whilst this was welcomed, it was vital to ensure that the residential accommodation (following a change from business to residential use) was of sufficient standard and quality.

A post-completion report for the Beckenham Improvement Scheme would be submitted to the Committee in approximately six months' time.

Concern was raised in regard to enhanced cleaning of Beckenham High Street. The Head of Renewal advised that Members had previously opted for a like-for-like cleaning regime with enhanced cleaning funds to be drawn down when required. The Chairman recommended the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services be approached on this subject as a matter of importance.

It was reported that the cost of cleaning and maintaining the performance canopy at Beckenham Green was yet to be sourced as no particular group had been identified to undertake the task. One Member suggested using BID money for this purpose. Councillor Tickner advised that local residents' associations were not willing to accept the exceptionally high cost of £2k p.a. quoted by idVerde. The Chairman enquired whether sponsorship options could be considered. It was noted that the subject of waste and cleaning would be discussed at the Environment and Community Services PDS meeting the following week.

Funding had been agreed for the remedial works to the Churchill Theatre which, it was anticipated, would begin in January and complete by May 2019.

The paved areas outside Lakeland and H&M in Bromley High Street, required re-finishing.

Comments on the public consultation regarding site G were currently being evaluated.

The CLG had launched a High Street Fund of £675m to focus on the future of high streets. It was acknowledged that the Council should prepare and submit a bid for this to contribute to the long-term strategies for Orpington High Street. The deadline for submitting bids was Spring 2019. Further details would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED that the progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme be noted.

**48 RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME: JANUARY-MARCH 2019**

Report CSD18152

The Committee considered its Work Programme for January – March 2019.

The following reports were suggested:-

- Business Improvement Districts for Chislehurst and West Wickham; and
- Crystal Palace Masterplan - site visit to be undertaken sometime in the future.

RESOLVED that subject to the addition of the suggested reports above, the Work Programme be noted.

**49 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER
2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

50 TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

Members considered the report and made comments available to the Executive.

51 HOUSING S106 PAYMENT IN LIEU CONTRIBUTIONS

Members considered the report and made comments available to the Executive.

**54 UPDATE ON BROMLEY HOMES SPV AND OPTIONS GOING
FORWARD FOR FURTHER JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENTS**

Members considered the report and made comments available to the Executive.

**55 INCREASING HOUSING SUPPLY TO MEET HOUSING NEED
THROUGH USE OF BROMLEY OWNED LAND**

Members considered the report and made comments available to the Executive.

56 LEISURE SERVICES LEASE PROPOSAL

Members considered the report and made comments available to the Executive.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chairman



THE LONDON BOROUGH

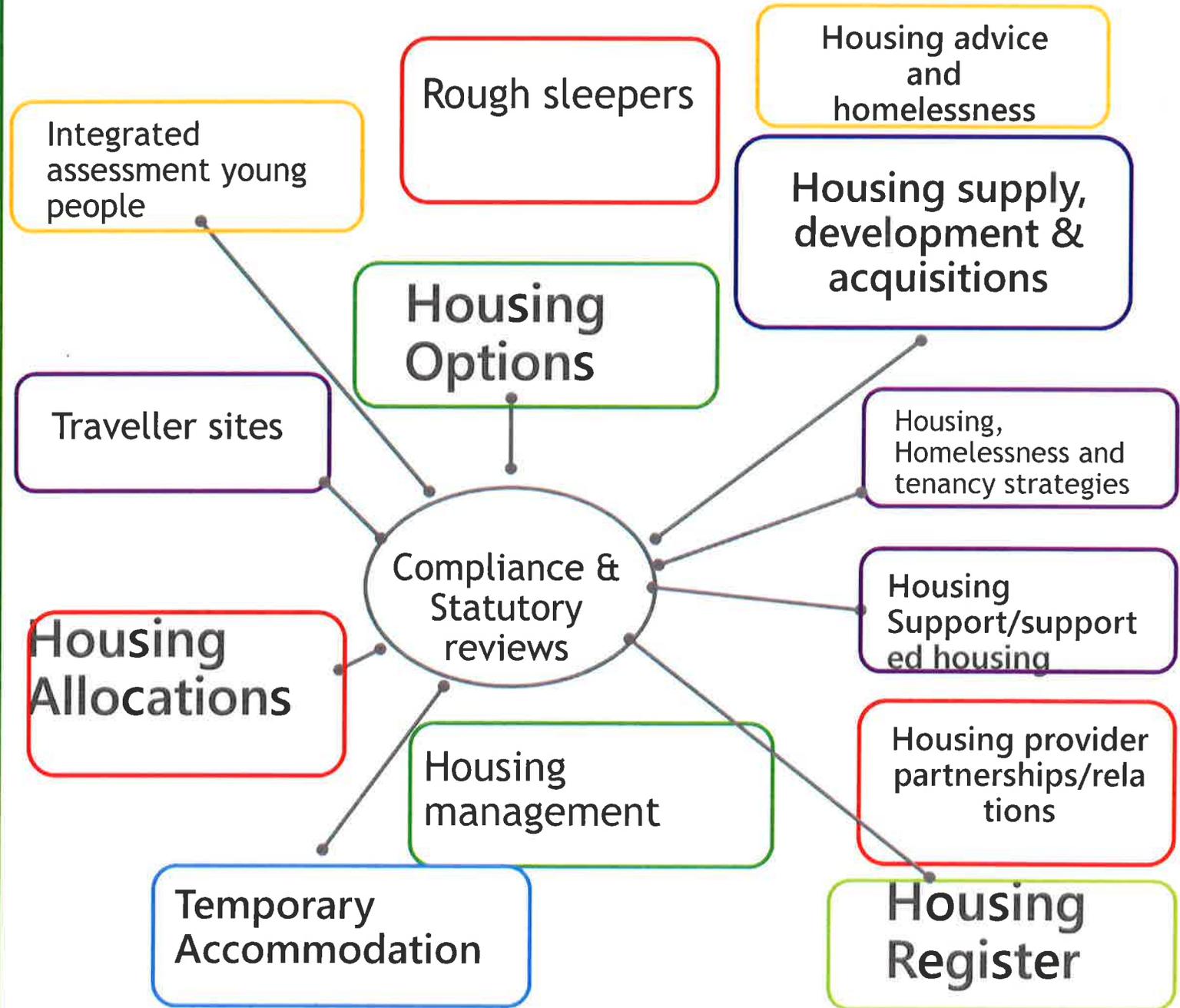
RR&H PDS: Housing Division Overview

Content

- The Housing vision and key responsibilities
- Pressures
- Definition of homelessness and the law
- Key priorities and responses

Our Vision:

Enabling residents of Bromley to access and sustain a place to live that is affordable, decent and secure.



Key Pressures: Bigger Demands, decreased supply

- Affordability gap between rents and benefits leaving households with a shortfall in their housing costs – average market rents are 54% above local housing allowance levels
- Welfare reform – universal credit, benefit caps, frozen benefits, removal of spare room subsidy
- Landlords increasingly risk adverse
- Increasing vulnerabilities/multiple and complex needs

Key Pressures: Bigger Demands, decreased supply

- Landlords increasingly risk adverse
- Market shift to nightly paid rates
- Reduction in new supply (less than 200 affordable units over 5 years)
- Reduced social housing lettings – reduction around 30%
- Extended duties in the new homelessness Reduction Act

Main provisions of the Act

New homelessness duties

Threatened with homelessness 56 days before likely to become homeless

Enhanced information and advice

Detailed assessments

Personalised Housing Plans

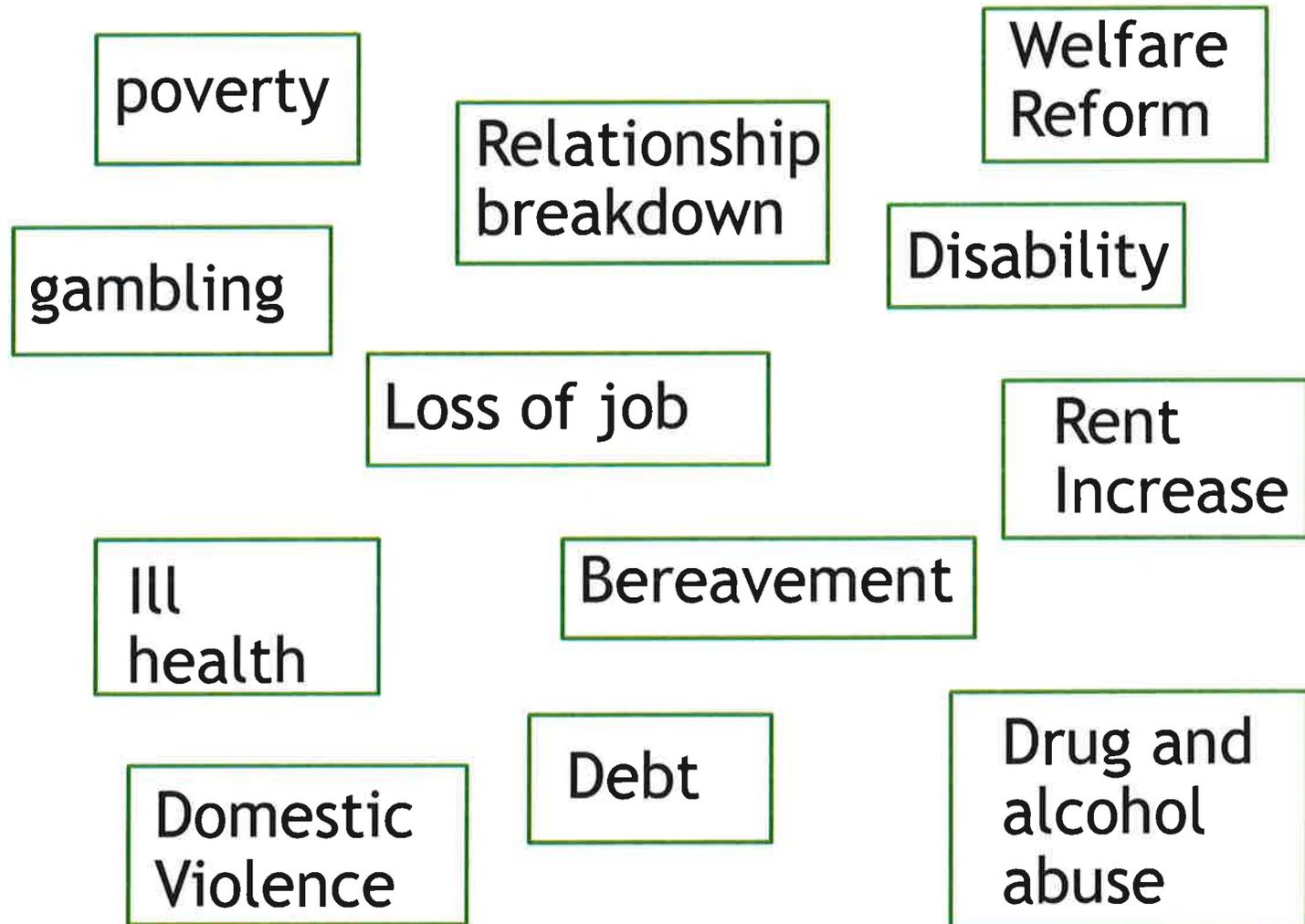
For up to 56 days, take steps to prevent

For up to 56 days, take steps to relieve

Definition of Homelessness

‘You may be homeless if you live in unsuitable housing, don’t have rights to stay where you are or if you are sleeping rough’ - Shelter

Reasons for homelessness



Those that may be left behind

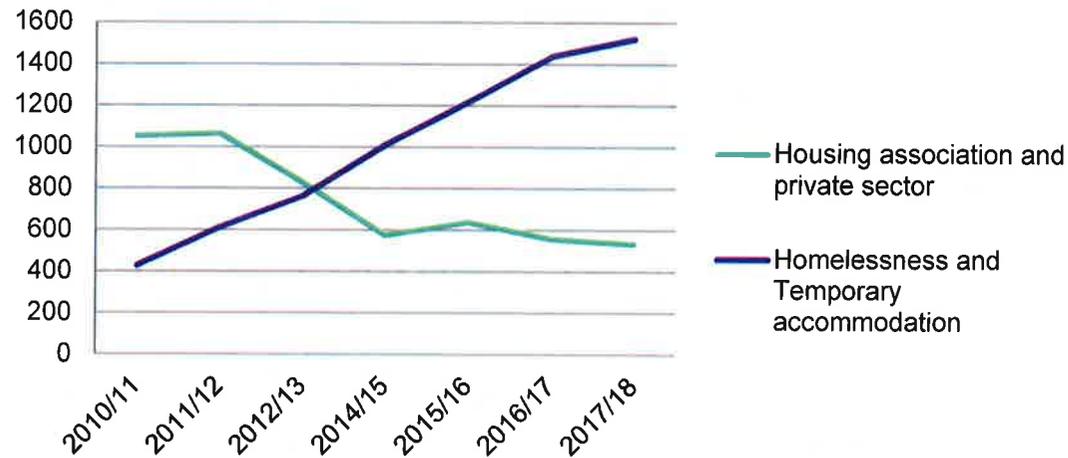
- The many hundreds who don't get onto the Housing Register (likely to be over 3000 this year)
- The many hundreds who approach as Homeless that the Council has no obligation to provide housing (likely to be over 1400 this year)
- These people will often be in unsatisfactory or insecure accommodation

The Local Picture

- Acute housing pressures: An increasing mismatch in supply of, and demand for, accommodation that is affordable
- Increase in numbers of people with serious housing problems
- Increased number of homeless presentations
- Increased numbers (and length of stay) in temporary accommodation
- Assessed need 1320 homes per annum

Overall impact

Correlation between decreasing supply and temporary accommodation use



- High level of approaches
- More than 100% increase in use of temporary accommodation
- Lack of move on
- Rising budget pressure for temporary accommodation and homelessness - £7.7m by 2023

The stats at a glance

- 220+ monthly approaches (& rising)
- 1,600 in TA (1,000 in nightly paid)
- TA net increase 20 per month
- 55% of TA is out of borough
- 80% in TA are families with dependent children/pregnant
- 3,500 on the housing register
- 14 years to clear the housing register at current rate
- Rehousing timescales – 4 years+

Strategic Priorities:

- **To prevent homelessness wherever possible. either by assisting a household to remain in existing accommodation or to secure alternative accommodation**
- **To increase the level of affordable housing supply available to discharge statutory housing responsibilities in order to reduce the current reliance on costly and insecure nightly paid models of temporary accommodation**
- **To provide support to improve life chances so that households build the necessary resilience to sustain accommodation and minimise the risk of repeat homelessness**

Prevention

- Housing options toolkit – whatever works approach
- Early intervention – identifying those at risk
- Outreach/gateway approach – the right advice, at the right time
- Customer portal – interactive advice and sign posting
- Holistic personal housing plans

Increasing access and supply

Engaging with the private rented sector

Tenant and landlords incentive pack

Block bookings and leasing schemes

Lodging schemes

Refurbishment of vacant properties –
Bellegrove and Manorfileds

Empty homes

Modular homes

Increasing supply – greater control of the market

Work with housing associations

Planning obligations

Property acquisition

Use of Bromley owned sites or acquired sites

Mears

