

# Agenda

## Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

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streamed to the Council's YouTube channel  
when the meeting starts,**

**<https://www.youtube.com/oxfordcitycouncil>**

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Thursday 8 October 2020**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

**For further information** please contact:

Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer, Committee Services Officer

☎ 01865 252191

✉ [thudson@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:thudson@oxford.gov.uk)

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Please contact the Committee Services Officer to register to speak; to discuss recording the meeting; or with any other queries.

## Committee Membership

Councillors: Membership 6: Quorum 3: substitutes are not permitted.

Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers  
(Chair)

Councillor Shaista Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Michael Gotch

Councillor Sian Taylor

Councillor Elizabeth Wade

Councillor Dick Wolff

Tony Buchanan

Apologies and notification of substitutes received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting. Substitutes for the Chair and Vice-chair do not take on these roles.

# Agenda

		Pages
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Substitutes are not allowed.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Housing Panel Work Plan</b>  For the Panel to note and agree its work plan, which can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Panel.	9 - 12
<b>4</b>	<b>Notes of previous meeting</b>  For the Panel to approve the record of the meeting held on 03 September 2020.	13 - 20
<b>5</b>	<b>Oxford City Council's response to the Planning for the Future White Paper August 2020</b>  The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government issued the Planning for the Future White Paper on 6th August 2020 seeking views on a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England. The Council's response is scheduled to go to the Cabinet meeting of 14 October 2020. The Panel is asked to consider the response and make any recommendations to Cabinet as required.  Amanda Ford, Planning Policy Team Leader, will be available to present the report and answer questions. Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, has been invited to present also.  <b>NB The report for this item will be issued as a supplement.</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Housing Performance Q2</b>  For the Panel to consider the Housing Performance Q2 update report, and to make any recommendations to Cabinet accordingly.  Richard Wood, Strategy and Service Development Manager, will be	21 - 26

available to present the report and answer any questions.

## **7 Date of next meeting**

Meetings are scheduled as follows:

- 05 November 2020
- 01 February 2021

The Panel is also asked to note that members are invited to participate in the Housing element of the Budget Review in Jan 2021 (precise date TBC)

All meetings begin at 6.00pm.

## **8 Confidential Session**

Should the Panel consider it necessary to go into confidential session, it will be necessary to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the press and members of the public during discussion of this item on the grounds that it might involve disclosure of exempt information as described in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **9 Domestic Arrears during Covid**

At its previous meeting, the Panel heard an update on the Council's position regarding the management of Covid-related domestic rent arrears. It was agreed that the topic required more time to consider fully. The Panel is therefore provided with a further opportunity to consider the issues, raise questions and make any recommendations to Cabinet as necessary.

Tanya Bandekar, Revenue and Benefits Service Manager, and Phil McGaskill, Revenues Manager will be available at the meeting to present the report and answer any questions.

**NB The report for this item is restricted.**

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## **Information for those attending**

### **Recording and reporting on meetings held in public**

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- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

### **Councillors declaring interests**

#### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

#### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

#### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

#### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

## Housing and Homelessness Panel Work Plan: October 2020 – April 2021

### 08 October 2020 - reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing Performance 2020/21 Q2	No	An update on the Council's Housing Performance against its KPIs for Q2		Richard Wood, Strategy and Service Development Manager
Oxford City Council's response to the Planning for the Future White Paper August 2020	Yes	MHCLG issued the Planning White Paper on 6th August 2020 seeking views on a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England.	Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery	Amanda Ford, Planning Policy Team Leader
Domestic Arrears during Covid	No	Further to the update at its September 2020 meeting, the Panel will have additional opportunity to discuss the Council's position in regards to domestic arrears during the Covid-19 pandemic	Cabinet Member for Customer Focused Services	Tanya Bandekar, Service Manager Revenue & Benefits

### 05 November 2020 - provisional reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Rough Sleeping Update	No	An update report on the Council's activities in relation to Rough Sleeping, particularly in light of Covid 19, to include consideration of Floyds Row,	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing	Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager

		the impact of the 'everyone in' policy, and future plans around 'everyone in' (with specific reference to the availability of move-on accommodation).		
Housing and Carbon Reduction	No	A report to inform the Committee of the Council's current plans with regards to carbon reduction in housing, looking specifically at retrofitting plans and possible funding models for paying for improvements to energy efficiency, as well as new housing supply.	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing	Rachel Nixon

### 01 February 2021 - provisional reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing Performance 2020/21 Q3	No	An update on the Council's Housing Performance against its KPIs for Q3		Richard Wood, Strategy and Service Development Manager
Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds 2021/22	Yes	A report to approve the allocation of homelessness prevention funds for 2021/22.	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing	Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing Services / Director Housing Companies
Update of Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptation Policy 2021	Yes	Minor changes to allow clarification around discretionary grant and joint custody arrangements	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing	Becky Walker, Home Improvement Agency Team Manager
Additional HMO licensing scheme	Yes	To report on the findings of the consultation and to seek approval for the next steps in relation to	Affordable Housing	Gail Siddall, Team Leader , HMO



renewal		additional HMO licensing in the city		Enforcement Team
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#### 04 March 2021 - provisional reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
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#### Items with dates to be determined

6

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Tenant Satisfaction	No	An update report on the results of the tenant satisfaction survey, and actions being taken in light of the learnings	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing	Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager

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## **Minutes of a meeting of the Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee) on Thursday 3 September 2020**

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### **Committee members present:**

Councillor Bely-Summers (Chair)

Councillor Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Gotch

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Wade

Councillor Wolff

### **Officers present for all or part of the meeting:**

Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer

Tanya Bandekar, Service Manager Revenue & Benefits

Dave Scholes, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager (Affordable Housing Supply Lead)

Paul Wilding, System Change Manager - Homelessness Prevention

Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety

Phil McGaskill, Revenues Manager, Finance

### **Also present:**

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery

Tony Buchanan, Housing Panel (tenant co-optee)

Simon Warde, Tenant Involvement Manager

## **9. Apologies**

None

## **10. Declarations of interest**

None

## **11. Housing Panel Work Plan**

The Panel considered the proposed workplan for the forthcoming year, which was **NOTED**. It was suggested, however, that if relevant items came up for the next meeting that they should also be added to the work plan.

## **12. Notes of previous meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 03 August 2020 were **AGREED**.

### **13. Requested updates from previous meeting**

Further to its requests at the previous meeting, the Panel heard a number of verbal updates.

#### **1) Lived Experience Advisory Forum**

Paul Wilding, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager, gave a verbal update to the Panel on the activity of the Lived Experience Advisory Forum.

The Lived Experience Advisory Forum (LEAF) had been established by the Oxford Homeless movement on the basis of its belief in the importance of having people with lived experience of homelessness being able to work with (and influence) professionals around homelessness issues.

Activities from LEAF had been curtailed somewhat due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, two LEAF members were now part of the wider Oxford Homeless Movement's steering group. A coordinator for the Forum had also been funded by Oxford Homeless Movement to support its work and monthly meetings for members were taking place. In terms of its work, LEAF had

- Participated in research on how homelessness in Oxfordshire as a whole could be tackled through a housing-first approach, including training LEAF members to undertake interviews of homeless people, of which LEAF undertook 20.
- Worked with the Blavatnik School of Government on magazine articles relating to co-production.
- Worked with Aspire's new housing project on governance to ensure systems were in place to allow the project to be tenant-led.

Having been newly appointed to the post of Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless Manager, Paul Wilding was keen that he would be able to work with LEAF in the development of services from the Council also.

The Panel asked questions about demographic representation on LEAF, and work with St Mungo's on homelessness prevention. Regarding the latter, it was hoped that the new coordinator would help to raise the profile and reach of LEAF further, including on issues around services relating to homelessness prevention.

#### **2) Champion Way and Community Led Housing**

Dave Scholes, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager, gave a verbal update to the Panel on the progress of the Champion Way Community Led Housing project and the wider Community Led Housing concept locally.

Since the Panel had received the report the previous November, the Champion Way site had received planning permission for four one-bed properties. An easement right had needed to be altered. Heads of terms for the use of the site were being developed with the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust. Grant funding from the Oxfordshire Growth Deal was being sought, potentially with a top up from the Council via s. 106 developer contributions. On a strategic level, the Local Plan had been adopted, with a requirement for all sites of over 50 houses having to offer 5% of the space for Community Led Housing and self-build. The Council had also met with multiple Community Led Housing organisations, including the Community Land Trust, the Co-Housing group and the Collaborative Housing hub, where a protocol and shared understanding for information-sharing and taking sites forward was agreed, with one site being about two weeks away from being sufficiently progressed to be named. A

report from the Growth Deal had been published, with officers in each authority looking at how to take the recommendations forward. As part of that the Council had also partnered with other districts to enable a County-wide approach, allowing feasibility studies for potential sites to be undertaken across the County. The biggest area of delay in the Community Led Housing area was in regards to the publicity and meetings with the public which had been planned but were paused due to the pandemic.

The Panel asked no questions.

### 3) The Council's management of domestic rent arrears during Covid

Tanya Bandekar, Revenue and Benefits Manager, gave a presentation to the Panel on the Council's approach to domestic tenants in rent arrears during the Covid pandemic.

When the impact of Covid became apparent, the Council changed its approach to revenue-collection across the board, including domestic rent arrears, to allow for a softer approach. Rather than send official letters at a time when the courts were shut, the Council had softened its letters, encouraging those in arrears to contact the Council instead to discuss their situation. Alongside telephone calls, the softer approach had a positive approach that many tenants had shared their appreciation for.

Since March, when the courts had been shut, the Council had made no requests for possession. Though the courts had since reopened, the Council had not recommenced its recovery processes. In total, the number of tenant over six months in arrears was 41, out of 7800 tenants. The Council's recovery process did not involve seeking possession straight away, but seeking the court to give a suspended possession order subject to payment being made of the rent going forward and progress made against the arrears, a situation which allowed even those in significant arrears the opportunity to maintain their tenancy and not be evicted. Even those who fell further into arrears at this point would not be immediately subject to enforcement, but the Council would work with other services such as the Welfare Reform Team to support those individuals into work or ensure they were receiving the correct benefits. In 2018/19, 19 evictions took place out of a total of 185 court orders sought. A similar rate of 10% was found in 2019/20.

Assurance was provided to the Panel, and arrears levels compared to the same week in in 2018 were £70,000 higher, a small proportion of the total rent figure, particularly in light of the rent increase this year. Of these, the majority were 0-4 weeks in arrears, a time-frame in which the workings of the benefits system could cause distortions.

The Panel sought to know the Council's attitude towards the special circumstances of Covid and were informed that taking this into consideration was a pre-requisite for any court order, and that the Council was working with people in arrears to understand the causes, such as non-topped up furlough. Particular consideration would be given to those with families. The Council would work with advice agencies as well as the Welfare Reform Team, and also take steps with those on benefits to ensure that payments would be made directly to the Council to ensure non-escalation in arrears figures. It was possible to seek for payments for arrears directly too, but this would be dependent on the individual being left with sufficient money and was not guaranteed.

It was suggested that the Panel might have more things to discuss than in the time available with a verbal update. It was **AGREED** that there would be a dedicated item to the issue at the next meeting.

## 14. Selective Licensing

In light of the importance of the issue under consideration and the wish to understand the reactions of stakeholders from outside the Council to the proposals, the Housing Panel invited a number of representatives from local organisations to give their reactions to the report. The organisations represented were the Oxford Citizens' Advice Bureau, the letting and estate agency College and County, and the Oxford branch of the ACORN union.

Speaking prior to the presentation of the report, the Panel's external attendees presented their views. All were in agreement with the proposals, but raised a number of issues and questions. The most clear-running theme was the importance of enforcement of all properties, particularly given that those in the least secure housing should not be expected to whistleblow on their landlords. Without across the board enforcement, licensing would become a burden on those seeking to comply, leaving those willing not to do so, those operating within the shadow lettings market, with an advantage. It would be important to avoid the perception of 'entrepreneurial bureaucracy', the taking of license fees from compliant landlords to pay to tell them that they were compliant, rather than identifying and cracking down on those providing homes with category 1 and 2 health risks.

Whilst broad-spectrum enforcement was recognised to be a challenge, it was also recognised to be extremely valuable. Having minimum standards for the right to let would be a useful tool for advice agencies and unions in supporting tenants, and if done effectively would be of greatest benefit to the most vulnerable. Given the most vulnerable were identified by the CAB as those with English as a second language, on low pay and or those with mental health conditions there was seen to be a clear equalities justification. Extending licensing across the entire private rental sector, rather than simply on HMOs would also have the benefit of closing loopholes which allowed landlords and agents deemed unfit to provide HMO accommodation still able to let within the wider private rented market instead.

Other important messages were raised in relation to the importance of transparency, and the value for tenants of being able to look up on a database whether their property was licensed.

From the landlord side, an important point to note was that there was a recognition within the professional sector that licensing had been successful in raising standards in the HMO sector. Support was given to the proposals for discounts, though it was requested that there be greater clarity on the unit cost of providing the licensing service. An area of potential collaboration between letting agents and the Council was in regards to compliance, and whether there may be a role for lettings agents to be responsible for checking and guaranteeing compliance for the properties on their books, with the Council needing only to spot check a proportion of such properties.

Following these presentations, Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, introduced the report. It was underlined that plans for small geographical exemptions were not the Council's preferred choice, but were included in the proposals because central government had not clarified whether it did or did not support a whole-City scheme. The need for wide-reaching publicity was also

recognised, both to landlords so as to ensure compliance, but also to tenants and those in the shadow rental market in order to provide awareness of their rights as a tenant. Good landlords would have nothing to fear and indeed would be protected under the new scheme from bad landlords undercutting them on the back of poor rental standards. The danger of entrepreneurial bureaucracy was recognised, but assurance was provided that the scheme had been designed precisely so as to raise standards amongst non-compliant properties or prevent such properties from being rented.

Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, introduced the technical aspects of the report. Having previously intervened to raise standards in the private rented sector through HMO licensing the Council was in a strong position to extend licensing further, having learnt a lot of lessons. Licensing had proven the most effective way of raising rental standards compared to the other options available to the Council. Selective licensing would close regulatory gaps and loopholes owing to the fact all privately rented properties would require a license, and the Council's experience in identifying unlicensed HMO properties (an area in which Oxford is notably strong) would be of significant benefit in enforcing compliance against unwilling landlords.

Being a regulatory intervention requiring government approval the proposals for selective licensing had to be designed in order to ensure government requirements were met. The Council had commissioned external consultants to assess the need. Their report showed every ward in the City had over 20% of privately rented homes, and that one in four privately rented homes were estimated to have a serious hazard, demonstrating by reference to the government's criteria a need for the proposed selective licensing scheme.

A key strength of the proposals was the addition of conditions to the license, which would give the Council greater powers. HMO landlords, for example, who failed the fit and proper person test, or who lost their license, would no longer be able to default into the private rented sector as they would be unable to meet the new licensing conditions. Licensing conditions would also extend to lettings agents, giving the Council greater power over problem-agencies. Other benefits would include giving the Council power to pressure landlords over their management of anti-social or criminal behaviour at their properties, and the management of waste which, hitherto, had been an area where the Council had struggled.

The standard fee of £480 was deemed to be reasonable in itself. However, the Council was also providing a series of discounts which would reduce the cost further. The early-bird discount, for example, would reduce the cost of the license to £400 for a five year license, working out to £6.67 a month – a far from onerous sum. The discount scheme was a clear effort to place the costs of the scheme where they primarily arose, chasing and taking enforcement action against non-compliant landlords, rather than penalising those who were compliant.

Inspections of properties would, due to the scale of the scheme, not be undertaken prior to the granting of a license but would be undertaken at least once within the five year license period. Complaints from tenants would increase that number.

On advice from other councils which had implemented similar schemes the consultation was being undertaken by an external company, which would provide greater assurance to participants of its impartiality. The consultation is legally mandated to run for at least ten weeks. Covid evidently presented challenges, and indeed had delayed the Council's initial plans for consultation in April, but officers were working with the consultants to deliver a consultation that effectively reached out to all stakeholder groups. Criticisms of previous consultations elsewhere had been that they had focused too heavily on hearing the views of landlords, and that tenants and the wider community's views were marginalised. Responses to consultation would inform next steps.

Ultimately, the decision whether to give permission for the scheme lay with central government. There is no statutory timescale for decision-making, but typically a response is given within three to six months. Assuming permission was given and the Council proceeded with the scheme, there would be a requirement to run a three month awareness raising and publicity exercise.

In response to the report presented, the Committee sought clarification over issues including:

- the responsibilities on landlords of the antisocial behaviour of their tenants
- whether licenses were of the landlord or of the property and the financial implications arising from that
- Council staff's interaction with non-English speaking landlords
- the potential to outlaw 'no DSS' policies through licensing conditions, for which there was little scope

The main area of discussion, however, was in regards to the efforts being made by the Council to engage in consultation those groups impacted by low housing standards but unlikely to come forward, in particular those in insecure accommodation and non-English speakers. Feedback from both Panel members and invited guests was very clear that there is a systemic power imbalance between the situations of landlords and tenants when discussing housing related issues. Those tenants least well served by landlords would at the same time be most in need of the changes selective licensing proposals seek to induce, and the least likely to be heard. Feedback from the CAB highlighted the possibility not only of formal revenge-evictions, but lower-level harassment and intimidation of tenants for crossing their landlords. Owing to this, without corrective action the response to the Council's consultation would likely have an under-representation of tenant voices, particularly amongst vulnerable tenants in the shadow rental market and those with the lowest housing standards. It was **AGREED** to make the following recommendation to Cabinet:

**That the Council is mindful of the challenges to hearing the views of vulnerable tenants – those in dangerous accommodation, pseudo-tenancies and non-English speakers in particular – and that it adapts its approach to consultation to ensure their views are not overlooked.**



## 15. Additional HMO Licensing renewal

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, introduced the report on renewing the Council's HMO licensing scheme. It was stressed that the scheme was a renewal of an existing scheme, and had already been renewed once. Though some minor changes were being made, the biggest issue brought to the Panel's attention was that owing to Covid-19 and the lockdown, the Council had been unable to run the current consultation earlier in the year. Central government had not waived its requirement for consultation and so consequently, there would be a period prior to the new scheme being adopted where the old one would have lapsed.

Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, introduced the technical aspects of the report. The scheme had originally been established in 2011, and whilst government policy had caught up with the scheme's policy regarding larger HMOs, it remained necessary to prove licensing was also required for smaller ones. A review of the existing scheme showed that there remained a significant number of HMOs not being managed up to standard and that a licensing scheme was required to improve standards. Non-compliance had remained stubbornly high; through spot checks, initial inspection and end of license inspections it was known that only 47% of small HMO properties were compliant. This was a slow improvement over time, but not sufficient to stop running the scheme. Numbers of non-licensed properties were also declining though still being discovered.

The Panel asked a number of questions relating to:

- Whether measures were available, particularly grants, to encourage landlords to comply with licensing requirements, rather than simply the threat of punishment. Largely, grants were no longer available bar for energy efficiency measures.

The Panel **NOTED** the report with support for it.

## 16. Reports for approval

The Panel considered a draft of the report written in response to the discussion held on the effect of Covid-19 on the private rented sector.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to approve the report with a number of amendments:

- To add a recommendation 'that the Council takes whatever measures it has at its disposal, including environmental health enforcement powers, to reduce the number of unsafe homes being let out before winter arrives'
- That the Scrutiny Officer research and, if opportunity arises, add a relevant recommendation relating to strengthening the Council's response to the flouting of 'no DSS' policies in the private rented sector.
- To add a recommendation 'that the Council works with local housing support and advice organisations to draft a letter on the need for government to introduce practical policy changes to increase protection for renters, to include consideration of ending section 21 evictions and the need for a rent-freeze policy, and for the Leader to send the agreed letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government'.

## 17. Date of next meeting

The Panel **NOTED** the amended date of the next meeting, 08 October 2020.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.10 pm**

**Chair .....**  
**2020**

**Date: Thursday 8 October**

*When decisions take effect:*

*Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired*

*Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued*

*All other committees: immediately.*

*Details are in the Council's Constitution.*

## Update on Housing Service performance Apr-Aug 2020 Housing Panel, October 2020

Corporately, we are still recording data for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set for our services under the previous Corporate Plan. However, it is recognised that because of the much changed landscape due to the Covid-19 crisis, the Council's work has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and lockdown, and resources have had to be redirected to support the response to the crisis. This means many of our pre-existing performance measures currently do not provide a fair and meaningful view of the work of the Council and provide a limited picture on current activity. However this information has been made available here to provide some indication on how activity is continuing through this challenging period, and that positive outcomes are still being delivered for residents and the city. The results for this year are also not directly comparable to previous years when these measures have been used. The process for setting new Service Performance measures for 2021/22 is under way.

This briefing note include the data for set KPIs up until the end of August along with commentary against each measure. This is in line with previous reporting processes to Housing Panel. We are also presenting updates from the Housing Service that gives a better picture of our achievements overall, over the last eight months. These include:

- We have successfully delivered the 'Everyone In' scheme, following the Governments direction issues on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that all Councils in England were to provide emergency accommodation for rough sleepers, vulnerably homeless people and those accommodated in communal setting (such as Floyds Row) in order to help stop the spread of coronavirus. Within two weeks of this direction, we had secured 121 self-contained hotel and student rooms. Food was also provided to those accommodated. On-site support has been provided by St Mungo's, with other homelessness organisations assisting with staffing, in-reach and to source necessities. As leasing arrangements with hotels came to an end in July and August, we secured the use of YHA until March 2021 and Canterbury House until July 2021 as interim accommodation. Interim accommodation is a bridge between emergency lockdown arrangements and more sustainable housing.
- We have been awarded just over £1m following a successful bid to the Next Steps Programme (NSAP) that will help us: provide 118 units of interim accommodation for former rough sleepers and people who had been living in shared hostels before the pandemic; provide financial assistance through deposits and rent in advance to help people move to more settled accommodation; partner organisation to refurbish properties and bring them back into use as move-on accommodation for people who have experienced homelessness. We are waiting to hear about an additional bid to fund longer term supported accommodation for people who are formed rough sleepers.
- The annual street count and estimate exercises are taking place as usual later this year to determine how many persons are sleeping rough at any given night in the City. The number of people sleeping rough in the city has consistently been in the mid-20s since early May. We now report weekly figures of rough sleepers to the MHCLG and our last reported figure was 25. It was agreed at the start of 'Everyone In' that people would not be forced into accommodation and some of those on the streets at present have rejected offers to come in, others are new to rough sleeping waiting to come into accommodation. Where people have rejected accommodation offers, the St Mungo's outreach team continue to engage to find accommodation options. The securing of YHA and Canterbury House means that there are accommodation offers for those sleeping rough.
- Our teams supporting homeless households with their housing options, rough sleeping, the provision of temporary accommodation, and onward access to the private rented sector have continued to deliver a great service despite the need to change how they work through lockdown with limited access to council sites, and deal with increased demand due to the need to support those effected by homelessness brought on by lockdown and rising unemployment.
- The Council's landlord services have successfully adapted to meet the challenges of the pandemic. Essential services have continued for our tenants such as repairs and new lets through the pandemic. The team have also been integral to the success of the locality hubs, ensuring vulnerable tenants and our communities were supported through lockdown.
- There are expected delays to our development programme due to the Covid-19 pandemic that saw work on sites across the city stop for a period of time, however sites are now reopened with

only slightly reduced capacity due to the need to ensure social distancing. The lockdown in Q1 and continued uncertainty in the housing market will have an impact on the number of units completed throughout the year.

- To tackle the lack of housing in general and affordable housing in particular in the city, the Council Cabinet has committed to spend another £31m to buy land with the aim of building more affordable housing in the city.
- Property services have worked with colleagues in ODS to deliver the safe re-opening of buildings following easing of lock down measures due to Covid, including our leisure and community centres

Measure	Reporting Frequency	2019/20		2020/21	Comments
Description		EOY result	Result at end of Aug 2019	Result at end of Aug 2020	
Limit our use of temporary accommodation at 2015 levels (Corporate Measure, NI156)	Monthly	93 Number	78 Number	86 Number	We continue to work hard to prevent homelessness and thus reduce the need to place households in temporary accommodation. The number of households in temporary accommodation will fluctuate throughout the year and over the last few weeks, we have seen a reduction in the number of households placed in temporary accommodation despite upward pressure on homelessness due to the pandemic. Our teams are also focussed on assisting households to move on from temporary accommodation into suitable permanent housing. This work has continued throughout the Covid-19 crisis. <i>Please note</i> , this data does not include the persons provided accommodation by the council under the 'Everyone In' scheme.
Homelessness cases prevented (HC004)	Monthly	1,616 Number	Not available	433 Number (cumulative)	We have continued to carry out important homeless prevention work throughout the Covid-19 crisis, both under 'Prevention Duty' and through other 'pre-prevention' activities which include, general housing advice from our housing options service, Welfare Reform Team case work, landlord/tenant liaison work, prevention work/advice provided by advice agencies and Shelter. This measure is an example of the holistic approach taken by our service to homeless prevention. Some measures included in this data is reported bi-annually, so will not be included in this data set.
Homeless Acceptances (HC003)	Monthly	53 Number	26 Number	13 Number (cumulative)	Since the Homelessness Reduction Act was implemented in April 2018 there are fewer instances where we have to accept a 'Main Homelessness Duty'. Under the new legislation, Main Duty is only considered when Prevention and Relief activities have been unsuccessful. Therefore a significantly lower number of cases are now 'assessed' for Main Duty.
The number of successful interventions with rough sleepers (HP0040)	Quarterly	Not Recorded	79 Number	Not available	Due to the Covid-18 pandemic and the delivery of the 'Everyone In' scheme, it has not been possible to report this measure as it has in the past. We will investigate the best way of reporting this for the remainder of the year, remaining focussed on recording interventions for people moving off the streets. Under the 'Everyone In' scheme, where all rough sleepers, former rough sleepers living in communal spaces and those at imminent risk of rough sleeping were (and are) offered accommodation, a total of 235 persons had been placed in emergency accommodation up to the end of August.
Total standard re-let time (HouseMark definition) (HP009)	Monthly	20 Days	15 Days	24 Days	Due to a number of properties needing a great deal of work before being let again, as well as an multiple offers and direct matches on certain properties that has taken the teams longer to arrange, alongside the ongoing pressure from the pandemic and need to ensure full compliance with social distancing regulation, our re-let time is higher than we normally would want to see.
Empty homes returned to use (BV064)	Monthly	26 Homes	9 Homes	13 Homes (cumulative)	We continue to work with property owners to bring empty properties back into use across the City.
Total number of affordable homes completed in year	Monthly	89 Number	0 Number	33 Number (cumulative)	33 units have been handed over to date and a further 63 units are expected by the end of the year bringing the total to 96 completions. At this time last year, no properties had been handed over due to delays in completions, with handovers taking place from October onwards. Work on sites was significantly impacted by the pandemic in Q1, with some supply chains halted and work stopped at sites due to lockdown, sites have been getting back up to speed through the summer.
Number of affordable homes for rent delivered (HC016)	Monthly	66 Number	0 Number	20 Number (cumulative)	20 Social Rent units handed over to date and a further 48 Social Rent units are expected to be handed over by the end of March 2021, including 19 units at Barton, 13 units at Sandford Road, 7 at Wolvercote Mill and 9 units built by OCH. At this time last year, no properties had been handed over due to delays in completions, with handovers taking place from October onwards.

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## Housing Services Performance to August 2020

Measure	Reporting Frequency	2019/20		2020/21	Comments
Description		EOY result	Result at end of Aug 2019	Result at end of Aug 2020	
Limit our use of temporary accommodation at 2015 levels (Corporate Measure, NI156)	Monthly	93 Number	78 Number	86 Number	We continue to work hard to prevent homelessness and thus reduce the need to place households in temporary accommodation. The number of households in temporary accommodation will fluctuate throughout the year and over the last few weeks, we have seen a reduction in the number of households placed in temporary accommodation despite upward pressure on homelessness due to the pandemic. Our teams are also focussed on assisting households to move on from temporary accommodation into suitable permanent housing. This work has continued throughout the Covid-19 crisis. <i>Please note</i> , this data does not include the persons provided accommodation by the council under the 'Everyone In' scheme.
Homelessness cases prevented (HC004)	Monthly	1,616 Number	Not available	433 Number (cumulative)	We have continued to carry out important homeless prevention work throughout the Covid-19 crisis, both under 'Prevention Duty' and through other 'pre-prevention' activities which include, general housing advice from our housing options service, Welfare Reform Team case work, landlord/tenant liaison work, prevention work/advice provided by advice agencies and Shelter. This measure is an example of the holistic approach taken by our service to homeless prevention. Some measures included in this data is reported bi-annually, so will not be included in this data set.
Homeless Acceptances (HC003)	Monthly	53 Number	26 Number	13 Number (cumulative)	Since the Homelessness Reduction Act was implemented in April 2018 there are fewer instances where we have to accept a 'Main Homelessness Duty'. Under the new legislation, Main Duty is only considered when Prevention and Relief activities have been unsuccessful. Therefore a significantly lower number of cases are now 'assessed' for Main Duty.
The number of successful interventions with rough sleepers (HP0040)	Quarterly	Not Recorded	79 Number	Not available	Due to the Covid-18 pandemic and the delivery of the 'Everyone In' scheme, it has not been possible to report this measure as it has in the past. We will investigate the best way of reporting this for the remainder of the year, remaining focussed on recording interventions for people moving off the streets. Under the 'Everyone In' scheme, where all rough sleepers, former rough sleepers living in communal spaces and those at imminent risk of rough sleeping were (and are) offered accommodation, a total of 235 persons had been placed in emergency accommodation up to the end of August.
Total standard re-let time (HouseMark definition) (HP009)	Monthly	20 Days	15 Days	24 Days	Due to a number of properties needing a great deal of work before being let again, as well as an multiple offers and direct matches on certain properties that has taken the teams longer to arrange, alongside the ongoing pressure from the pandemic and need to ensure full compliance with social distancing regulation, our re-let time is higher than we normally would want to see.
Empty homes returned to use (BV064)	Monthly	26 Homes	9 Homes	13 Homes (cumulative)	We continue to work with property owners to bring empty properties back into use across the City.
Total number of affordable homes completed in year	Monthly	89 Number	0 Number	33 Number (cumulative)	33 units have been handed over to date and a further 63 units are expected by the end of the year bringing the total to 96 completions. At this time last year, no properties had been handed over due to delays in completions, with handovers taking place from October onwards. Work on sites was significantly impacted by the pandemic in Q1, with some supply chains halted and work stopped at
Number of affordable homes for rent delivered (HC016)	Monthly	66 Number	0 Number	20 Number (cumulative)	20 Social Rent units handed over to date and a further 48 Social Rent units are expected to be handed over by the end of March 2021, including 19 units at Barton, 13 units at Sandford Road, 7 at Wolvercote Mill and 9 units built by OCH. At this time last year, no properties had been handed over due to delays in completions, with handovers taking place from October onwards.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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