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HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

**Tuesday, 7th December, 2021 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XA**

Membership:

co : Anne Brown, Ergin Erbil (Associate Cabinet Member (Non-geographical based)), Margaret Greer, Ayten Guzel, James Hockney (Chair), Saray Karakus, Edward Smith and Hass Yusuf (Vice-Chair)

AGENDA – PART 1

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council are invited to identify any disclosable pecuniary, other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests relevant to the items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 4)

To agree the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 30 September 2021.

4. ENFIELD REPAIRS DIRECT - OVERVIEW ON DELIVERY AND RECENT CHANGES (Pages 5 - 10)

To receive the report of Martin Greenway, Head of Repairs & Estate Services.

5. ESTATE SERVICES (Pages 11 - 16)

To receive the report of Martin Greenway, Head of Repairs & Estate Services.

6. DRAFT TENANCY STRATEGY (Pages 17 - 34)

To receive the report of Helen Baeckstroem, Strategy & Policy Team Manager.

7. RETENTION OF STAFF IN HOUSING DEPARTMENT (Pages 35 - 38)

To receive the report. Please note that this report is '**For Information Only**'

8. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22 (Pages 39 - 40)

To note the Housing Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021/2022.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 17 March 2022.

HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL - 30.9.2021**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2021**

MEMBERS: Councillors Anne Brown, James Hockney, Ayten Guzel, Edward Smith and Hass Yusuf

Officers:

Joanne Drew (Director of Housing and Regeneration), Richard Sorensen (Head of the Housing Advisory Service), Jane Creer and Tanya Elcock (Governance and Scrutiny Team)

Also Attending: Councillor Gina Needs, Cabinet Member for Social Housing

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Councillor James Hockney, Chair, welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ergin Erbil.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021.

4. BUILDING SAFETY-INCLUDING CLADDING COMPLIANCE WITH BUILDING SAFETY BILL

RECEIVED the report of Abigail Ellis, Investment & Resident Safety Programme Director.

NOTED

1. The verbal introduction by Councillor Gina Needs, Cabinet Member for Social Housing.
2. Members' agreement that more training around building safety responsibilities would be useful, to enhance knowledge.
3. Key points of the report highlighted by Joanne Drew, Director of Housing & Regeneration. Members were invited to raise questions and comments.
4. In response to Members' queries regarding the fire safety measures, it was confirmed the inspection regimes and responsibilities were set out in Para 5 Table 1 of the report. It would be important to educate residents for them to also take responsibility for in-flat testing. It was also confirmed

HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL - 30.9.2021

there was a stay-put policy for residents as the best way to manage an incident.

5. In response to Members' queries regarding lack of Fire Fighting lifts, it was advised these had not been raised by the Fire Brigade as a deficiency. Further to a risk based review informing the lift replacement programme, they were not a recommended solution in blocks. However, officers would re-check and would seek the perspective of the Fire Brigade.
6. Officers provided more information on premises information boxes (PIBs), and that information on vulnerable residents and those with mobility issues would be included, and would be part of the responsibilities of the new role of Building Safety Managers.
7. It was confirmed that access on estates for emergency services vehicles was kept under review, and the Council had a system in place.
8. Members asked for an estimate of the numbers of additional staff and of the additional cost in implementing the measures. It was estimated that the Council would require a team of Building Safety Managers and an investment around £800k per annum by April 2023. The HRA business plan was being reviewed. There was potential for LBE Building Control to provide services as the Building Control Authority and collect fees for those services.
9. Officers would check with the private sector enforcement team whether further checks on standards would be required in future, if the same checks applied to private developments.
10. Regarding the Fire Safety Programme, Officers provided information on slippages and pressures on materials and labour, and the prioritisation and phasing of works.
11. The role of care takers at blocks was discussed. As Cabinet Member, Councillor Needs asked to be advised of any issues of concern. Ward councillors would be contacted with the schedule of annual estate walkabouts and invited to join them. The appropriate contacts for residents to report issues were on information boards in each estate block.

The Scrutiny Panel AGREED to:

- (i) Request further feedback from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on fire fighting and evacuation lifts, and the Fire Brigade officers and unions' perspective.
- (ii) Request further feedback from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on resource and staffing implications of the new measures to the Council, and on enforcement of private developments.
- (iii) Recommend training on the legislative changes for the portfolio holders and key members.
- (iv) Recommend an information campaign / education for Council tenants on fire safety measures.

5. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION LEVELS AND STRATEGY TO REDUCE

RECEIVED the report of Richard Sorensen, Head of the Housing Advisory Service.

HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL - 30.9.2021

NOTED

1. Councillor Gina Needs, Cabinet Member for Social Housing, introduced the report and gave credit to officers for their achievements.
2. The presentation by Richard Sorensen, Head of the Housing Advisory Service, setting out the context of the housing situation in the borough, and the number of households living in temporary accommodation. The updated slide presentation would be circulated to Members. The Council's objectives were highlighted, and that the focus on prevention was showing success.
3. Officers responded to the Chair's queries regarding Brickfield House and recent media coverage, confirming that there had been an independent report into the management of the building, and that the issues were specific to this building. The report had found that while the building was generally well managed, there were some specific improvements which could be made. An action plan was being implemented in response to the report. Officers also highlighted the problem of long term use of accommodation intended as emergency housing, and the challenges of large numbers of single parent families and vulnerable residents living in close proximity, of pandemic lockdowns, and of short supply of private rented accommodation.
4. In response to Members' queries regarding leasing, the work with landlords, the selective licensing scheme, and the advice line put in place during the pandemic were highlighted.
5. Officers provided advice for councillors on progressing tenants' issues. Problems of capacity in the Home-finders team were acknowledged and this had been dealt with by the introduction of a new system. There had also been recruitment of new case workers, which would help speed up responses.
6. Councillor Smith asked about the effect of the ban on evictions during the pandemic. It was advised that whilst there had been fewer evictions, the Council had dealt with the challenge of the 'Everyone In' scheme to assist rough sleepers and had secured funding for more year round accommodation.
7. In response to further queries regarding inducements to landlords and relative costs to the Council of nightly rented accommodation and other private temporary rented accommodation, this was outlined and a written note was also requested to be sent to Members for further clarification.
8. Councillor Brown expressed concern regarding the lack of enough family sized or properly affordable housing for people on low incomes. Officers clarified the affordable housing definition, and that the Council aimed for best use of existing housing stock and as much family oriented housing and affordable intermediate products as possible.
9. In response to the Chair's queries, Enfield Council's efforts in reducing temporary accommodation levels were confirmed as bucking the national trend, and better than neighbouring boroughs. A decision had been taken not to place people outside the borough and to try to work to re-shape the local private rented sector.
10. The Cabinet Member and officers were thanked for attending and presenting the strategy.

HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL - 30.9.2021

6. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22

NOTED that the report in respect of Retention of Staff in Housing Department would be received at the next meeting, along with the other two items marked on the panel's work programme for the December meeting.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

NOTED the date of the next meeting was Tuesday 7 December 2021.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

This report format is for scrutiny reports**London Borough of Enfield****Housing Scrutiny Panel
7th December 2021**

Subject: Review of Enfield Repairs Direct**Cabinet Member: Cllr Gina Needs****Executive Director: Sarah Cary**

Purpose of Report

1. This report reviews the progress and performance of Enfield Repairs Direct as we approach a year and a half from its setup. It details the successes, the challenges and the opportunities for future development of the service along with the staffing model which has been subject to staff consultation and explains how these arrangements will improve the service
2. This report also notes the contribution of the Repairs Stakeholder group and recognises the value of resident involvement in shaping and scrutinising the service.

Proposals

The Panel is invited to note the contents of the report and make comments, suggestions or recommendations for further work or improvements.

Background

3. Resident and member feedback on previous repairs contractors responsible for undertaking responsive repairs in recent years has been poor.
4. In June 2019, the Cabinet approved the in-sourcing of the Housing Repairs Service (KD4868). This service was launched in May 2020. In addition to the setting up of a new inhouse team wider feedback was considered. Firstly, that residents wanted their call to be answered quickly by polite, helpful staff who could diagnose their repair and book a convenient appointment slot with minimum customer effort. Secondly, there needs to be more reliability in attending appointments and we achieve higher rates of 'first time fix'. Finally, that we communicate better to satisfactorily resolve repair issues including improving how we handle escalations and complaint casework.
5. In February 2020 Cabinet reviewed a report (KD5070) detailing the design of the service, a policy for repairs, timescales for delivery, a financial business, branding and a service model with proposed timetable for the introduction of defined functions.
 - Housing Resolution Centre – align with the establishment of a new Housing Hub set for January 2022.
 - ERD direct labour force – established. Staff have been recruited firstly on a temporary basis moving to permanent contracts. The market is particularly challenging

- MOT service ceased due to covid restrictions although the team has focussed on the treatment of damp & mould and ensuring there is a robust winter service which ensures all of our elderly and vulnerable customers are supported.
- Active Asset Management – this has been developed further and allows the Council a higher level of sophistication in asset planning and management.

Response to the challenge of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Members will appreciate the disruptive impact that covid-19 has had upon the service as with all other sectors in economic and social life. Repairs services across the country have applied restrictions in repairs to critical emergencies only, furloughed staff and have been fraught with supply chain difficulties. Enfield Repairs Direct having launched in May 2020 has remained operational throughout.
- The service has had to change its working practices and procedures in order to meet the challenge. Staff have been updated frequently and issued with the latest in PPE in order to safely discharge their duties and participated in regular testing onsite at Council premises.

Performance

- Residents expect a responsive repairs service which is fast and effective. ERD has expended a great deal of effort into developing our job management system to enable us to effectively manage appointments. The chart below shows our progress over the past year in completing appointments on time. The team have not carried a backlog coming out of Covid restrictions as other housing providers have experienced. Instead we have now achieved a level of confidence in our system and method where our operating Works In Progress (WIP) is below a thousand jobs and we expect to see the targets being met in the last quarter of the year.

Indicator	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Current Target
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	
EH072 Percentage of Urgent Repairs Completed on Time (YTD)	91.6%	91.6%	91.9%	92.0%	92.1%	97.0%	96.0%	95.1%	95.8%	96.3%	96.7%	96.4%	97.0%
TP150 Responsive repairs completed by agreed target date - (YTD)	91.1%	91%	91.2%	91.3%	91.3%	98%	96.8%	96.2%	96.5%	96.8%	97%	96.7%	98%

- Following on from the general trend of improvement completion times, we expect to see a corresponding increase in satisfaction. The Council engaged the services of BMG to conduct an independent survey of our residents' views of key housing services. There was previously a survey conducted in 2019. The 'percentage of residents satisfied with the way Enfield Council's Housing Service deals with repairs and maintenance' increased by 7% (general needs). Moving from 55% in 2019 to 62% in 2021.
- Recognising that the route to improving the responsive repairs service, the team needs to act on feedback. For this reason we capture data on a transactional basis from completed jobs. Residents may receive a text alert should they consent, which allows us to remind the resident about the

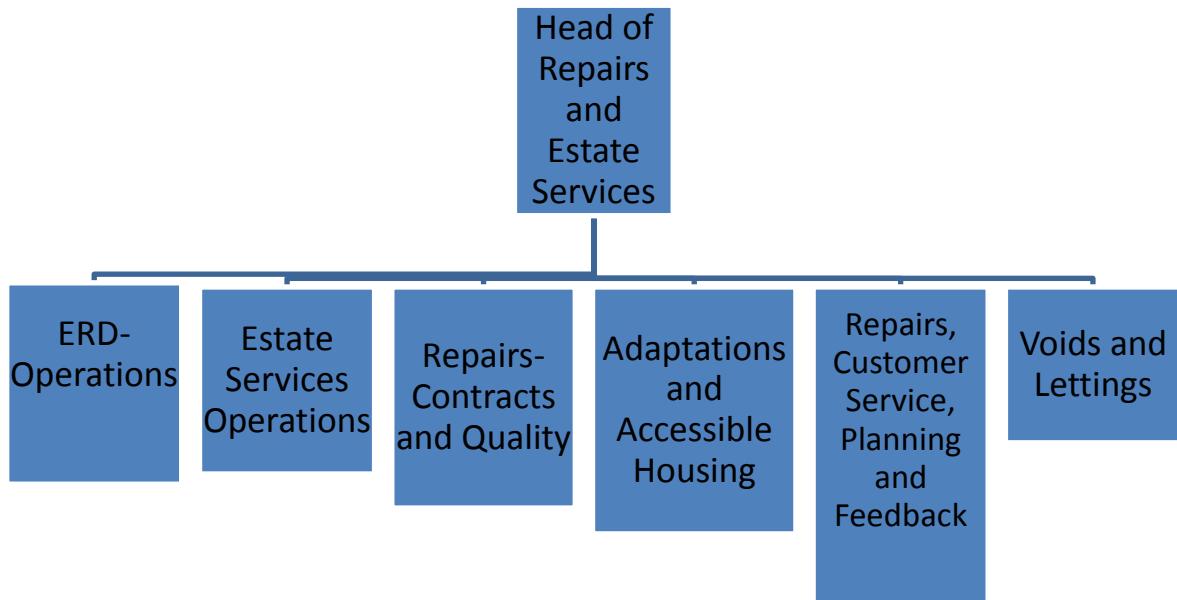
appointment but also to generate a survey following the completion of the works. We use this feedback to evaluate our performance and approach to resolving a repair and we may contact residents who report a bad experience to see how we could improve next time.

11. Similarly our feedback team also review data from complaints and Members' Enquiries. Management of casework is a priority for the team and we are actively working to de-escalate complaints and effect timely solutions as a matter of course. Furthermore, we look into trends and hotspots to see where we can focus our planned investment to reduce multiple expensive responsive repairs. For instance, on one block, given the number of leaks emanating from a failing infrastructure of heating pipes causing multiple callouts often out-of-hours, we have liaised with colleagues to bring forward a programme of works to alleviate the issue.
12. Tenants and leaseholders have the right to invoke formal legal disrepair protocols where they feel the council has failed to discharge its repairing obligations as a landlord. The number of disrepair cases have halved from the caseload in 2020 settling at 36 as of October 2021. We may contest the assertions made in some of these claims but where it is evident the Council has failed our focus is to quickly resolve the disrepair. The strong performance of the team should be recognised in the context of a country-wide increase in cases as a result of direct marketing of legal services on a larger scale and some legislative changes such as the Homes (Fit for Habitation) Act which can widen the scope and duration of proceedings.

Indicator	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value
CH066 **Legal Disrepair Caseload*** (New measure)	34	36	30	31	29	31	36
CH067 ***Disrepair cases completed*** (New Measure)	4	11	5	8	6	2	6

Staffing structure Changes

13. The service has changed its delivery model following a review of structures across the Housing Department as well as an extended period of staff consultation earlier this year. As part of a considered and integrated Housing wide restructure, we have sought to design a repairs service ready to meet the challenge of the future.



14. The chart above outlines how functions are organised. The structure is predicated on maximising efficiency so there are several functions brought together or share common resources. Eg. Estate Services and Repairs services share common demands for fleet, materials, waste disposal etc. This is therefore reflected in a new structure. Similarly, this setup enables us to have greater focus on the communal areas given feedback from caretakers.
15. **ERD Operations** – The inhouse repairs operation is of critical importance to the future success of the service. The reason is that we do not want to over-rely on contractors as has been a problem in the past. Instead our vision is to create a dedicated inhouse workforce with trained and knowledgeable tradespeople, with apprenticeship programmes and succession planning. The benefit of an inhouse service is that there is greater control and accountability for the standard of work. Many of our new staff are local to Enfield and have a connection to our community. We have a training programme agreed which will enable our staff to work safely, understand our systems and to be receive further trade skill training.
16. Our apprenticeship programme includes 5 apprentices in the next intake. There are significant advantages to the 'grow our own' strategy. Firstly, it affords local residents an opportunity to develop themselves at the same time as the Council benefits from the local knowledge they have. By learning on the housing stock in Enfield, apprentices build significant knowledge of repairs and maintenance solutions particular to our housing stock and increasing the chances of us completing repairs first time round.
17. ERD Tradespeople act as ambassadors for the Council. For many of our residents this is one of the few direct interactions they have with Council staff. For this reason, they have a public service opportunity far wider than a contractor. Through our regular programme of toolbox talks we can update on local initiatives the Council is undertaking as well as a level of training in safeguarding, 'prevent' training, hoarding as well as escalating potential buildings and structural defects we ought to be mindful of.
18. A good example of the service supporting the Council's response to the pandemic was the refurbishment of a council-owned building as a 'somewhere safe to stay hub'. A vital support for those who are homeless during a public health crisis.

19. **Contracts and Quality Team-** To support the delivery of repairs we have established in the structure a team providing technical support. This has had a positive effect on delivery in several respects. Firstly, by being the operational administrators for our IT we can use real-time data to improve the speed and quality of our responses. In addition, there is a data analyst function and financial controller allowing us to review repairs demand, hotspots and identify responsive repairs trends which may require a capital investment solution. For instance, it may be more cost effective to bring forward a programmed roof renewal rather than multiple repairs. Furthermore we are also concerned to maximise productivity from our inhouse workforce as well as monitor and challenge spend on materials and fuel.
20. Embedded in this team is the surveying function who have the responsibility to diagnose complex repairs, post inspect contracted work and manage our contractors if the work cannot be done inhouse. We are developing the surveyors' role to play a more integrated role in a wider asset management strategy. Similarly, we have improved our internal processes with regards to dealing with damp and mould. The surveyors approach reports of damp and condensation from a problem solving perspective rather than from a liability perspective. Where residents have difficulty with condensation we offer practical advice on how to manage moisture. It also enables us to approach the problem from a wider perspective. For instance, there may be a case of fuel poverty for which we can refer for help.
21. **Housing Resolution Centre** The structure combines the customer service, planning and customer feedback/ complaints functions. There are several business benefits to managing the end-to-end repairs process as a whole. Firstly, it enables us to improve diagnosis meaning improved efficiency down the chain. For instance, we are more likely to dispatch the right tradesperson for the job and book the appointment for the correct amount of time and there will be a greater chance of having the right materials. We have recruited the manager for this service and are making preparations for the transfer of this new service into the Housing Hub in January 2022.
22. Communications with customers are important. Unless we have an integrated call handling and planning system we will not be able to deliver a slick high-volume service. The opportunity we have with a one-stop-shop resolution team is to get things right at the point of call and reduce failure demand – i.e. customers chasing existing repairs. We have built in resource for the fielding of enquiries and complaints to improve our completion times and quality.

Planned IT Improvements

23. A modern Repairs team's success is largely tied up in the effectiveness of its IT and how it is used. The service is currently using Connect Mobile as a job management system which enables us to plan our works and send jobs to operatives on their PDAs. The system is comprehensive in that it enables clear descriptions of works, the ability to upload before/ after photos and GPS tracked to identify the next geographically closest job for the tradesperson and reduce travel time. We wish to develop the functionality of the system for example to enable residents to book certain repairs directly through the website. Service Connect also integrates with Civica CX which will soon replace Northgate as our principal housing system.

Resident Involvement

24. The insourcing and development of Enfield Repairs direct has been monitored by the Repairs Stakeholders' group. This has been very valuable in understanding the key concerns of residents and where we should prioritise our focus. The recent meetings have discussed:
- Procedure for dealing with damp and mould
 - 'Plentific Platform' – an innovative way of engaging small local contractors for certain types of works
 - Winter programme of support for elderly and vulnerable residents

Future Plans for the Development of the service

25. ERD is emerging from the start-up phase of its establishment and is now stabilising and settling. The public service ethos of the team is strong and there is a great willingness to succeed in our next phase of development. We intend to focus on performance, achieve 'right first time' wherever possible and approach maintenance in way which considers the broader asset management strategy. As performance continues to improve gauged by our own internal indicators and more importantly by customer and member satisfaction, we seek opportunities for the growth of the service.

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Date of report 24.11.21

Appendices

This report format is for scrutiny reports

London Borough of Enfield

Housing Scrutiny Panel
7th December 2021

Subject: Estate Services

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gina Needs
Executive Director: Sarah Cary

1. Purpose of Report

The report sets out the service standards delivered on our housing estates including how these have been reviewed as a result of the increased waste being experienced as a result of the pandemic and changes to the way residents live..

2. Relevance to the Council Plan

1. Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods

Our priorities are to:

- build more and better homes for local residents
- invest in and improve our council homes

2. Safe, healthy and confident communities

Our priorities are to:

- keep communities free from crime
- inspire and empower young Enfield to reach their full potential
- deliver essential services to protect and support vulnerable residents
- create healthy streets, parks and community spaces

3. Background

With ambitions to become the greenest borough in London, Enfield has a great opportunity to include its council housing portfolio in our plans. Having a clean, safe and well-maintained environment in which to live is clearly important to our tenants and we recognise that the appearance of an estate or group of homes enhances well-being and a positive environment in which to live. We therefore aim to make our homes and surrounding areas as attractive and well maintained as possible, provide greater opportunities for safe play and enjoyment and enhanced recycling facilities. Additionally, legislative and regulatory focus on living conditions requires that the sector to address the issue holistically and engage with residents and other stakeholders to determine standards and improvements.

4. Main Considerations for the Panel

4.1 Resident views

Feedback from residents and members is that the standard of estate services could be improved. In a recent resident satisfaction survey there was 17% of tenants and 24% of leaseholders reported a level dissatisfaction. We know that the pandemic has caused lifestyle changes which has increased the level of waste being experienced across London.

The Housing sector falls under the remit of the Regulator of Social Housing which sets standards landlords must comply with including the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. It is expected that we keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with our homes clean and safe. We will also work in partnership with tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

4.2 Roles and service standards

Caretaking and management of common parts - The Caretaking team have the key role in service coordination on our estates. For many of our residents, caretakers will be the only representative of the council they see regularly and this places caretakers in a key position of trust and responsibility. We have clarified the role of caretakers and others providing services to the blocks and will display this information publicly.

Caretakers deliver the communal area cleaning programme including a cleaning service for the Communal entrances, lifts, Balconies, Exits, Stairs, Doors, Glass, Floors, Landings, Hallways & areas outside of all flats; removal and disposal of all papers, junk mail, leaflets, litter, etc. Clean of the lobby, checking of all internal areas, reporting any bulk/graffiti/Health and safety issues; Cleaning for all communal floors/stairwells to get rid of removable marks and hazardous deposits. The team has conducted an internal review of chemicals and fragrances used and will be trialling different products across the borough to gauge the level of finish.

Caretakers sweep and spot clean balconies, clean any glass in the main doors, internally and externally, and any internal glass doors, remove any cobwebs from all communal areas, dust all fixtures/fittings, ledges, balustrades, ledges and skirting Bin rooms/areas.

The Caretaking team will fully disinfect/sanitise, conduct a spot clean of the bin rooms/refuse areas on the external hard, gravel & green spaces. Caretakers will conduct a litter pick round on all external hard, gravel and horticultural areas, including removing bottles, cans, general rubbish. The staff will remove hard surface weeds as & when required, raise and follow up on Communal repairs, replace any non-LED light bulbs as & when required and report any Anti-Social Behaviour issues to the Housing Team.

Following our internal review, we have identified the following improvements to be implemented or expanded in the coming months:

- A window cleaning programme. There are 623 low rise blocks and 52 towers meaning there will be a 'reach and wash' arrangement for low rise blocks and

abseiling for towers. There is also an opportunity to tie this in with a planned gutter clearance programme which as part of our cyclical maintenance.

- 'Deep Cleaning' Programme. This will be an annual programme of pressure washing, deep cleaning of bin chambers and gulleys.

Grounds maintenance - We have increased standards for grounds maintenance:

- Grass will be cut every 10 working days during the cutting season (March - Oct)
- Leaves will be cleared once a year at the end of leaf fall
- Shrub beds will be maintained twice a year
- weed-spray contract for controlling weeds growing on all hard surfaces on our land.
- Treatment of invasive species such as Japanese knotweed
- Maintenance work on trees according to priority, contractors will deal with trees that are a health-and-safety hazard first. There is an inspection regime for communal areas every 3 years.
- Delivery of ground maintenance estate improvement programmes, such as creating and supporting resident led greening projects such as Grow Your Own schemes and Allotments.
- Planting budget to enable us to consult residents on shrubbery to be used on estates to enhance their aesthetic.

Bin stores - The investment programme in existing stock encompasses bin storage areas in light of building safety legislation as well as communal parts and playgrounds. A review of the recycling facilities across council housing land highlighted several estates that required improvements and those are part of an existing programme underway on 20 sites with a further 30 sites being highlighted for the next tranche. The review looked at the sites from a building safety perspective and also from a perspective of increasing recycling rates. Typically these recycling facilities are relocated or upgraded according to assessment.

Communal repairs and maintenance - **There** is an increased focus on maintenance with new posts in the establishment focused on delivering cyclical works to the common parts. The caretaking team is integrated with Enfield Repairs Direct and shares common resource. This enables us to develop a dedicated communal repair response and improve the speed of completing communal repairs and to cross-train caretakers to undertake small repairs where appropriate. The categories of repairs are currently:

Emergency repairs We have responsibilities to carry out work in the event of an emergency. These will be completed in four hours of the request

Urgent repairs These are repairs that may cause discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance to our residents or a third party. We will complete these repairs within 48 hours of the request.

Routine repairs

These are defects that are not likely to cause any serious discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance to the customer or third party if not given an immediate or urgent response. We will complete these within 90 calendar days of

the request. There will not be any obvious consequential cost of not undertaking this work sooner.

Out of Hours Repairs For repairs reported outside of normal working hours we will only attend emergency repairs within 4 hours. We will try to fully rectify the issue, but it may be necessary to only make safe pending a full repair in line with the timescales given in the full Housing Service repairs policy.

Planned Works - These are works which have been identified as being required from a stock condition survey and which do not cause any serious discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance to the customer and which do not present an immediate health and safety risk. These may include external works such as fencing, gates, paving, larger roof or brickwork repairs and internal decent homes works such as kitchen, bathroom and heating replacements and will be put into a planned programme of work.

Waste and recycling - Communal domestic waste is collected from locations approved by the Council's Waste and Recycling service. The crews will remove all bins from the communal bin area, empty and return the bin to its original presentation point. Waste and Recycling Operations will ensure all bin lids are locked after collection, wheel brakes are secured, and any damaged bins are reported back to the Waste and Recycling service. Communal bin collection frequencies are weekly although on some sites a new additional collection will be carried out in order to better manage waste on estates.

Improving recycling rates are a key Council concern and for this reason we have embarked on a programme of improved facilities as mentioned above. In addition we also plan to launch an education campaign in conjunction with waste services to enable us to help more residents recycle.

Given the London wide increase in fly-tipping we have established two posts dedicated to waste enforcement on housing land. The officers have been successfully embedded and already issued in excess of 50 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). The team work collaboratively to capture evidence through CCTV and witnesses. Additionally we have regular communications about estate services issues. Currently there is not the dedicated resource which we need to carry out enforcement to the levels needed.

Anti-social behaviour - We have a clear approach to ASB and, where proven, we will take tough action against anti-social behaviour or illegal acts. This includes domestic abuse, Hate Crime, physical violence, severe damage to property and other serious criminal acts. We comply with legislative requirements and work closely with the Police, other Council departments and other partner agencies to tackle problems and promote safer and sustainable communities.

We are dedicated to working with residents to resolve reports of anti-social behaviour which we will investigate and, where there is clear, proven evidence, the necessary and appropriate action will be taken. We can only do this with resident commitment throughout the process which means that we are reliant on receiving reports of anti-social behaviour as part of the case management process. Our primary aim is to resolve cases without the need for legal intervention and, in fact, very few cases require this approach.

Each estate has an allocated First Response Officer, who will case manage all reports of low level anti- social behaviour on council owned and managed estates. The First Response Team work in close partnership with the council's community safety unit, the police and diverse partners within the community to minimise anti-social behaviour and crime in the borough.

Resident engagement - Through our resident engagement service, we seek to involve a wide range of tenants, leaseholders and other residents, not only in housing issues but also in the context of place shaping in the borough, specifically our plans for the future for areas and neighbourhoods. The service supports residents and community groups to ensure their involvement in scrutinising council services and performing a wider community capacity building role.

Working with our Customer Voice Group, caretaking operatives will run a pilot of a digital 'check in' through the HouseMark inspection app. This data will help identify any missed blocks, real time attendance and evidence that a service has been provided. This will not replace the Caretaking manager inspections. The app has additional features such as the 'Report it' function. This allows the inspector to raise a quick report of a specific issue. In this case we will be looking to use this to report fly tipping across the borough. This detail is logged as part of a heat signature map which will highlight a specific hotspot area.

Monitoring and maintaining standards - The Council's Housing services team undertake monthly physical inspections of all council owned and managed blocks to identify and remedy Health and Safety Issues and expand participation to residents and ward councillors.

The team will resolve Fire Risk assessment issues and enforcement for Council owned and managed blocks – i.e Bulk and rubbish repeatedly left outside residents' doors and on walkways, dry riser checks, flooring issues such as carpets and furniture stored in communal areas.

During monthly estate inspections, housing staff will raise and remedy:

- low level communal repairs and will undertake site inspections with surveyors for raising larger planned repairs works where required;
- Repairs to all communal interior and exterior areas including drainage, gullies and guttering.
- Caretaking issues; including stairs, glazing, doors, signage, lighting, walls, flooring, internal decorations, electrical intake cupboards, loft hatches, lift motor room security.
- Estate Exteriors; including shed conditions & repairs, drying area conditions, drying facilities, fencing, boundary fences & issues, pathways, bin chambers, garages, fly tipping, Play park inspections, and visual checks of play equipment and rubberised matting etc.
- Car parks: car park conditions, illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, untaxed and SORN vehicles, and the attempted enforcement of these areas.
- Entry com (IRS systems) and Digi lock issues.

SLAs – recognising that services are delivered by colleagues in different teams, SLAs will be concise and practical and performance will be tracked through monthly client meetings to ensure satisfactory outcomes and value for money. A KPI framework will measure performance across those areas.

5. Conclusions

Following on from our resident feedback suggesting that improvements are needed in the management of our external areas on housing land, the investments in the service enhancements above puts us in a position to improve over the coming year:

1. Co-location and integration with repairs will enable a more focussed management of the communal area;
2. the role of the caretaker is better defined and purposeful;
3. enhanced waste collections and fast response fly-tipping pick-ups will enhance the appearance of the estates;
4. investment in communal waste facilities will enable us to increase recycling rates and enhance the appearance of the estate,
5. greater engagement with residents either via participation on walk-about or via the App
6. Enforcement will target those engaging in fly-tipping and negatively impacting our estates
7. Planned cyclical works and deep cleaning will enhance the quality of finish
8. Greater resource in Grounds Maintenance and a planting budget for shrubs, bushes and plants will enable us to enhance the look and feel of our estates

In completing these actions we will fulfil our obligations under the new regulatory regime and it provides a greater opportunity to work with our residents in our planned objectives in the Council Plan.

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Date of report 24.11.21

Appendices: Standards Document

London Borough of Enfield**Housing Scrutiny Panel, 7 December 2021**

Subject: Draft Tenancy Strategy
Cabinet Member: Cllr. Gina Needs
Executive Director: Sarah Cary (Executive Director Place)
Key Decision: KD 5268

Purpose of Report

1. This report presents the new draft Tenancy Strategy 2021- 2025 for discussion as part of its engagement process before for approval by Cabinet.

Reason for Proposal(s)

2. The new draft Tenancy Strategy replaces the previous Tenancy Strategy 2018 – 2020 and meets our requirement under the Localism Act 2011 to review and produce a strategy that sets out the matters to which registered social housing providers are to regard in formulating their policies on tenancies.
3. The draft reflects how we intend to use our formal powers and influencing role to set high standards for tenancies in the Borough so that Enfield residents live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible. It sets out requirements regarding lifetime tenancies for social housing and also recommends good practice for private landlords and letting agents in regard to the tenancy agreements they use.

Relevance to the Council Plan**4. Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods**

The draft strategy stipulates that lifetime tenancies should be offered to tenants in social housing and requires all social housing providers to provide tenants with information and advice so that they know and understand their rights and responsibilities. This supports our commitment to create a place where anyone born in the borough has a home to grow up in, where they can choose to stay and benefit from living in the great city that is London.

5. Safe, healthy and confident communities

Providing tenants in social and affordable housing with lifetime tenancies and providing clear information and advice so that tenants understand their rights and responsibilities, will support Enfield residents to live safe, healthy and confident lives in settled communities across the borough.

6. An economy that works for everyone

Lifetime tenancies enable residents to settle in their community and access employment and skills opportunities. This takes away uncertainty about their future living situation enabling stability for children's education and access to educational attainment opportunities as they enter adulthood.

Background

7. The Localism Act 2011 has given local authorities the power to influence how social housing is offered and managed in their respective local areas. The draft strategy sets out the matters the Council and other registered providers of social housing are required to consider when developing tenancy policies.
8. Although the Localism Act 2011 does not extend to private landlords and letting agents, the draft Tenancy Strategy also includes good practice recommendations for private landlords and lettings agents.

Main Considerations for the Council

9. The draft strategy outlines the Council commitment to good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods through the setting of high standards for tenancies in the Borough.
10. The policy focuses on four priority areas:

Residents have a clear understanding of their tenancy: Tenancy agreements will be easy to understand and will give all the information tenants need to know about their rights and responsibilities. Residents will be signposted to independent advice and support to help them to make informed decisions about their housing options.

Lifetime tenancies are the preferred option as to the best approach for addressing housing need in the borough: The council's preference is for lifetime tenancies, to promote settled lifestyles for local people. This means that we expect Registered Providers to issue lifetime tenancies for all new tenants. For those currently on fixed-term tenancies, we expect Registered Providers to have a process in place to move tenants onto lifetime tenancies when appropriate. This guaranteed level of security allows tenants to settle and build support networks within the surrounding community. There are exceptional circumstances where a registered provider could offer a fixed term-tenancy, and these are based on an assessment of the local housing market and supply and demand for affordable homes. In this case, the proposal is for fixed-term tenancies to be a minimum of 10 years (previously 5 years)

Residents are able to stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them: We encourage all landlords to have robust support systems in place so that Enfield residents can stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them to do so. For those whose needs change, they will be supported by their landlord to make informed choices, including by

considering mobility or mutual exchange schemes and using the Council's Allocation Scheme and Choice Based Lettings website to move to a more appropriately sized and accessible home.

If a tenancy ends, residents are supported to avoid homelessness: Our vision is to end homelessness in Enfield: The Council will work with all landlords in the borough so that all stakeholders fulfil their responsibilities under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 to prevent homelessness.

11. This draft strategy has been developed in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, [London Housing Strategy](#) and the Council's Housing and Good Growth Strategy (2020-2030), Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2020 -2025), Housing Allocation Scheme, Council Plan 2020-2022 and Fairer Enfield Policy 2021 - 2025 found [here](#). Benchmarking with other boroughs has also been carried out.

Engagement

12. The draft strategy has benefited from engagement and formal consultation with a wide range of stakeholders throughout its development.
13. Underpinning priorities for the strategy were identified following local and national research and assessment of local data and associated strategies/policies. These were discussed with and supported by Registered Providers in attendance of the Registered Providers Housing Operations Meeting on 1 December 2020. Agenda driven discussions during the Housing Operations Meeting held in March, were also considered.
14. Formal public consultation on the draft strategy took place between 15 September - 11 November 2021, following approval of the draft strategy (KD5374). This consultation was open to all registered providers, residents, businesses and private landlords and ran for 57 days. The consultation consisted of both an online questionnaire publicised on the council website (also available in paper and Easy Read format) and discussion on the draft at existing housing forums and groups including the Leaseholders Forum and Housing Advisory Group. The online questionnaire was also promoted at the Council's Customer Voice forum with council tenants and with the Enfield Tenants and Residents Associations.
15. The consultation was advertised via multiple media channels including [Enfield Independent](#), [Enfield Dispatch](#), [Avrupa Times](#), [Landlord Today](#), [LinkedIn](#) and our [council website](#). All Registered Providers were invited to participate via a personalised email containing a direct link to the consultation and officer contact details should they wish to discuss it further.
16. Key findings (**as at 25 November as we are continuing to engage with stakeholders on finessing the draft strategy**)

- **Groups/ forums:** Feedback from attending the above mentioned groups/forums was positive and included discussion to clarify and then support the discretionary (non-statutory) succession element.
- **Email:** Metropolitan Thames Valley (formerly Metropolitan) emailed a response stating “We are supportive of Enfield’s tenancy strategy, and see it as a positive step in aligning how the Council and MTVH, as the two largest social landlords in the borough, deliver services to our combined resident base in a consistent and equitable manner.”
- **Questionnaire:** This was completed by 17 respondents (the Easy Read version was accessed but not completed). The key findings are:
 - Over three quarters of the respondents (13 respondents) understood the current scope and purpose and over 70% (12 respondents) were supportive of the objectives included in the current draft tenancy.
 - The Registered Provider completing the questionnaire, thought it was feasible to update their policies to implement the new Tenancy Strategy in 9 months or less.
 - Landlords completing the questionnaire (6 individuals) wanted the document to also relay positive tenant behaviour in relation to respect for property and prompt payment. They felt this was part of ensuring residents have a clear understanding of their tenancy and would help manage the expectations of all parties. This feedback has resulted in amendments to the draft strategy.
 - The questionnaire highlighted some confusion as to the expectation of private landlords and letting agents. This feedback has resulted in amendments to the draft strategy to demarcate the expectation of those providing social housing from the recommended good practice for private landlords/letting agents.
 - The lowest scoring question was concerning respondent’s confidence in communicating with their respective tenant/landlord. Just 33% (2 of 6 private landlords/letting agents) and 33% (1 of 3 social housing tenants) felt confident in communicating. This trend is also evident in other research and therefore, addressed by the councils’ approach to offer additional support to both tenants and landlords. The available support is also outlined in the strategy.

Safeguarding Implications – outstanding response

17. The draft strategy proposes that all tenants of social housing are given lifetime tenancies to enable them to live safe, healthy and confident lives in settled communities across the borough. To ensure the draft strategy does not directly or indirectly cause risk to children, young people or vulnerable adults we reiterate the need for all providers to comply with the Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Public Health Implications

18. By providing tenants in social and affordable housing with lifetime tenancies, and supporting tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities as

tenants, while also seeking to drive up standards in both the public and private rented sectors, we will support Enfield residents to live safe, healthy and confident lives in settled communities across the borough.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

19. We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) on the draft Tenancy Strategy and no negative impact has been identified on any group due to their protected characteristic or socio-economic status. The strategy requires the Council and Registered Providers in Enfield to conduct an Equalities Impact Assessment (or its equivalent) on their tenancy policy as part of any policy review, to identify any groups who may be disadvantaged by its implementation and take any mitigating action as required.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

20. The proposals in the draft Strategy should not have any direct impact on carbon emissions. The proposed strategy will provide tenants in social and affordable housing with lifetime tenancies which may help prevent carbon emissions associated with house moves.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

21. The draft strategy is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011 with the local authority being required to keep it under review and periodically modify or replace it. The current draft strategy is now in need of review and failure to update the strategy would increase the likelihood of legal challenge.

22. If this work was not taken forward, the Council would miss opportunity to set high standards for tenancies in the Borough enabling Enfield residents live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

23. The strategy may not be adhered to by Registered Providers. To minimise the risk:

- We have consulted with our Registered Providers to ascertain their ability to comply and update their own tenancy policy within 9 months of the draft strategy publication.
- We have regular meetings with Registered Providers concerning housing management issues and good practice around tenancy management and tenancy sustainability. This ensures any concerns can be openly discussed.

24. The government could produce further related guidance or legislation that may have an influence on the contents of the strategy. To minimise the risk;

- The draft strategy will be annually reviewed and reassessed following the publish of new regulations.

Financial Implications – outstanding response

25.

Legal Implications (*provided by KJ – version circulated 8 Nov 2021*)

- 30 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy for which registered providers of affordable housing should have regard. The strategy should cover the kinds of tenancies to be granted, the circumstances in which a tenancy of a specific type will be granted, the length of tenancies and the circumstances in which a further tenancy shall be granted.
- 31 The Council must have regard to its tenancy strategy in exercising its housing management functions and publish the Tenancy Strategy before the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the day on which the relevant section of the Act comes into force, which is expected to be around January 2013.
- 32 A local housing authority must keep its Tenancy Strategy under review, and may modify or replace it from time to time and any proposed modifications should be published.
- 33 The Tenancy Strategy should be publicly and easily available.
- 34 The Tenancy Strategy should be consulted on with every registered provider in Enfield and allow comment on the document.
- 35 Before adopting a tenancy strategy, or making a modification to it reflecting a major change of policy, the authority must:
 - consult such other persons as the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe;
 - in the case of an authority that is a London borough council, consult the Mayor of London.
- 36 Tenancy Strategies are expected to have regard to the Council's:
 - current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996;
 - current homelessness strategy under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002;
 - in the case of an authority that is a London borough council, the London housing strategy.

Workforce Implications – outstanding response

28.

Property Implications

26. HRA property implications: these are found throughout this report

27. Corporate property implications: none.

Options Considered

37 30. The previous Tenancy Strategy focused on matters to which registered social housing providers are to regard in formulating their policies on tenancies as listed in the Localism Act 2011. This approach was also initially considered when reviewing and drafting this strategy. However, it was felt that the council could expand the opportunity to increase the standard of all tenancies across the Borough though the inclusion of good practice for private landlords and letting agents.

Conclusions

32. The draft strategy sets out how we intend to use our formal powers and influencing role to set high standards for tenancies in the Borough so that Enfield residents live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible.

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Date of report: 25/11/2021

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

- Draft Enfield Tenancy Strategy 2021- 2025
- EqIA Tenancy Strategy

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Enfield's Tenancy Strategy 2021-2025



Contents

I.	Introduction and local context	5
2.	Our vision	6
3.	The legal and regulatory context	7
4.	Equality and Diversity	7
5.	Types of Tenancies	8
5.1	Introductory tenancies	8
5.2	Lifetime tenancies	8
5.3	Fixed-term tenancies	9
5.4	Assured shorthold tenancies	9
5.5	Demoted Tenancies	9
6.	Providing support for tenants to manage their tenancy	10
7.	Discretionary (Non-Statutory) Succession Rights	11
8.	Delivering on our objectives	12
9.	Guidance for private rented sector landlords	14
10.	Advice	15
11.	Complaints	15
12.	Review	15

Foreword

We want to grow our borough in a way which means no one will be left behind. This means making sure that all tenants have tenancy agreements that offer them the highest levels of security possible, and that they know and understand their rights and responsibilities. Our aim is to enable residents to stay in their homes, feel settled and build strong, sustainable communities.

This draft strategy sets out the approach Enfield Council, and other Registered Providers of social housing in the borough, need to consider when developing or reviewing their own tenancy policies.

As a local authority, we have both formal powers and an influencing role which we will use to promote high quality, lifetime tenancies for council and register provider tenants and to encourage all landlords to take a 'what can I do to help' mind-set to support residents to stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them. We want our residents to live in homes that are appropriate to their needs and will continue to address housing need and actively prevent homelessness in the borough.

We are working to create a borough where anyone born here has a home to grow up in, where they can choose to stay in and age in, to benefit from the great city that is London. By working with other Registered Providers, landlords providing accommodation in the private rented sector and co-ordinating our approach and resources, together we will support Enfield residents to live safe, healthy and confident lives in settled communities across the borough.

Cllr Gina Needs
Enfield Council's Cabinet Member for Social Housing



1 Introduction and local context

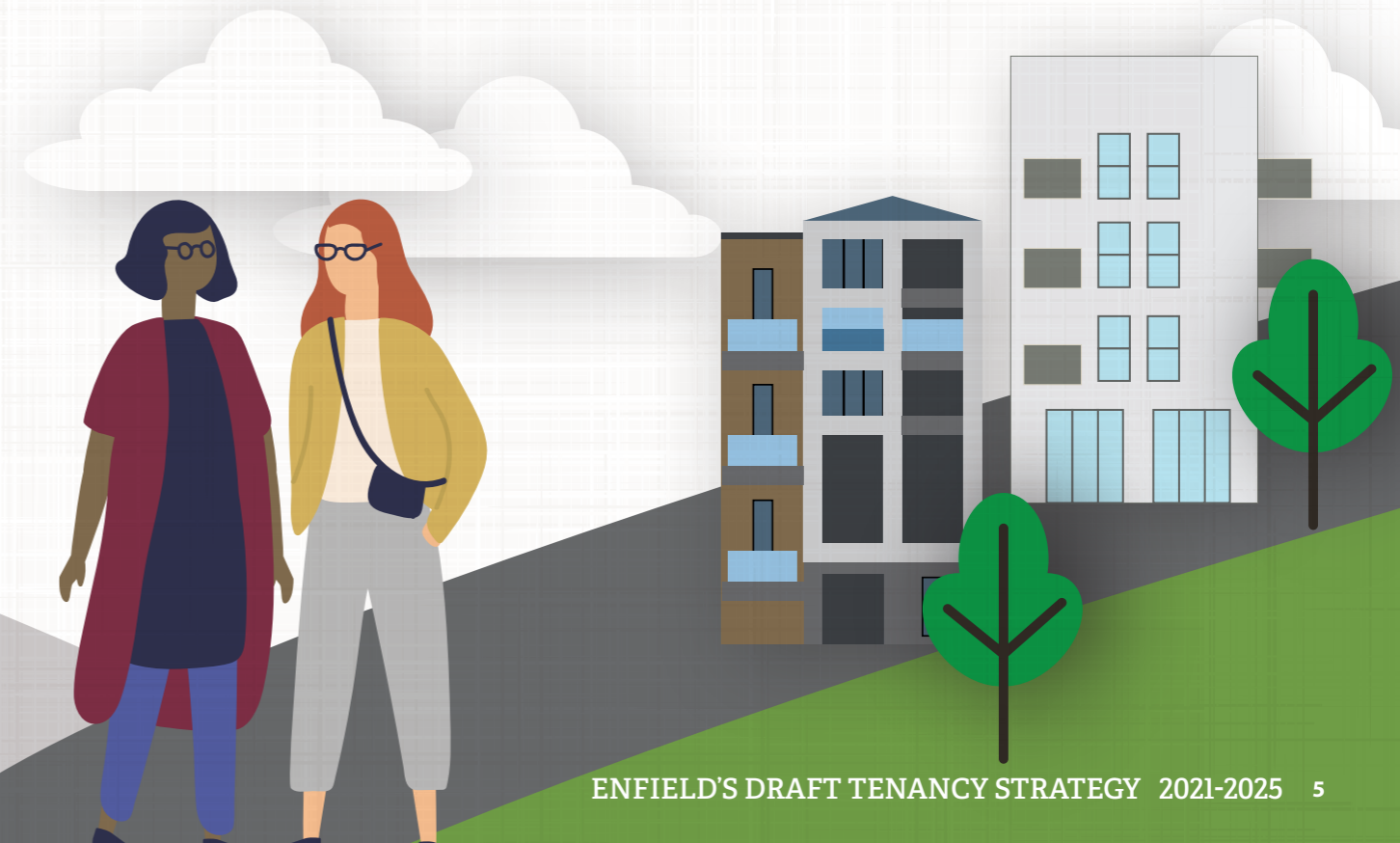
Enfield's Tenancy Strategy for 2020-2025 sets out the matters Enfield Council, and other Registered Providers of social housing in the borough, are required to consider when developing or reviewing their own Tenancy Policies. It also recommends good practice for private landlords and letting agents.

This work is part of a wider set of strategies which enable us to deliver against our [Council Plan 2020-2022](#) objectives which are to provide:



This strategy should be read alongside the following:

- **Enfield's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025** sets out our vision for ending homelessness in Enfield over the next five years.
- **Enfield's Housing and Growth Strategy 2020-2030** sets out how we will deliver more and better homes to address inequality, create a more balanced housing market and help local people access a good home. Our strategy responds to an under supply of social and affordable homes in Enfield and this Tenancy Strategy has been written in this context. Registered Providers are expected to include an assessment of how they are making the best use of their housing stock and are making a positive contribution to Enfield's strategic housing objectives, as set out in our Housing and Growth Strategy.
- **Enfield's Housing Allocation Scheme** sets out we make sure that social and affordable housing goes to those who need it most.
- **Enfield's Rent Setting Policy** explains how we will set rent levels and service charges for our Council Housing properties.



2 Vision

Our Council Plan 2020-22 and our Housing and Growth Strategy 2020-2030 makes clear that good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods is a critical strategic ambition for Enfield.

We will use our formal powers and influencing role to set high standards for tenancies in the Borough so that our residents live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible.

Our objectives for delivering on this vision are set out below.

1. Residents have a clear understanding of their tenancy

Tenancy agreements will be easy to understand and will give all the information tenants need to know about their rights and responsibilities. Residents will be signposted to independent advice and support to help them to make informed decisions about their housing options.

2. Lifetime tenancies are the preferred option as to the best approach for addressing housing need in the borough

The council's preference is for lifetime tenancies, to promote settled lifestyles for local people. This means that we expect Registered Providers to issue lifetime tenancies for all new tenants. For those currently on fixed-term tenancies, we expect Registered Providers to have a process in place to move tenants onto lifetime tenancies when appropriate. This guaranteed level of security allows tenants to settle and build support networks within the surrounding community.

There are exceptional circumstances where a registered provider could offer a fixed term-tenancy, as set out in section 5.3.

What's changed?

Our existing strategy expressed the preference for longer term tenancies but didn't stipulate that we expect registered providers to transition any tenants on fixed-term tenancies onto lifetime tenancies.

This new draft strategy also proposes stricter criteria around the exceptional circumstances where a fixed-term tenancy could be given.

3. Residents are able to stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them

We encourage all landlords to have robust support systems in place so that Enfield residents can stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them to do so. For those whose needs change, they will be supported by their landlord to make informed choices, including by considering mobility or mutual exchange schemes and using the Council's Allocation Scheme and Choice Based Lettings scheme.

4. If a tenancy ends, residents are supported to avoid homelessness

Our vision is to end homelessness in Enfield! The Council will work with all landlords in the borough so that all stakeholders fulfil their responsibilities under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 to prevent homelessness.

3 The legal and regulatory context

The Localism Act 2011² has given local authorities the power to influence how social housing is offered and managed in their respective local areas. Enfield's approach, vision and principles are detailed in this Tenancy Strategy, which must be taken into consideration by Registered Providers when writing their own Tenancy Policies.

Policies must include:

- the types of tenancy granted
- how a person's circumstance should be considered when deciding the type of tenancy to grant
- the length of time a tenancy will be granted for
- and how tenancies will be managed towards the end including the offer of a new tenancy
- the approach to tackling tenancy fraud

All Registered Providers are expected to comply with all economic and consumer standards of the social housing regulator.

4 Equality and Diversity

Enfield is the 9th most deprived London borough and has the 11th highest rate of child poverty in the country. In 2018, Enfield was ranked as the 14th most diverse borough in London, with 38.87% of our population identifying as Black, Asian, Mixed Ethnicity or Other and 39% of borough's population being born overseas³. Whilst ethnic diversity is one of our biggest assets, ethnic minorities experience inequality in housing, education, employment, health and criminal justice in Enfield, as is the case across the UK. This needs to be addressed.

The Council expects that, prior to producing or reviewing their Tenancy Policy, Registered Providers will conduct an Equalities Impact Assessment (or its equivalent) to identify any groups who may be disadvantaged by its implementation. If any are identified the Council expects the Registered Provider to take steps to demonstrate how these disadvantages will be mitigated for the affected group/s. The Tenancy Policy should also set out the landlord's approach to targeting social and affordable housing in Enfield to those most in need whilst supporting sustainable communities, in accordance with the Council Housing Allocation Scheme.

A copy of Enfield's Equalities Impact Assessment for this Tenancy Strategy and Policy, and its Allocations Scheme, can be found on the Council's website and will be helpful for Registered Providers in undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on their policies.

¹ <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/preventing-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-strategy-2020-2025-your-council.pdf>

² S.150 Localism Act 2011

³ <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/equality-and-diversity-report-2020-your-council.pdf>

5 Types of Tenancies

The Council encourages all landlords operating in the borough to offer the longest and the most secure tenancy possible. There are several different types of tenancy used in Enfield and they are outlined below in accordance to the Localism Act 2011 and the Housing Act 2004.

5.1 Introductory tenancies

In most cases, new Council tenants will be offered a 12-month introductory tenancy unless they were already a secure tenant of a local authority or an assured tenant of a registered provider at a previous property. We expect that Registered Providers may also choose to offer an introductory, probationary or a starter tenancy for new tenants.

Tenancies will remain introductory until the end of a "trial period" which lasts for one year after the date on which the tenancy was entered into, or the date on which the tenant was first entitled to possession, whichever is later. We expect that an introductory/probationary or starter tenancy will be extended by a further six months if there has been a breach of the tenancy conditions during the trial period. The tenancy conditions are clearly listed in the Tenancy Agreement.

The introductory tenancy will be ended by serving a Notice of Possession Proceedings if:

- 1) the tenant breaks the tenancy conditions; or
- 2) a false or misleading statement had been made to obtain the tenancy.

We expect that tenants will be provided with support to enable them to conduct their introductory tenancy successfully.

Where the tenant has met the conditions of their introductory tenancy at the end of the period, they should be immediately issued with a lifetime tenancy (see 5.2 and 5.3 below).

5.2 Lifetime tenancies

The council's preference is for lifetime tenancies, to promote settled lifestyles for local people. This means that we expect Registered Providers to issue lifetime tenancies for all new tenants. For those currently on fixed-term tenancies, we expect Registered Providers to have a process in place to move tenants on to lifetime tenancies when appropriate. This guaranteed level of security allows tenants to settle and build support networks within the surrounding community.

We consider lifetime tenancies to be the best approach to address social housing need and create safe, healthy and confident communities in Enfield.

Registered Providers are expected to issue lifetime tenancies for all new tenants and to have a process in place to move tenants on existing fixed-term tenancies to lifetime tenancies.

There are exceptional circumstances where a registered provider could offer a fixed-term tenancy, as set out in section 5.3.

5.3 Fixed-term tenancies

There may be exceptional circumstances where a registered provider could offer a fixed-term tenancy, based on an assessment of the local housing market and supply and demand for affordable homes.

In these circumstances, the Registered Provider is expected to make a clear case for a fixed-term tenancy being the most appropriate arrangement in the given circumstances and for making the best use of social housing stock in the borough.

An example of an exceptional circumstance where a fixed-term tenancy may be appropriate is for homes of three or more bedrooms. When tenancies are allocated, the bedroom standard⁴ is used to identify the housing size and needs of the household. This may change over time and a fixed-term tenancy would enable reassessment of needs

⁴ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01013/>



and identify households who no longer require the larger home. In these circumstances, the household could be supported to downsize and free up the property for another household.

Where a fixed term tenancy is to be used, Registered Providers are expected to:

- grant a minimum fixed term of 10 years, with a longer term expected for families with children aged 5 years and under or 10 years and under if the child is affected by special educational needs or disabilities
- clearly advertise properties available for letting where a fixed term tenancy applies
- not allow a fixed term tenancy to go beyond its fixed term without renewing it or bringing it to an end
- support tenants with advice and assistance to help them find suitable alternative accommodation in order to prevent them becoming homeless where fixed term tenancies are not being renewed.

There are no circumstances where a fixed-term tenancy can be granted to a tenant if they or a member of their household has been a victim of domestic abuse and the new tenancy is granted in connection with that abuse. This is in accordance with the Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018.

What's changed?

Our existing strategy stipulates 5 years as the minimum term of a fixed term tenancy. In this new draft strategy, we are proposing the minimum is 10 years (or longer in certain circumstances) and can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and with explicit justification based on an assessment of local housing need and best use of social housing stock.

We are stipulating that a fixed-term tenancy can never be granted where the tenant or member of their household is fleeing domestic violence and the tenancy is being granted in connection with that abuse.

5.4 Assured shorthold tenancies

An assured shorthold tenancy (AST) usually lasts for 6-12 months and is the most common type of tenancy in the private rented sector for tenancies started on or after 15 January 1989. It is recommended this type of tenancy is not used by Registered Providers for Social Rent, London Affordable Rent or Affordable Rent properties. As a public authority, Enfield Council cannot offer our tenants Assured Shorthold tenancies. However, Assured Shorthold Tenancies are offered by Housing Gateway⁵ which is a wholly owned Enfield Council company. This company was set up to provide a quality housing solution to eradicate the use of temporary accommodation for 742 families and prevent homelessness.

5.5 Demoted Tenancies

A secure tenancy can be demoted to a 12-month introduction tenancy if the tenant has engaged in housing related anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, causing a nuisance to neighbours or noise disturbance, or has used the property for unlawful purposes.

Enfield Council is not in favour of demoting tenancies unless other options have been explored without success and Registered Providers are expected to have robust support systems in place to help tenants address any issues before any decision to demote is made. The final decision on whether to demote a tenancy will be made by the Community Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

6 Providing support for tenants to manage their tenancy

We expect Registered Providers to support tenants to sustain their tenancies, taking early action to address any concerns which could put their tenancy at risk. Evictions should be sought only as a last resort once all other avenues have been exhausted without success.

We expect all registered providers to offer support to tenants to sustain their tenancy whether this is ongoing or a one-off intervention and to approach tenancy issues with a 'what can I do to help' mind-set. This approach is beneficial to both Enfield residents and landlords as it avoids costly and unnecessary evictions.

What's changed?

Although we already expect all registered providers to take this approach, this is not set out in our existing strategy. This new draft strategy makes clearer our intention to work with registered providers and our expectations in regards to preventing homelessness.

7 Discretionary (Non-Statutory) Succession Rights

The Localism Act 2012 changed the rules of succession for social housing tenants. For tenancies created before 1 April 2012 existing rights of succession will continue. For tenancies created on or after 1 April 2012 only a spouse, civil partner or a person who lives with them (cohabitee) as if they were a spouse or civil partner will have a statutory right to a succession, and such a succession can only happen once.

Where there is no statutory right to succeed to an Enfield Council Housing tenancy and if moving a successor may cause exceptional hardship, the London Borough of Enfield Council Housing Team will submit a request for a new tenancy to be granted by way of discretion, to the appropriate Housing Panel.

Where there is no right to succeed, and no eligibility for a new tenancy under Council policy (a non-statutory succession), the occupants would be treated as unauthorised occupants. In this situation, within 10 working days of the notification of the tenant's death, a Notice to Quit (NTQ) will be served on the Public Trustee and the property.

We expect Registered Providers to also take this approach for their tenants in Enfield.

What's changed?

Our new draft strategy introduces this expectation for Registered Providers to follow this discretionary (non-statutory) approach to succession rights. Our previous tenancy strategy does not include this expectation.

⁵ <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/housinggateway/>

8 Delivering on our objectives

Objective 1: Residents have a clear understanding of their tenancy

We will:

- publish a tenancy policy that is consistent with this Tenancy Strategy and which details the different types of accommodation, tenancy and residents' rights concerning tenancy reviews, length of tenancy and termination
- proactively promote this strategy so all residents understand the types of tenancy available in Enfield
- share nationally recognised sources of information to enable residents to make informed decisions or seek additional help if needed
- encourage residents entering into Assured Shorthold Tenancies in the private rented sector to use the checklist provided on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [website](#) so they understand their rights and responsibilities
- encourage all landlords to make tenancy agreements as accessible as possible. This may mean considering posting tenancy agreements online and using websites that meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

Objective 2: Lifetime tenancies are the preferred option as to the best approach for addressing housing need in the borough

We will:

- offer lifetime tenancies, following the successful completion of an introductory tenancy, for all tenants in an Enfield Council home
- ask all registered providers using fixed-term tenancies to review this approach and put in place a process for transitioning tenants onto lifetime tenancies, unless in exceptional circumstances
- in the exceptional cases where a fixed term tenancy is used, ask registered providers to clearly advertise their tenancy length, assessment criteria and review process to residents
- maximise the incentives for private landlords to encourage longer tenancies through access to free landlord support
- educate registered providers of the requirement of the Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018 to offer existing tenancy holder/s, or new tenancy holders that meet the criteria, a new lifetime tenancy

Objective 3: Residents are able to stay in their home for as long as it remains suitable for them

We will:

- work with all registered providers to share best practice in regard to supporting tenants to maintain their tenancy
- work together with registered providers so that Enfield residents keep their tenancy if they are forced to leave their home (for example through fear of violence) by enabling a transfer or reciprocal arrangement; and ensuring that where a tenant or a member of their household is a victim of domestic violence and a new tenancy is being granted in relation to this, that they keep their tenancy rights, including their lifetime tenancy, in all circumstances
- facilitate downsizing initiatives with registered providers through nomination agreements and support registered providers to use new smaller homes built within the borough
- set rents and service charges using fair and transparent calculations to enable residents to manage their finances, in accordance with our Rent Policy

Objective 4: If a tenancy ends, residents are supported to avoid homelessness

Under the Housing Act 1996, homelessness does not solely mean the lack of a home. A person could be treated as homeless if they have no housing that is reasonable or safe for them continue to occupy. The charity Shelter explains what constitutes homelessness and where to get further information.⁶

We will:

- ensure Registered Providers fulfil their responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and work with the council at the earliest opportunity if a tenancy is likely to end
- offer training to Registered Providers and landlords so that they are confident and able to provide support for tenants at risk of a tenancy ending
- educate all landlords of the requirement of the Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018
- expect all Registered Providers to assist with the local authority's homelessness duty through addressing the under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes and active engagement in mobility or mutual exchange schemes, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements for lettings of properties within the Borough of Enfield

⁶ https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/what_is_homelessness



9 Guidance for private rented sector landlords

We encourage all landlords and letting agencies, regardless of size of portfolio, to support our vision for high standards for all tenancies in the Borough so that our residents live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible

As a landlord you must⁷:

- keep your rented properties safe and free from health hazards
- make sure all **gas** and **electrical equipment** is safely installed and maintained
- keep your property in good condition and ensure timely repairs are carried out to an adequate standard
- provide an **Energy Performance Certificate** for the property
- **protect your tenant's deposit** in a government-approved scheme
- check your tenant has the **right to rent your property** if it's in England
- give your tenant a copy of the **How to rent** checklist when they start renting from you (you can email it to them) offer tenancies without discrimination, in accordance with the Equalities Act.

Consideration must also be given to:

- provide longer term tenancies of a minimum of 3 years to provide security and assurance for both landlords and tenants. To ensure tenants and landlords are still able to access their rights should there be a breach of contract, an agreed break clause may be considered and shared in advance of the tenancy signing session.

- keep communication lines with their tenants open, either directly or through an appointed third-party manager.
- eviction should always be the last resort action once all other avenues to resolve concerns have been exhausted.
- we would like to promote a 'back to basics' approach with the use of a deposit and rent in advance model over a 'one off' incentive payment. This will empower tenants to take responsibility for their property and finances.

We are committed to support and provide advice for private landlords and tenants in order to help resolve situations where the tenant has got into financial difficulty and is struggling to make rent payments. Eviction should always be the last resort action once all other avenues to resolve concerns have been exhausted.

We recognise the vital role that private landlords and letting agents play in meeting housing need of residents in the Borough. To access information, advice and guidance to help resolve tenancy or rent payment issues at an early stage, please use the **Landlord Advice Line**. If tenancy sustainment is not possible then we may explore options to rehouse tenants in more suitable accommodation and/or advise whether there is any financial support available for the tenant.

10 Advice

Enfield Council housing service offers a variety of help and information for tenants and leaseholders. The service also gives advice and financial assistance to council tenants thinking about moving to a smaller home or swapping home with other tenants. There is further information on our website [here](#).

II Complaints

Details of a complaint and appeals process must be outlined in the tenancy agreement and the Council's and Registered Providers' Tenancy Policy. Our process is in line with the new [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code](#) and can be found [here](#).

12 Review

Following the final publication of our new Strategy after consultation with stakeholders, we expect Registered Providers with social and affordable housing in the London Borough of Enfield to review their own Tenancy Policies within nine months of the strategy publication, giving consideration to the content of this refreshed Strategy, and providing confirmation of completion to the Assessments and Allocations Service Manager.

This Tenancy Strategy covers the period 2021-2025. It will be kept under review and adjusted as required to take into account Enfield's Housing and Growth Strategy, implementation of the Council's new Housing Allocations Scheme, the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, the Council's own substantial regeneration plans and other relevant housing strategies and policies. It will also take into account Registered Providers quarterly returns to the Council and changes in legislation.



⁶ https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/what_is_homelessness

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property>

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London Borough of Enfield

Housing Scrutiny Panel
7th December 2021

Subject: Retention of Staff in Housing Department

Cabinet Member: Gina Needs (Social Housing)
Executive Director: Sarah Cary

Purpose of Report

1. For discussion

Relevance to the Council Plan

2. Good homes in well connected neighbourhoods.
 - a. Supports our new approach to estate renewal, understanding and responding to the needs of tenants and working ever more closely with tenants and leaseholders to build on the strength of our existing communities.
 - b. Restructure designed with the future in mind, planning for the implementation of the emerging social housing regulatory framework and for building safety.
 - c. Cross team approach to support effective collaborative working with the in-house repairs service.
3. A modern council.
 - a. Supports our aim of delivering high quality services which benefit local people and puts our customers and communities at the heart of everything we do.
 - b. Fulfils our commitment to engage with our workforce,
 - c. As an organisation we are committed to engaging with our workforce. As part of our cross-cutting themes of being a modern council, we work towards having an empowered, responsive and happy workforce.

Background

4. This report has been compiled at the request of Cllr Hockney who wished to have the following matters addressed:
 - a. How has the restructure affected the number of Neighbourhood Officers on the ground?
 - b. Similar question on caretakers
 - c. Update around new board
 - d. Turnover of staff historical / current
 - e. New strategies from HR?

Main Considerations for the Panel

As you will be aware the Council Housing department recently completed a significant restructure with the aim of creating a service fit for the future. The structure review encompassed the full breadth of the Council Housing teams, recognising the need for change within the context of the broader legislative framework and the opportunities afforded by new ways of working and new more mobile technologies.

In designing the new structure the senior leadership took a broad and holistic approach taking into consideration feedback from residents; the views from the team; looking forward to the responsibilities incumbent in the new regulation regime including the greater role of the Social Housing Regulator and Ombudsman; preparing for the implementation of the Social Housing White Paper as well as reflecting on lessons learnt and challenges associated with the pandemic.

Prior to the restructure there were three neighbourhood teams with a total of 27 Neighbourhood Officer posts. In the new structure the Neighbourhood Officer role has been deleted and we have created 3 new roles with 30 FTE posts

- First Response Officer x 8
- Community Manager x 6
- Resident Relationship Officer x 16

The First Response Team are a geographic patch based team and highly visible in uniforms. They are the first point of contact for residents on our estates. Their role is community facing and includes tasks such carrying out home visits to support tenants on repairs and anti-social behaviour issues; conduct estate and block inspections, raise communal repairs and conduct welfare checks with residents.

The Community Partnerships Team provide an intensive housing management service across 6 of our most challenging estates. This highly focussed team manage and create strategies to improve the estates facing the greatest crime, anti-social behaviour and deprivation challenges. They also liaise with the Capital Programme and Regeneration teams to ensure residents impacted by these projects are fully supported.

The Resident Relationship Team are there to support residents facing the greatest challenges. This team will provide guidance to residents with complex and potentially multi-faceted problems such as domestic violence, hoarding, safeguarding, substance misuse, poor mental health. They will work in partnership with other teams across the council as well as voluntary and statutory agencies

The Resident Relationship Officer will be the single point of contact for that resident, providing support and guidance on tasks associated with independent living, maximising access to benefits to ensure tenancy sustainment, reducing rent arrears and other debt, whilst minimising anti-social behaviour and social isolation.

In addition to these three teams the restructure also created a **Place Improvement Team** to deliver the Council's Resident Led Estate Improvement Programme using data and insight to inform long term community and place based investment priorities.

This team also support on more immediate improvements to the feel of the estates by working through the DVLA for abandoned vehicles, managing the Councils garage sites and estate parking and overseeing the introduction of parking controls through Traffic Management Orders etc.

As part of the restructure the Estate Services team, which includes the caretakers, was moved across to the newly created Repairs & Estates service. There were no other substantive changes to this team with the number of caretakers and senior caretakers remaining unchanged.

As requested, we have looked at turnover of staff from within the Council Housing department, comparing the turnover within Housing with both the Place Directorate and the Council.

	01/09/2020 to 31/08/2021			01/09/2019 to 31/08/2020		
	Average Headcount	No. Leavers	% Turnover	Average Headcount	No. Leavers	% Turnover
Housing	189	20	10.61%	168	11	6.54%
Place	1396	125	8.95%	1104	79	7.16%
Enfield	3591	368	10.25%	2873	264	9.19%

Of the 20 leavers between the 01/09/2021 and 31/08/2021, based on the leaving information recorded:

- 4 were retirements of which 1 was an ill health retirement.
- 12 were resignations, 6 where no reason was given, 3 leaving the profession and 3 leaving LBE for new appointments.
- 4 were redundancies.
- The grades of the leavers varied between Scale 2 and HoS 3.
- The average age of the leavers was 46 with an age span of 20 to 72.
- Of the 20 leavers only 1 was part time.
- 14 of the leavers were male and 6 were female.
- The declared ethnicity of the leavers was as follows; 2 African; 3 any other white; 2 Bangladeshi, British Bangladeshi; 3 British; 4 Caribbean, 2 English; 1 Irish; 1 Other Black & Black British; 2 unknown / refused.
- None of the leavers had a declared disability.

As already referenced the restructure was future facing. The senior leadership team worked effectively with the HR Associate BP analysing key workforce data to build in additional resilience and strength in the workforce.

As a result of our strategic analysis we have built in apprenticeship posts in both Housing Management Services and the Estate and Repairs service. This will enable us to recruit locally and attract new and potentially younger recruits to the service. This has been complemented by creating structures with more visible career progression opportunities.

We also recognise that our previous structures did not overtly support the ethos of grow your own, particularly in more technical roles. In the new structure we have created trainee surveyor roles to try and build pipeline talent and increased opportunity for professional development.

As agreed at Cabinet consultation is currently underway on a new Resident Engagement Strategy which will consider and gain agreement on new further opportunities for engagement, co-design and scrutiny. The Customer Voice – a tenant and leaseholder led group will continue to operate focusing on the needs of social housing tenants. A new Housing Advisory Group has been established to represent the views of all residents in receipt of council housing services including those in private rented housing, temporary accommodation, Enfield Let and Housing Gateway as well as Council tenants and leaseholders. This group looks at the overall housing issues that affect residents.

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HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22

ITEM	Tues 6 July 2021- Planning Session	Thurs 30 September 2021	Tues 7 December 2021	Thurs 17 March 2022
Annual Items				
Setting the Panel's Work Programme 2021/22	Agree work programme 2021/22			
Specific items:				
Local Priorities 2021-22	Verbal presentation			
Building Safety- including cladding compliance with Building Safety Bill		Report		
Temporary accommodation levels and strategy to reduce		Report		
Retention of Staff in Housing Department		Report (deferred to 7 Dec meeting)	Report	
Enfield Repairs Direct- overview on delivery and recent changes			Report	
Estate Management			Report	
Draft Tenancy Strategy			Report	
New Partner arrangements with Registered providers				Report
Housing Gateway and budget underspends				Report

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