



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development
Date:	11 th August 2015
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2015/16
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	This report is a Key Decision and is included in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Financial Summary:	The gross Housing General Fund homelessness budget, excluding Prevention, for 2015/ 16 is £48m. Of this sum about £41m relates to the provision of temporary accommodation.
Report of:	Ben Denton, Executive Director of Growth, Planning and Housing

1. Executive Summary

This annual report reviews the demand for and supply of social rented housing and low-cost home ownership in 2014/15, and considers supply and demand projections for 2015/16.

The report also makes proposals for the allocation of the supply of social housing in 2015/16 to meet the Council's statutory obligations, meet the varying demands for social housing and to reduce the numbers of people living in Temporary Accommodation.

In particular the report sets out:

- Projected supply and the proposed allocation of social housing for 2015/16.
- An update on the supply of future temporary and social housing
- How new flexibilities relating to the allocation of housing will be made use of, in particular the power to discharge duty into the private rented sector

2. Recommendations

2.1 The projected supply and proposed allocation of rented housing, as discussed in paragraph 3.1 and set out in Appendices A, B and B1, be noted

2.2 Lessee offer policy on renewal estates

It is occasionally necessary to exercise Director's discretion to offer a leaseholder on a renewal estate the option of a social housing tenancy, usually on exceptional welfare grounds. This is set out in the Renewal Policy which sits as an appendix to the Housing Allocation Scheme. It is proposed to add a line into the points table in the Housing Allocation Scheme to say that in these cases applicants will be given 400 points to ensure they are rehoused in time.

2.3 Mobility Categories

It is recommended that the Mobility Category definitions in the Housing Allocation Scheme are amended as set out in paragraph 5.2 to confirm that applicants have been assessed by a doctor as having a diagnosis that requires them to use a wheelchair.

2.4 People who need to move on Medical grounds

The Housing Allocation Scheme allows for rehousing when an applicant's housing situation seriously adversely affects their health. It sets out that when applicants live in the private rented sector (PRS) but need to move on medical grounds, they will be assisted to find alternative private rented accommodation. If no suitable accommodation can be found they may be placed on the Medical Priority List. In reality Housing Options have been unable to assist any of these applicants into the PRS because they have been unable to find level access properties or properties suitable for wheelchair users and/ or private landlords will not allow the adaptations which are necessary. It is therefore proposed to remove paragraphs 6.1.7.-6.1.8 of the scheme and allow applicants accepted on medical grounds to be registered immediately for social housing.

2.5 Transfers to Community Supportive Housing

Older WCC tenants who are living in general needs properties are encouraged to consider moving to Community Supportive Housing (sheltered housing) but are currently only eligible for studio flats if single. If they are currently living in a one-bedroom flat they are not usually interested in moving to a smaller home even though they might benefit from the support offered in Community Supportive Housing. It is proposed to amend the Allocation Scheme to allow single WCC

tenants moving from general needs housing, whether studio or one-bedroom, to bid for one-bedroom Community Supportive Housing.

2.6 Amendment to the Tenancy Policy Direct

The Tenancy policy to be amended to confirm that the Council's discretionary succession policy may apply where the applicant does not qualify for statutory succession. This involves amending paragraph 7.10 to include the wording in italics below:

7.10 In certain circumstances if the tenant dies and there has already been one statutory succession at the property, *or the applicant does not qualify for a statutory succession*, the City Council may offer a discretionary succession under the discretionary succession policy.

2.7 Implementation of Right to Move Guidance

Agree to allocate 4 properties for the Right to Move scheme who need to move to take up employment or live closer to employment or training

Reasons for Decision

The proposals contained in this report set out the issues related to the development of allocation projections for social housing for 2015/16 to meet the Council's statutory obligations, meet the varying demands for social housing and to reduce the numbers of people living in Temporary Accommodation who are waiting for social housing

3. Background, including Policy Context

Social Rented Housing Supply and Allocation Projections

3.1 The following table summarises the position regarding the demand for and allocation of social rented housing over the past four years.

Demand Profile	31.3.11	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1170	1445	1338	1002	1053
Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	430	539	813	705	617
Households in Temporary Accommodation	1726	1910	2450	2283	2397
Category A Transfer Applicants	69	66	71	81	105
Allocation Profile	31.03.11	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15
Homeless Households	662	391	425	344	360
Tenant Transfers	233	175	151	238	245
Children Act Panel	11	19	20	20	11
Mental Health Hostel Move On	24	13	13	11	12
Cash Incentive Scheme	48	38	58	39	40

3.2 Demand for Social Housing

3.2.1 The demand for social housing in Westminster continues to outstrip the supply of available accommodation to let, whether as a result of homelessness, overcrowding, priority needs or demand from vulnerable groups. This is particularly the case for units of two bedroom or larger, reflecting the make-up of Westminster's social housing stock.

3.2.2 Acceptances of a housing duty to households, who are either homeless or threatened with homelessness, have decreased during 2014/15 in comparison with the numbers received in 2013/14. The number of acceptances is c. 60% of applications due to thorough investigation of applications and work to prevent homelessness or divert applicants into other options.

3.3 Supply Projections

- 3.3.1 Projections for the supply of new lettings of affordable rented accommodation for 2015/16 are 791 an increase of c. 38 against the total number of lettings forecast for 2014/15. This comprises the sum of casual voids from City West Homes, Registered Provider (RP) relets, RP first lets and tenant transfers and is broken down in appendix A
- 3.3.2 The number of new affordable homes currently projected to be delivered by Registered Providers or directly by the Council during the period 2015/16 and 2016/17 is 479 units, made up of 422 new build or converted units plus 20 spot acquisitions. However it may be possible to increase beyond the current projected figure of 20 through City West Homes or Westminster Community Homes in order to meet the temporary or permanent re-housing needs of residents affected by the Council's Housing Renewal programmes.
- 3.3.3 Of the 479 new or converted homes, 47 are anticipated to be provided for social rent at target rents and a further 152 homes for affordable rent. 260 homes will be provided as intermediate housing either at sub market rents or as shared ownership.
- 3.3.4 The projected year of delivery and number of new affordable homes to be delivered by tenure are shown in the table below
- 3.3.5 These projections are based upon affordable housing developments that are currently under construction or have secured planning permission and are due to commence building works shortly. Significant schemes making up these supply projections during 2015/16 and 2016/17 include, Middlesex Hospital (54 units), Cleland House (67 units), Trenchard House (65 units), Alexandra Buildings (63 units), Elgin Estate (36 units), Ladbrooke Grove (22 units), Rathbone Place (20 units), Mortimer Street /Great Portland Street (18) and Chiltern Street (16 units).
- 3.3.6 Of the 479 new affordable homes to be delivered, 47 new build or converted homes are expected to be provided for social rent where target rents will apply and where tenancies will be issued on assured/secure or fixed/flexible tenancy terms. 13 of these social rent units are anticipated to be delivered in 2015/2016 with 34 anticipated to be delivered in 2016/2017. The majority of these social rented homes will be provided by Westminster Community Homes (31 of 47 units). However, the majority of new spot acquisitions proposed (20 currently) and any further spot acquisitions that are brought forward during the period are also likely to be provided as social rent.

- 3.3.7 A further 152 social housing units will be provided at affordable rents, where rents charged will be higher than target rent levels. 65 affordable rent units are anticipated to be delivered in 2015/2016 and 87 in 2016/2017. The majority of these affordable rent units will be provided by Registered Providers on S106 sites. Assured/secure or fixed/flexible tenancy terms will be provided at these units.
- 3.3.8 260 affordable homes will be provided on an intermediate housing tenure basis, either as shared ownership or at submarket rents. 65 intermediate homes are anticipated to be delivered in 2015/16 and 170 in 2016/17
- 3.3.9 In addition to the 479 affordable homes anticipated to be delivered during the period 2015-2017, an additional pipeline of new housing developments exists that has the capacity to deliver c. 1,700 additional affordable homes over a 5 year period starting from April 2017. This additional affordable housing supply will come from a mixture of sources including the Council's Housing Renewal areas and S106 development sites.
- 3.3.10 In addition to new affordable housing supply, the Council is anticipating access to approximately 218 relets to existing stock provided by our Registered Provider partners during 2015/2016. These projections have been calculated from relets data available over the three previous years.
- 3.3.11 Based on this data it is expected that just under 70% of relets provided will be to studio or 1beds, with the remaining relets being primarily to 2bed properties (28%)
- 3.3.12 70% of relets to be provided during 2015/2016 are anticipated to be provided at rents equal to or below target rent levels, with the remainder at affordable rent levels

3.4 Housing Renewal and Community Build

- 3.4.1 Following publication of our Housing renewal Strategy in 2010, for the past few years we have been working with residents and design professionals to develop firm plans for the regeneration of Church Street/Paddington Green, Tollgate Gardens Estate, and Ebury Bridge Estate,. Planning permission has now been granted for Tollgate Gardens, Ebury Bridge and the first few sites to be developed in Church Street. Projects in this first renewal phase will deliver in the region of 160 additional affordable homes, and significantly improved homes to replace the 320 social and private homes that will be demolished, along with over 400 new private homes plus new commercial and community facilities.

3.4.2 It is estimated that 34 households will require allocations of social housing to assist with decanting programmes during 2015/16.

3.5 Homelessness Projections and Prevention

3.5.1 The Housing Options Service (HOS) provides the Council’s statutory housing assessment and advice function. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide housing under homelessness legislation, where the applicant’s immigration status entitles them and they are:

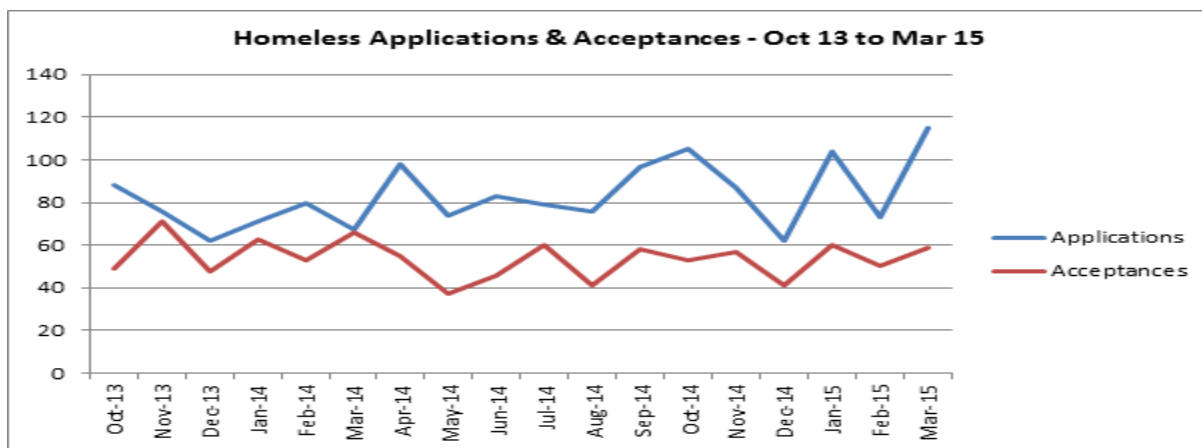
- Homeless with no alternative accommodation that is reasonable to occupy
- In priority need
- Has a local connection (or no local connection elsewhere.)

When the supply of suitable affordable accommodation is not available, the Council is required to procure Temporary Accommodation (TA) to provide housing until the full housing duty can be discharged.

3.5.2 The following table summarises the numbers of homeless applications and acceptances over the last five years and a more detailed monthly summary over the past 18 months

Demand Profile	31.3.10	31.3.11	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	Forecast To 31.3.15
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1125	1170	1445	1338	1002	1015
Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	378	430	539	813	705	597

3.5.3 The monthly homelessness and welfare reform updates circulated to Members highlight that whilst there are short-term fluctuations, homeless acceptances continue to be more than 70% higher than in 2010.



3.5.4 Private Sector Local Housing Allowance Claims

The number of households claiming Local Housing Allowance (LHA) in the private sector has reduced since the introduction of the original LHA caps in 2011 (see table below.) However the effects of the caps are still being felt and loss of private rented sector tenancies remains the primary driver of housing need in the borough increasing TA demand.

Bedsize	Claim numbers before 2011 Cap	Current total claim numbers	Reduction
1 Bed	3099	1933	1166 (38%)
2 Bed	1743	1036	707(41%)
3 Bed	766	405	361 (47%)
4 Bed	304	170	134 (44%)
TOTAL	5912	3544	2368 (40%)

In addition, in 2011 there were 761 Shared Room claims and there are now 585. It should be noted that the above figures will also include new LHA claimants since 2011.

3.5.5 A system has been set up to respond directly to those households in TA whose claims are capped and households in the private sector who made a DHP application, involving a co-located team including Job Centre plus, Housing Options and Benefit Services officers. All households in TA affected are contacted initially by the Council, a review of each case is completed and interviews are arranged with each household to agree the best way forward in the short and medium terms. Over 700 interviews have been held with households affected by the Benefit Cap in TA with 630 action plans agreed,

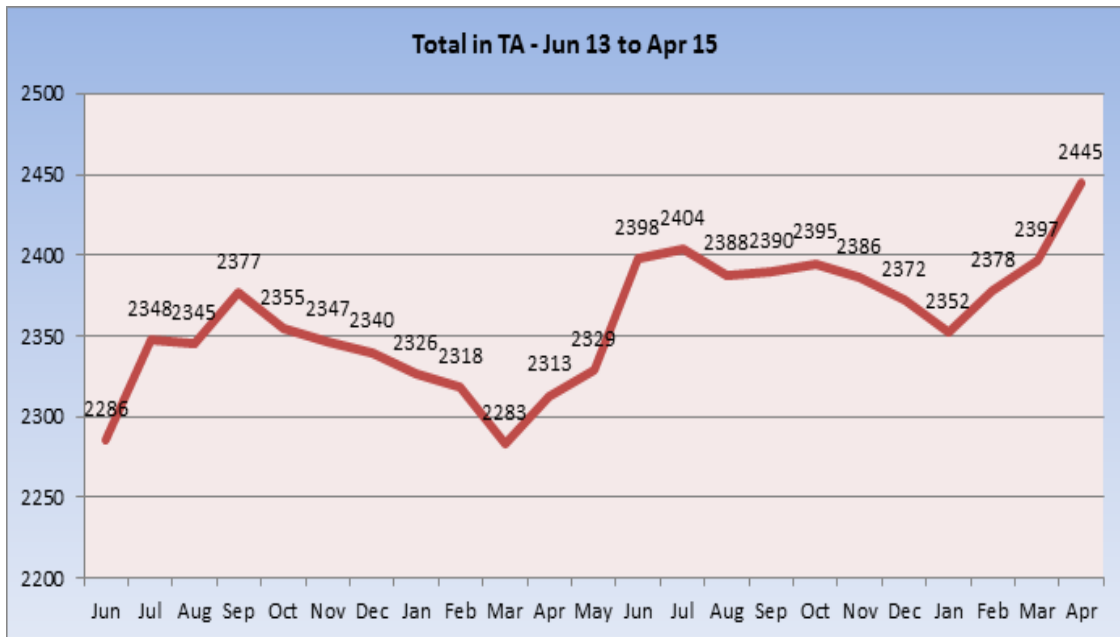
almost 500 applications for DHP and almost 100 households have moved into employment.

Homeless Prevention and Forecasts

- 3.5.6 Homeless prevention remains the central focus of work with households in housing need, whether challenging illegal evictions, debt advice, supporting families to remain together and assisting with moves into the private rented sector. In the past 12 months 257 private sector prevention placements have been completed, 112 into properties in Westminster, 128 into other London boroughs and 17 outside of London. 86 moves into the private sector have been of accepted households living in Temporary Accommodation. At the same time sourcing private sector properties to discharge housing duty continues to be very challenging and 2 contractors are currently attempting to identify potential sources of properties.
- 3.5.7 Most applicants currently wait 7-10 years for a social housing tenancy and we now intend to start identifying more households for whom the private rented sector would be suitable and start making offers to them to bring our duty to an end. It is also anticipated that as a result more households threatened with homelessness will be open to accepting help to find a private rented sector property to prevent homelessness. To strengthen this message to applicants and to give Housing Options time to assess whether applicants will be able to manage in the private rented sector and to find them a suitable property it is proposed to stop homeless households being able to bid for social housing for 12 months after the date that we accept a duty.
- 3.5.8 Given the pressures on homeless acceptances during 2014/15 and forecast for 2015/16 and the continued pressures in securing properties for Temporary Accommodation and the uncertainty around the funding regime the percentage of total rehosings made available to homeless households (currently over 60%) is to be retained, in particular for larger units.
- 3.5.9 The principal factor that is driving the high levels of homelessness continues to be the availability of private sector housing for households on benefits. As set out above homeless acceptances are forecast to be just under 600 in 2014/15, a reduction of over 200 from 2012 and this trend is expected to continue. As a result total homeless acceptances during 2015/16 are forecast to continue to reduce during the year to c. 550 and the total requirement for TA will remain between 2300 – 2500 during the year

Temporary Accommodation Procurement

3.5.10 Current TA levels are c. 2445 and are expected to continue at between 2300 – 2600 during 2015/16, depending on flows of homeless households. The chart below highlights the change in TA numbers over the past 2 years. Approximately one third is interim accommodation, generally nightly booked self-contained accommodation and non-self-contained units for single households.



3.5.11 This represents an increase in the total of more than a third since 2012. Before the increase 75% of TA was located in-borough with the great majority of the remainder in East London. Since the increase whilst the in-borough stock has largely been retained, TA properties are now located in over half of London boroughs with c. 100 properties outside London, principally in Essex. Of the above total currently c. 53% is in-borough.

3.5.12 Waiting times in TA vary greatly (see table below) generally driven by the size of the property required, reflecting the limited supply of 2 bed and larger social housing properties in Westminster. As a result the principal demand for households requiring TA is for properties that are 2 bed or larger, with current levels over 1900 and this total likely to increase to more than 2000 during 2015/16.

Bedsize	Studio	1bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Waiting Time	3 years	4 years	10 years	12.5 years	25 years

3.5.13 The traditional model for TA procurement is to lease properties from the private rented sector. The Council is able to recoup some or all of its costs for these leases by charging residents to live in TA, the level of rent being set by a central government prescribed formula. This is currently 90% of January 2011 LHA plus a management fee of £40 subject to a cap of £500 per week. The cap of £500 was introduced in 2009 and was a direct cost of £1.5m to the Council in lost income and restricted the Council's ability to procure large numbers of properties in the borough.

The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order sets out that in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person the housing authority must take into account the location including:

- Where it is outside the district of the housing authority the distance from the district
- The significance of any disruption to employment, caring responsibilities or education of the person or his/her household
- The proximity and accessibility to medical facilities and other support which are currently used by or provided to the person or household and are essential to their well being
- The proximity and accessibility to local services amenities and transport.

3.5.14 As a result TA will continue to be secured in borough as far as reasonably practicable, reflecting that the current funding framework of TA is based upon each households individual financial circumstances which in practice means that the great majority of households claim Housing Benefit. As a result of the increasing demand for TA and the reduced availability of private sector accommodation available to households on benefits this will mean that TA will be also be sourced out of borough in areas where it is available.

3.5.15 The Council has three primary methods of delivering TA properties in and close to borough:

- Having agreements with over 15 suppliers of Temporary Accommodation across London. These organisations either lease properties directly from private landlords on behalf of the Council or directly own properties for lease by the Council (c. 1900 properties)
- Directly purchasing properties using the Council's own resources for use as TA. (c. 100 properties)
- Contracting with RP's directly who have purchased properties directly for use as TA (c. 420 properties)

3.5.16 Accommodation for use as TA is becoming increasingly difficult to source, particularly in higher value areas, both through property owners having alternative markets to leasing to the local authority and taking a decision not to renew leases (c. 400 are anticipated to require renewal during 2015/16) as they come to an end. Further homelessness numbers are increasing across London meaning that other London boroughs are also under pressure to secure new TA. The impact of this has been reduced availability of self-contained TA at a time when homeless numbers are increasing.

3.5.17 The reduced availability of private sector housing affordable to households on benefits (whether as TA or directly let to households) is reflected in various housing market studies on the costs of private sector housing. This in turn is supported by Westminster's own monthly market analysis that highlights the purchase and rental costs of properties in Westminster and how these are higher than the London average and thus are less affordable for households in receipt of benefits. (See appendix C)

3.5.18 Delivery of a TA portfolio that meets budget targets is dependent upon a central government set funding regime both for TA subsidy and to purchase properties that allows such activity to be economic and a prudent use of public monies.

3.5.19 The current regime will continue whilst claimants are migrated onto Universal Credit during the period 2013-2017 (as will take place with all households in receipt of Housing Benefit.) The detail of how the TA subsidy regime will operate within Universal Credit has yet to be announced. However if it is directly based upon current LHA levels (rather than the current formula based on 2011 levels) the amount a household living in TA in Westminster has to spend on their TA is likely to reduce significantly. This is likely to make the majority of the current in-borough TA unaffordable.

A new Temporary Accommodation Commissioning Strategy will be developed during 2015

3.6 **Update on the delivery of the June 2013 Temporary Accommodation Commissioning Strategy**

3.6.1 The June 2013 TA Commissioning Strategy was agreed by Cabinet at a time when there were families in bed and breakfast for over 6 weeks (although reducing from the peak of 180), c. 150+ units of very high cost accommodation were being used and supplies of any self-contained properties were reducing. The strategy was designed to respond to this and the key outcomes of the strategy implementation since June 2013 has been the change in portfolio make-up reducing the use of high cost placements and non self-contained properties for families except in an emergency

3.6.2 The central assumptions within the strategy that a TA portfolio of at least 2000 units will be required until 2020 and that increasing the supply of units through the traditional model of leasing from the private sector at the government set TA subsidy rates would not meet this requirement are still valid. This is supported by the recent budget reports that highlighted the impact of high rental costs within the private sector. Taking each of the strategy areas:

- **End the use of non self-contained bed and breakfast accommodation over 6 weeks for families**

This has been achieved, as few families are placed in B&B now and these are for short periods of time. Maintaining this remains a very high priority (at a time when other London authorities are reporting increased use of B&B including for families for more than 6 weeks)

- **Reduce unit costs**

Costs have reduced significantly since June 2013 with total numbers remaining at more than 2300. However the rate of cost reduction has slowed during 2014/15, reflecting the continuing high costs of the private rented sector and the challenges in finding affordable private sector housing.

- **Increase supply**

c. 300 new self-contained properties have been sourced since June 2013; this has largely been within the nightly booked sector which is now c. 430 properties; c. 150 new long-term leased properties have been secured but c. 90 leased properties have been returned to landlords as leases have ended and the landlord has not renewed these

- **Deliver new ways of sourcing accommodation, making best use of the Council's resources**

The Council has made use of its own properties that are temporarily vacant through the regeneration programme and currently has c. 85 units. Whilst clearly not a long-term solution this has provided a source of in-borough accommodation.

The Council has entered into a programme of purchasing properties for use as TA. In addition to the 25 units purchased through Westminster Community Homes in Grays, Essex, the Council has made offers on 160 properties for purchase and this has led to completions on 36 and these are being refurbished for letting. The aim is to have agreed the purchase of 60 units by end of March 2015 and 150 by September 2015.

3.6.3 The above strategy will continue to deliver a reduction in unit costs of TA and ensure properties are affordable to households on benefits. At the same time the strength of the private market set out above means that it is extremely challenging to maintain the existing properties when alternative markets are available and identify properties which are economic to purchase and rent to households on benefits.

3.6.4 A London Councils initiative to cap costs of nightly booked properties started in the autumn 2014. All suppliers have been informed of the pan-London costs that authorities will pay and whilst extremely challenging to deliver, London Councils hope that this will reduce costs. It is still early in the initiative to draw definite conclusions and whilst this may have the effect of driving down some costs it remains the case that there are insufficient properties available at the capped rates to meet demand.

4. Service Issues that impact upon the supply and allocation of housing

During 2015 there have been both Supreme Court judgements and new national policy initiatives that will impact on future supply and allocation of affordable housing and the following paragraphs summarise the key implications. In general the Council has reviewed and revised its operating policies and procedures to respond to the allocations issues and it is recognised that practice will develop as the new systems are reviewed and further court rulings are made. The immediate impact of new national policy on housing supply and demand are reflected in the projections for 2015/16 contained in this report.

It is anticipated that the impacts on housing supply will be from 2016/17 as the detail of policies emerge (and the Council will be working with central government on this) and future Supply and Allocations reports will consider these in more detail.

Allocation of Affordable Housing

The following paragraphs set out the principle recent case law that have or will impact on housing allocation:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide accommodation in their own area "so far as reasonably practicable": Housing Act 1996, section 208(1). And if that is not practicable, statutory guidance requires them "where possible", to try to secure accommodation as close as possible to where the applicant was previously living. The *NZ v. City of Westminster* case heard at the Supreme Court concerns the import of those duties for individual households who are offered an "out of borough" placement.

Following the Supreme Court judgement, officers have reviewed procedures for allocating temporary accommodation to homeless households. Outputs include more rigorous documentation on files demonstrating how the specific needs of the family have been assessed; a revised suite of letters for use when offering longer term TA; a plain English 'Frequently Asked Questions' guide for applicants setting out how placements are made and; greater transparency around our TA placement policy as described in this report and the location of the TA we currently have in the form of a GIS map on the website.

The council already had a TA placement policy included within the Housing Allocation Scheme as well as specific policies in place for managing moves

involving the most vulnerable families open to Westminster Children's Services. The Allocation Scheme will be revised to include specific reference to the NZ judgement.

The cases *Hotak v London Borough of Southwark*, *Kanu v London Borough of Southwark* and *Johnson v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council* concern the duty of local housing authorities towards homeless people who claim to be "vulnerable", and therefore to have "a priority need" for the provision of housing accommodation under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Essentially, the court found that decisions around vulnerability involve comparing the needs of the applicant with those of an ordinary person in need of accommodation and that a widely used test, based on previous case law, was incorrect. It was also clear that whilst local authorities can take into account whether the person is receiving support to manage their difficulties when making decisions about vulnerability, it could only do so where it was satisfied the support is available to the applicant on a consistent and predictable basis.

The *Haile v Waltham Forest LBC* case refers to whether an applicant can be deemed Intentionally Homeless under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Essentially the court found that an applicant cannot be deemed Intentionally Homeless from accommodation if, by the date of the decision, they would have been homeless anyway due to another involuntary cause.

Officers in Westminster have received training on these judgements and will ensure they are taken into account when making decisions. Officers will monitor the impact of these judgements on decisions to establish if these changes create an upturn in homeless acceptances for single people and / or those who previously we would have found intentionally homeless.

- 4.1 The following sections set out the issues that impact upon the recommendations made for the supply and allocation projections set out in appendices A and B. These cover affordable rent tenure, housing and physical disability, supporting adolescents in housing need and the work with Children's Services and the equalities review.
- 4.1.1 Sections covering issues related to allocating housing and providing support for different priority groups such as people with mental health problems, learning disabilities, households escaping domestic violence etc. are included in appendix D.
- 4.2 GLA Affordable Housing investment Programme 2015-2018**
- 4.2.1 The GLA's affordable housing funding prospectus for the investment period 2015-2018 published last year ("The Mayor's Housing Covenant 2015-2018 Programme") announced a total investment pot of £1.25bn towards supporting the delivery of 45,000 new affordable homes in London during . Average grant allocations are likely to be under £30,000 per unit
- 4.2.2 The Mayor's key aim is to provide as many new homes as possible for working Londoners on low to moderate incomes The GLA's Investment Programme in affordable housing will be targeted to deliver 60% Affordable Rent and 40% of homes provided as Flexible Home Ownership.
- 4.2.3 The GLA does not anticipate affordable housing delivered on S106 sites to require grant funding. The GLA will only consider grant funding to be made available on S106s sites where it can be evidenced that without grant the scheme would be unviable, or that grant generates additional affordable homes or accelerates the delivery of affordable housing.
- 4.2.4 In recent years over 80% of new affordable housing delivery in Westminster has been on S106 sites. Consequently, the City Council is anticipating limited availability of grant from the GLA for new affordable homes delivery in Westminster during 2015-2018.
- 4.2.5 However, as part of the GLA's affordable housing delivery agreements to be negotiated with providers during 2015-2018, the GLA anticipates providers to include non grant funded affordable housing schemes as part of their agreed delivery programmes. Therefore, providers are likely to include non granted S106 schemes in Westminster as part of their delivery programmes agreed with the GLA.

Affordable Homes for Rent

- 4.2.6 Bids from providers for Affordable Rent are anticipated to contain an equal split between bids for Discounted Rent and Capped Rent affordable housing units.
- 4.2.7 *Discounted Rent* is an Affordable Rent product where rents including service charges are set at levels up to 80% of market rent or, where it would be lower, at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels.
- 4.2.8 The Mayor wishes to see Discounted Rent homes prioritised for working London households, some of whom will be in receipt of some level of welfare support, but boroughs will have flexibility on nominations as long as all nominated households are unaffected by the benefit cap. As the Mayor wants to prioritise Discounted Rent for working households and in order to give Registered Providers certainty in relation to their income stream, nominations to Discounted Rent properties should be made to households unaffected by the benefit cap and these households are most likely to be working households. To achieve this objective, boroughs may need to vary their existing local housing allocation schemes or develop local lettings policies within them.
- 4.2.9 *Capped Rent* is a form of Affordable Rent which will be targeted at those households most in housing need. Rents inclusive of service charge will be no higher than 50% of local market rent. However, in higher value areas the GLA will consider Capped Rents set at around 50% of lower quartile market rents. The minimum Capped Rent level will be target rents (exclusive of service charge) and bids for properties at target rents will need to be justified to the GLA –e.g. where these properties are needed to facilitate re-housing of tenants affected by regeneration.
- 4.2.10 Annual rent increases on Affordable Rent whether at discounted or capped levels will be restricted to CPI+1%.

Flexible Home Ownership

- 4.2.11 Providers are invited to bid on the basis of an expected mix of the following sub products within flexible home ownership. These products will be accessible to households who qualify for intermediate housing under GLA criteria (household incomes not exceeding £66k for 1 and 2bed homes and up to £80K for family sized accommodation):
- 4.2.12 Rent To Save: A sub market rent product let at up to 80% of market rent for a period of 5 years allowing tenants to save for a deposit towards buying the property at the end of the period either outright or on a shared ownership basis.

Providers are expected to put in place a structure and process to identify necessary savings behaviour with the aspiring home owner at the outset of the tenancy and to monitor this on an ongoing basis.

4.2.13 Shared Ownership: Those qualifying for intermediate housing can purchase between 25% and 75% of the value of the property and pay a rent of up to 2.75% on the unsold equity. Share Owners can buy additional equity stakes and staircase to outright ownership.

4.2.14 Equity Loans: Equity loans of up to 20% can be provided to intermediate qualifying households on moderate incomes sufficient to raise 75% of the value of the property through a mortgage and 5% as a deposit. The equity loan would be repayable if the leaseholder moves, repays their mortgage without simultaneously re-mortgaging or the expiry of the 25 year term.

4.2.15 Providers are expected to bid for a set number of new build homes without pre-determining the flexible home ownership product which the home owner will purchase.

4.2.16 The GLA is not currently prioritising Intermediate rent (sub market rents) as part of its 2015-2018 investment programme

4.3 Affordable Housing Delivery Framework

4.3.1 To inform the delivery of new affordable housing in each of the London Boroughs during 2015-2018 the GLA is requesting that each borough enter into a Delivery Framework agreement with the GLA. The Framework will set out

- the agreed rent levels that should apply to the two new variants of Affordable Rent , known as Capped Rent and Discounted Rent and the proportions of new Affordable Rent supply to be provided on a Capped Rent and Discounted Rent basis.
- Confirmation that only households unaffected by the benefit cap will be nominated to Discounted Rent homes
- The share of nominations to new rented homes that will be retained by the Local Authority and Registered Providers.
- The agreed programme split between Affordable rent and Flexible Home Ownership 5) The approach to Flexible Home Ownership, including in relation to marketing cascades and income restrictions.

The Council is currently negotiating its Framework Delivery Agreement with the GLA

4.4 Pan London Top Slice – Mayors Housing Covenant 2015-2018

- 4.4.1 The GLA is intending to operate a “top slicing” mechanism from April 2015 for all new affordable rented supply being delivered by investment partners as part of the Mayor’s Housing Covenant affordable housing investment programme 2015-2018. This mechanism reflects the implementation of policy 27 of the Mayor’s London Housing Strategy
- 4.4.2 The London Mayor’s Housing Strategy includes the following policy :
“For affordable rented homes funded through GLA programmes five percent will be let on a pan-London basis and ten per cent on strategic sites. In addition ten per cent will be retained for nominations by the registered provider. This will replace the current system of sub-regional nominations.”
- 4.4.3 The policy is designed to address the geographical mismatch between the supply of new affordable rented homes and the demand and need for those homes across London. It is currently proposed that only tenants will be able to access top slice units with tenants needing to move because of employment, or those under occupying or over crowded being prioritised.
- 4.4.4 The new policy will apply to schemes in the GLA investment programme 2015-18, regardless of the level of GLA funding applied to them. However , the top slice will not apply to schemes with less than 10 affordable rent homes , supported housing schemes ,legacy schemes from previous programmes (irrespective of their completion date) or schemes delivered entirely outside of the GLA investment programme.
- 4.4.5 New schemes that form part of agreed delivery programmes with the GLA and which generate 10 or more new affordable rented homes will be subject to top slicing at 5%. A top slice of 10% will apply to strategic sites delivering 150 or more homes. Strategic sites are defined as schemes that would be referable to the Mayor for planning purposes, currently those with 150 homes or more across all tenures.
- 4.4.6 For the purposes of calculating the number of units to be contributed, all affordable rented units (comprising both capped and discounted rent) will be included with the only exception being supported housing. The top slice will *not*

be applied in perpetuity – i.e. it will only be applied to the first letting of the property.

- 4.4.7 If the top slice applied to a scheme doesn't generate a whole number, then the top slice will be rounded down and the remaining fraction will be added to the top slice on the next scheme/ Providers will have the opportunity to substitute certain types of units, including those with four or more bedrooms, and adapted or specialist units that have been developed to meet a specific local need. Units identified for returning tenants (e.g. on regeneration schemes) will also require special treatment. The top slice will only apply on the additionality. For phased schemes the threshold will be based on the entire scheme. However, the top slice will be applied phase by phase.
- 4.4.8 While the GLA is not intending to make exceptions where existing nomination requirements linked to S106 sites complicate Registered Providers' ability to meet the top slice requirements, the GLA will not insist on these agreements being renegotiated if this puts the delivery of schemes at risk—However, the general approach will be that boroughs should take account of the top slice requirements when negotiating S106 agreements with developers, and RPs should not be committing to schemes that would prevent them from meeting their contractual requirements with the GLA. The GLA may look at how this can be formalised in the next set of alterations to the London Plan.

Impact upon Housing Moves

- 4.4.9 The existing GLA Housing Moves scheme will need to be altered in order to account for the additional top-sliced units. Some Local Authorities have suggested that the scheme should place more of an emphasis on relieving housing need, potentially by inviting applications from households living in the private rented sector or temporary accommodation. Given that there is not a consensus on this issue among boroughs, and that it would pose significant technical challenges to deliver, the GLA will continue the existing policy of restricting access to Housing Moves to current tenants only. However, the GLA intend to work with boroughs to look at how eligibility could be expanded to further groups in future, if this is required.

Checks and balances

4.4.10 In order to ensure that boroughs receive their 'fair share' of units out of the scheme, in a way that meets the aim of the top slice (i.e. to address the geographical mismatch between the supply of new affordable rented homes and the demand and need for those homes across London). Two options were proposed: a 'free-for-all' with no checks and balances, or a quota system using the Housing Needs Index (HNI). The GLA has decided to use elements of both, as follows:

- top-sliced units will be made available to any Housing Moves applicants who meet the eligibility criteria and who do not live in the 'host' borough;
- at the end of the year, the HNI will be applied to determine the number of lettings that each borough should have received. This will be compared with what actually happened; and
- If it emerges that a borough is in 'deficit' – i.e. they have benefited from fewer lettings than expected – then they will be required to contribute fewer top-slice units in the following year Or direct nominations will be allocated to relets (double lock).
- HNI scores for each borough will be reviewed and updated by the GLA to determine the number of lettings that each borough is eligible to receive. A working group has been set up involving LA representatives to review HNI. Temporary Accommodation indicators will be removed, However, potential for the new indicators including number of homelessness presentations and affordability of PRS to be added.

4.5 Housing and Physical Disability

4.5.1 The CityWest Homes budget for 2014/15 for major adaptations is £800K. Expenditure on adaptations was £762,305 as at 31st December 2014 . Works are prioritised for those tenants who have been assessed as having an urgent priority need.

4.5.2 CWH had received 172 major adaptations referrals from April 2014 to December 2014 and 65 minor adaptations requests; a total of 130 major adaptations are practically complete as at end of December 2014. There have been 1 cancellation and another request on hold awaiting for clients' decisions regarding transfers to other adapted properties rather than adapting their homes. There were 77 cases still in progress or waiting for adaptations.

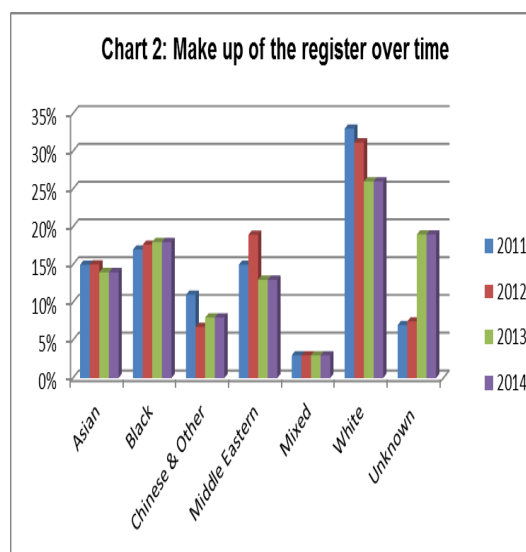
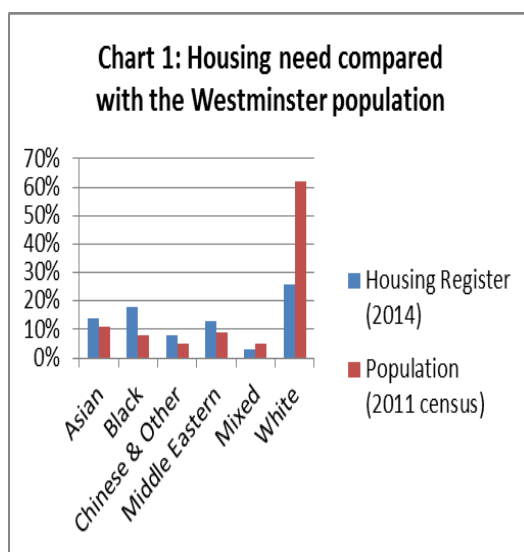
4.5.3 CWH requires an additional £500K to clear the back log of 77 referrals. It is proposed that this is funded by the underspend in the HRA Capital Programme on future major repairs. This will mean a revised 2014-15 capital budget of £1.3m for aids and adaptations with an anticipated waiting list of zero by the end of March 2015.

4.6 Equalities assessment and review

4.6.1 The annual equalities analysis looks at demand for social housing so we understand our customers, and also at social housing lets, which help ensure our policies are not discriminatory.

Demand for housing in 2014

4.6.2 Only households with priority for housing under the Allocations Scheme are registered, so the profile of the housing register is driven by the eligibility criteria. Like previous years, certain ethnic groups (Black, Asian, Chinese and Other Middle Eastern) continued to have higher levels of housing need compared with their share of the population (see chart 1 below). White households continued to be under represented on the register in 2014 compared to their population share, making up 26% of need and 62% of the population



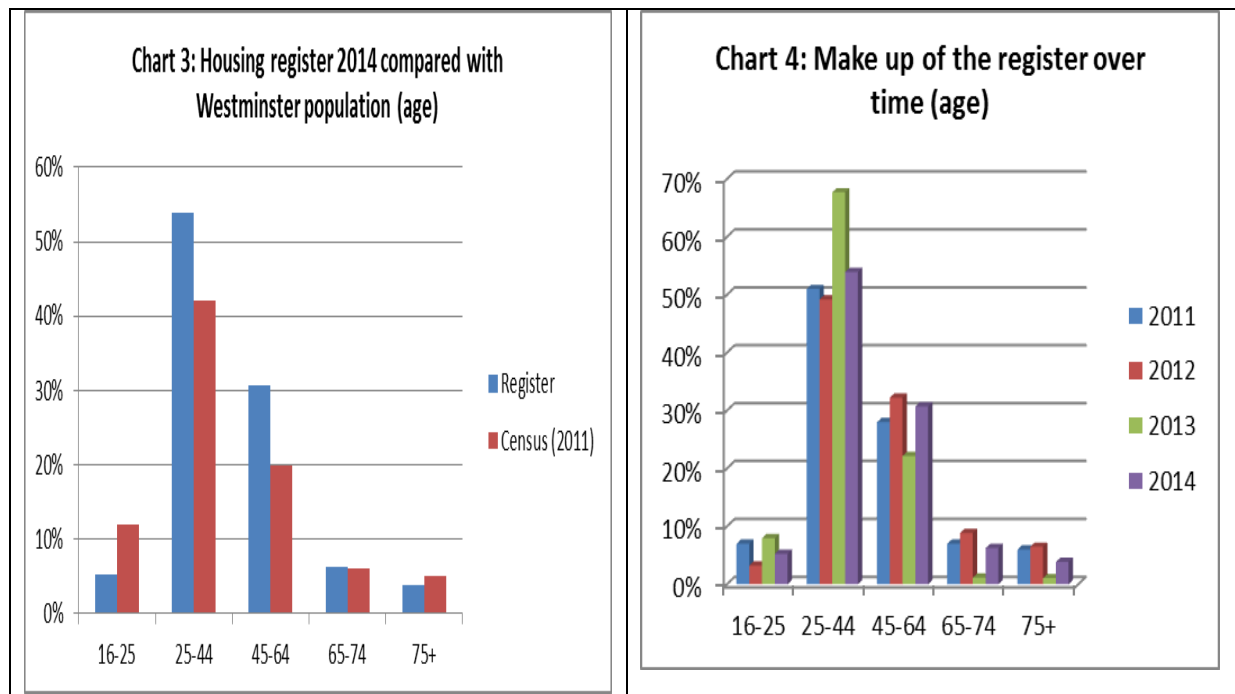
4.6.3 The profile of the register has changed over time – most notably the proportion of White households has fallen. In 2011 they made up 33% of the register

compared with 26% in 2014. The proportion of households with an Unknown ethnic origin rose in 2013 and this continued in 2014.

4.6.4 Thirty six per cent of applicants needed three or more bedrooms, and some ethnic groups continued to have an above average need for them i.e. 53% of Asian and 50% of Middle Eastern households needed larger homes.

4.6.5 A higher proportion of women (66%) were lead applicants on the housing register compared with their 49% share of the population.

4.6.6 The 25-44 age group continued to make up the biggest share (54%) of the housing register in 2014, albeit at a lower proportion than in 2013 when they made up 68%. They also make up the largest group in the Westminster population at 42%. Older people (65 and over) are slightly under represented making up 10% of the register and 11% of the population – although their proportion on the register has fluctuated over time as chart 4 shows.



4.6.7 Less than 1% of households needed a fully wheel chair adapted property which is the same as the 2006 housing needs survey estimate for the overall Westminster’s population. However there has been an increase in the number of households in TA requiring wheelchair accessible accommodation.

Lets 2013/14

4.6.8 The proportion of lets to different groups during 2013/14 is unlikely to reflect the profile of the register as:

- The make-up of the register changes over time and there is delay (often of many years) between registering for a property and a let due to supply shortages
- There is a particular shortage of family sized units and studios and one bedrooms make up nearly 50% of the stock – so groups needing larger properties will inevitably wait longer
- Households are prioritised for properties through a priority system and a quota of properties are let each year to each priority group
- The majority of lets are through choice based lettings (CBL) so applicants can choose whether to bid for properties.

However comparing lets in 2013/14 with the profile of the register is still useful to ensure there are no major discrepancies.

4.6.9 As the following table shows, overall lets to most ethnic groups were lower than their share of the register. This is with the exception of White groups where they were higher which is likely to be due to White groups making up a larger proportion of demand in the past (see chart 2) and by them having a greater need for smaller units which are more readily available.

Lets and ethnicity

Ethnicity	% Register 2014	% Lets 2013/14 (including CBL and direct offers)	Bids per let
Asian	14%	11%	119
Black	18%	14%	139
Chinese & Other	8%	8%	122
Middle Eastern	13%	10%	218
Mixed	3%	3%	182
Unknown	19%	21%	126
White	26%	33%	78
Average			122

4.6.10 Most groups actively participated in CBL with Middle Eastern and Mixed groups making higher than average numbers of bids per let. White households made lower than average bids per let which is consistent with previous years' findings.

Age

4.6.11 The table below illustrates there was a higher proportion of lets to young people (16-24) compared with their proportion on the register in 2014 and a significantly lower proportion to the 25-44 age group which is likely to be due to the shortage of family sized units and a more readily available supply of studio/s and one bedroom properties. The proportion of lets to older people was higher than their proportion on the register which is due to the available supply of community supported housing.

4.6.12 There was a higher proportion of lets to young people (16-24) compared with their proportion on the register and a significantly lower proportion to the 25-44 age group. This is likely to be due to the greater availability of studios and one bedroom properties and a shortage of family sized units.

Lets compared with need by age

Age	% Register 2014	% All lets 2013/14	% CBL lets 2013/14	Lets per CBL let
16-24	5%	8%	6%	81
25-44	54%	43%	43%	183
45-64	31%	33%	37%	92
65-74	6%	9%	9%	33
75 plus	4%	8%	5%	32
Average				122

4.6.13 Previous reports have noted that younger and older age groups make below average bids per let and this continued in 2013/14 as the above table shows reflecting that there is greater availability of community supportive housing for older people. In addition support is available for anyone not bidding and people are contacted by the Housing Options Service if not participating and can be offered automated bidding.

5. New Policy proposals

5.1 Lessee offer policy on renewal estates

It is occasionally necessary to exercise Director's discretion to offer a leaseholder on a renewal estate the option of a social housing tenancy. This would be on exceptional welfare grounds. This is set out in the Renewal Policy which sits as an appendix to the Housing Allocation Scheme. It is proposed to add a line into the points table in the Housing Allocation Scheme to say that in these cases applicants will be given 400 points to ensure they are rehoused in time.

5.2 Mobility Categories

There have been several cases recently of applicants who believe themselves to need wheelchair accessible properties when there is no physical reason for wheelchair use. It is proposed to insert the underlined wording below into the Allocation Scheme (section 2.7).

Mobility Category Applicants

Category 1	Applicants who <u>have been assessed by a NHS doctor as having a diagnosis which requires them permanently to use a wheelchair all the time</u>
Category 2	Applicants who <u>have been assessed by a NHS doctor as having a diagnosis which requires them permanently to need a home which is wheelchair accessible although they</u> but may not need to use it inside the home
Category 3	Applicants with severe mobility problems who require a ground floor or lifted property with level access and no internal stairs
Category 4	All other applicants

5.3 People who need to move on Medical grounds

The Housing Allocation Scheme allows for rehousing when an applicant's housing situation seriously adversely affects their health. It sets out that when applicants live in the private rented sector (PRS) but need to move on medical grounds, they will be assisted to find alternative private rented accommodation. If no suitable accommodation can be found they may be placed on the Medical Priority List. In reality Housing Options have been unable to assist any of these applicants into the PRS because they have been unable to find level access properties or properties suitable for wheelchair users and private landlords will not allow the adaptations which are necessary. It is therefore proposed to remove paragraphs 6.1.7.-6.1.8 of the scheme and allow applicants accepted on medical grounds to be registered immediately for social housing.

5.4 **Transfers to Community Supportive Housing**

Older WCC tenants who are living in general needs properties are encouraged to consider moving to Community Supportive Housing (sheltered housing) but are currently only eligible for studio flats if single. If they are currently living in a one-bedroom flat they are not usually interested in moving to a smaller home even though they might benefit from the support offered in Community Supportive Housing. It is proposed to amend the Allocation Scheme to allow single WCC tenants moving from general needs housing, whether studio or one-bedroom, to bid for one-bedroom Community Supportive Housing.

5.5 **Amendment to the Tenancy Policy**

The Tenancy policy to be amended to confirm that the Council's discretionary succession policy may apply where the applicant does not qualify for statutory succession. This involves amending paragraph 7.10 to include the wording in italics below:

7.10 In certain circumstances if the tenant dies and there has already been one statutory succession at the property, *or the applicant does not qualify for a statutory succession*, the City Council may offer a discretionary succession under the discretionary succession policy.

5.6 **Implementation of Right to Move**

In March 2015 the Government published 'Right to Move - Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local housing authorities in England'. The guidance encourages housing authorities to revise their existing allocation policies to take account of households that need to move within or across local authority boundaries for employment reasons.

The guidance states;

'The Government is committed to increasing mobility for social tenants to enable tenants to meet their aspirations, and to support them into work. We want to ensure that tenants are not prevented from taking up an employment opportunity because they cannot find a suitable place to live, recognising that long term unemployment is damaging for individuals and communities. That is why in the Autumn Statement 2013 we set out our intention to introduce a Right to Move for social tenants who need to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training'.

Currently local authorities allocate social housing to applicants that fall into the following reasonable preference groups;

- people who are homeless;
- people living in unsatisfactory housing conditions (including insanitary or overcrowded housing);
- people with a particular need to move on medical or welfare grounds; and

- people with a particular need to move to avoid hardship to themselves or others.

The Right to Move guidance is for social housing tenants that fall into the hardship category and cannot be excluded from applying on the grounds of no local connection. The guidance also encourages local authorities to set aside a minimum quota of 1% of lettings for Right to Move households.

Westminster is keen to give support to households in employment and already gives additional priority to some applicants that are working. Westminster Council currently gives a proportion (up to 5%) of lettings to the Mayor's Pan London Mobility Scheme 'Housing Moves'. Housing Moves is a scheme that allows social housing tenants to move from one London borough to another for employment/training purposes or to move nearer friends/family to provide care or support. This scheme is only available to social housing tenants of participating landlords in London and in 2014/15 Westminster let eight properties to this group.

Because of the demand for affordable housing in Westminster (as set out in this report) and because of the location of Westminster and the strong transport links into London it is proposed that applicants applying under the Right to Move must be from the Greater London area and/or currently have to travel in excess of 90 minutes each way to get to work to be considered. According to the ONS Census 2001, 90% of those working in Westminster have to travel in to the borough.

As Westminster Council already contributes to the overall number of moves to tenants wishing to move across boroughs for employment reasons we are proposing to give one x Studio, two x 1-beds and one x 2-bed property. This represents c. 0.7% of available lettings.

In order to comply with the guidance it is proposed to amend the Allocation Scheme to include the following;

Applicants applying under the Right to Move quota will be considered for re-housing where;

- They live outside the Greater London area and/or
- They have to travel for a minimum of 90 minutes each way (using the fastest mode of transport available) to their place of work from their current home. Availability of public transport during working hours will be taken into account
- Employment must be permanent for a minimum of 12 months.

Westminster Council will set aside a proportion of lettings for applicants moving under the Right to Move quota. The proportion of lettings will be reviewed annually.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The gross Housing General Fund homelessness budget, excluding Prevention, for 2015/ 16 is £48m. Of this sum about £41m relates to the provision of temporary accommodation.
- 6.2 Within the Housing General Fund capital programme for 2014/15 there is a budget of £26m for the funding of new affordable housing supply via registered providers. This is combined with HCA Funding and Section 106 opportunities to maximise the supply of affordable homes.
- 6.3 The Housing Revenue Account budget includes £800,000 for 2014/15 for major adaptations. Expenditure is administered by CityWest Homes. Works are prioritised for those tenants who have been assessed as having an urgent and high priority need.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council has a general duty under the Housing Act 1996 (Part VII), as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 to ensure that accommodation is made available for homeless applicants who are owed a full housing duty by the Council.
- 7.2 The Council also has a duty to maintain a housing register under the Housing Act 1996 (Part VI) as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.
- 7.3 By virtue of Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 many Housing Authorities are required to prepare and update a homeless strategy. However, being an excellent authority, the City Council is exempted from that requirement by virtue of Article 3 of the Local Authorities' Plans and Strategies (Disapplication) (England) Order 2005. This is a non statutory report prepared outside the homelessness regime

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are none

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Ongoing consultation on housing supply and allocations issues is also carried out with key stakeholders both within and outside the Council, through meetings with RP's and the Housing Options Service Improvement Group.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact:**

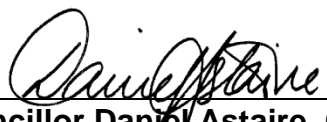
*Gregory Roberts, Head of Homelessness and Supporting People. Tel: 0207 641
2834. Email: grobert2@westminster.gov.uk*

BACKGROUND PAPERS: none

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development**.

Declaration of Interest

I have <no interest to declare /to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed:  Date: 11 August 2015
NAME: **Councillor Daniel Astaire, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development**

State nature of interest if any

.....
(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled

Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2015/16 and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed 

Date ...11 August 2015.....

Councillor Daniel Astaire, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:
.....
.....

If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Chief Operating Officer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of Human Resources (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made

aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.

SUPPLY OF RENTED ACCOMMODATION PROJECTIONS 2015/6

Affordable Housing Supply	2015/16 Projection
WCC Stock	
Casual voids and returned from major works	410
Returned from conversion/rehab.	8
Registered Provider Stock	
First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	65
First Let Nominations - Social Rent	13
Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	65
Relet Nominations - Social Rent	153
Regeneration related additional supply	
Additional supply for regeneration tenant decants - WCH	10
Additional supply for regeneration tenant decants - HRA	0
<u>Total Net Voids</u>	724
WCC Stock	
Transfer (Existing WCC Tenants (non regeneration schemes))	117
Total lettings Supply before decants	841
Less Decants for Major Works (non regeneration)	-13
Less Decants for Major Works (regeneration)	-37
<u>Total Gross Voids</u>	791

Appendix B

Supply of Rented Accommodation 2015/16 – projections by property size

Supply - 2015/16	Studio	1	2	3	4+	Total
CWH Casual voids	91	182	74	58	5	410
Return from rehab	0	0	3	4	1	8
RP First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	0	2	36	23	4	65
RP First Let Nominations - Social Rent	0	2	2	9	0	13
RP Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	19	19	25	2	0	65
RP Relet Nominations - Social Rent	65	43	35	7	3	153
Additional supply for regeneration decants	0	0	5	5	0	10
Total Net Voids	175	248	180	108	13	724
WCC Transfers	29	50	22	10	6	117
Decants for major works (non-regeneration)	-4	-6	-2	-1	0	-13
Decants for major works (regeneration)	-3	-8	-21	-5	0	-37
Total	197	284	179	112	19	791

Appendix B1

Allocations projections of rented housing 2015/16 by property size

All allocations will be made via the City Council's Choice Based Letting Scheme except for those individuals who are identified for direct offers of accommodation. The following tables form a projection only but include all groups who access social housing; the actual allocation will be made after considering all the relevant issues relating to any applicant and his/ her household and will depend upon the bidding preferences of individuals under Choice.

Existing Tenants	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed +	Total
Decants/Major Works including Returning Decants	4	6	2	1	0	13
Decants regeneration works	3	8	21	5	0	37
Cash incentives	2	27	10	2	0	41
Community Supportive Housing for the elderly	8	9	0	0	0	17
Overcrowded tenants	0	4	22	19	2	47
Studios to 1 beds, 1 beds to 2 beds (young parents), Cat A's, Management Transfers	4	25	41	7	1	78
SUB TOTAL (Tenant Transfers)	21	79	96	34	3	233
Waiting List						
Homeless (including community supportive housing (including C&C general needs))	91	116	63	68	12	350
Homeless split households	2	2	0	0	0	4
Category A Medical	3	8	3	3	1	18
Community Supportive Housing (including C&C decant; excluding homeless)	32	25	0	0	0	57
Cash Incentive (split households)	1	12	0	0	0	13
Community Care Nominations	1	1	2	0	0	4
Children Act Rehousing	0	0	3	2	0	5
Leaving Care Quota	9	5	1	0	0	15
Street Homeless and hostel move on quota	8	1	0	0	0	9
Second Succession	5	15	1	1	0	22
Staff Rehousing	0	1	0	0	0	1
Learning Disability Quota	3	4	0	0	0	7
Reciprocals	2	2	2	2	0	8
Mental health hostel quota	13	6	0	0	0	19
Statutory overcrowded	0	0	1	0	2	3
RP severe overcrowded	0	0	1	2	1	4
Pan London Housing Moves (GLA scheme)	5	5	5	0	0	15
Right to Move Scheme	1	2	1	0	0	4
SUB TOTAL (Housing Register)	176	205	83	78	16	558

Appendix C: Westminster Housing Market Analysis

Westminster private rents			
	Median rents (Hometrack) Sept 14	% change over year	Lower Quartile rents (GLA Map May 14)
1 bed	£429	0.94%	£330
2 bed	£620	3.33%	£430
3 bed	£900	0.55%	£640
4 + bed	£1,500	Not available	£928
Average	£862*	1.51%	£499

Overall Westminster property prices Sept 2014 (Hometrack)

All property types		
	Lower quartile	Average
Hometrack	£518,000	£1,129,309
% change (month)	-7.22%	-3.44%
% change (year)	17.28%	12.36%

Westminster prices by bedroom size September 2014 (Hometrack)			
Bedroom size	Lower quartile property prices	% change month	% change year
1 bedroom	£425,000	-2.30%	19.17%
2 bedroom	£625,000	-2.46%	24.48%

Appendix D: Provision of housing for vulnerable groups

A variety of services are commissioned to respond to rough sleeping, to support in particular the delivery of Council priorities to increase the numbers of people with learning disabilities and mental health problems living in settled accommodation and respond to incidents of domestic violence

10.1 The Westminster Learning Disability Housing and Support Plan 2012/15

10.1.1 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 'Transition from Children's to Adults' Services for Young People aged 14 to 25 in Westminster' (March 2011) anticipated that up to 155 young people will make the transition to Adult Services over the following five financial years. The majority of these are likely to transition to Westminster Learning Disability Partnership, although some may transition to the Adults Physical Disabilities Team. Young people with disabilities and complex health problems, including mental health problems, are a diverse group with varying needs and levels of need, including educational, health and social needs. As a consequence, individuals are supported by a wide range of services. The population covered includes individuals with a wide range of conditions and disabilities, including:

- A learning disability
- Physical disability
- Complex, long term health conditions such as neurological condition
- Sensory impairment, including hearing impairment, visual impairment dual sensory loss
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Severe and enduring mental health problems

10.1.2 The total population predicted to have a learning disability in Westminster in 2015 is 5,863. The largest numbers of people with a learning disability according to these predictions is in the age groups 25 years to 64 years. (Of the above numbers not all will have critical or substantial need)

10.1.3 The Learning Disability Partnership in Westminster has been successful in meeting its savings targets and continues to provide a high quality service to those who meet the criteria. This has been achieved by working closely with providers in a deregistration programme of the in borough services and development of more provision and upgrading of provision for people with learning disabilities.

This has been achieved through initiatives such as:

- The reconfiguration of Portnal Rd into five units of high needs supported accommodation for people with autism who had previously been placed out of borough in registered care home. This was achieved by utilising Campus Capital Grant funding.
- Reduction in the SP contract to make savings of £60K and directing the funding where it is needed most
- A capital investment programme from ASC of £565K to upgrade three supported living schemes to make fit for purpose for people with complex needs
- Development of the Harris Centre (using ASC capital investment) to provide five units of extra care housing for older people and people with a learning disability and dementia over 55yrs.
- Campus Grant Funding has also been utilised to enable swift discharge from NHS resources to up grade supported housing provision to meet the needs of their physical disabilities.

10.1.4 Further developments are in train to develop a specialist autism unit which provide additional high needs housing and support and increased provision to meet the needs of people with a learning disability and physical disability
A bid to DOH has been successful to provide a tri-borough shared ownership scheme (£900K) which will provide further housing options for people who are currently placed in Assessment and Treatment centres and who are being monitored by the Winterbourne View Concordant reporting system

10.2 Housing Allocation and Domestic Violence

10.2.1 Domestic Violence (DV) remains a major focus for the department. Housing has continued to sit on both the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategic group, and operational group, to ensure that its departmental objectives fit with the strategic and operational response to DV borough-wide. In 2011/2016 there will be significant changes to the governance structure as a result of the Tri Borough commissioning of VAWG services, meaning single borough meetings will cease and will be replaced with Tri Borough operational and strategic groups.

10.2.2 The Housing DV lead is Co-Chair of the Westminster Domestic Violence Forum (WDVF) and continues to support the development of both the Phoenix group for DV survivors and the Butterfly Group, a peer mentoring programme for those who have/ are experiencing domestic violence, which is coordinated by the refuge provider Hestia.

- 10.2.3 Housing has worked closely with the Tri Borough VAWG commissioning group to develop the design of the new Tri Borough service and strategy that will be in operation from 20110-2018. Housing will also be part of the Evaluation Panel which appoints the Integrated Support Service provider.
- 10.2.4 The department fully supports the operational work and development of the **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)** and continues to act as an example of good practice to other MARACs in respect of their housing input. The housing lead was a contributor to the recent MARAC self- assessment process which gave MARAC agencies the opportunity to examine the performance of the MARAC and suggest ways in which it could improve.
- 10.2.5 Westminster's weekly Domestic Abuse drop in surgery held at Bayswater Children's Centre has now been running for two years. A trained officer from HOS who specialises in Domestic Violence attends the surgery in person once a fortnight and provides telephone support the rest of the time.
- 10.2.6 The effectiveness of the response to domestic violence issues at HOS continues to be monitored through an annual mystery shopping exercise of the call centre. The housing lead now represents Westminster on the Tri Borough Housing Operational Group, which monitors the housing sector's response to domestic violence. Within this, the Tri Borough leads have commenced a face-to-face mystery shopping exercise, to measure responses to both housing issues and domestic violence. The Westminster lead is also working with HOS to assess their response against a set of Service Standards formulated by Standing Together against Domestic Violence (STADV).
- 10.2.7 Westminster Housing continues to be part of the North London Reciprocal agreement for DV victims who need urgent re-housing. The reciprocal agreement was re-launched in November 2013 to ensure that staff and support agencies across the six boroughs (Enfield, Barnet, Haringey, Islington, Camden and Westminster) are aware that this is an option for secure tenants who cannot be moved via management transfer in their own borough.
- 10.2.8 The Quality Assurance (QAF) of the refuge contract was completed during Spring 2014. A contract extension has been requested with the current provider, which will take the contract end date to March 2016. The extension provides the opportunity to explore Tri Borough refuge provision, which would provide contract management savings that can be used to maintain current levels of provision. In

January 2015 a bid was submitted to DCLG for £100,000 of money aimed at strengthening accommodation based specialist domestic abuse provision.

10.3 Mental Health and Housing

10.3.1 In Westminster we have developed a wide variety of housing related support services for people who experience severe and enduring mental health issues. There are 372 units of supported housing, ranging from high support 24 hour schemes to semi-independent units with visiting support. The schemes are managed by 10 housing providers. In addition there are over 550 units of floating support for people living in their own independent accommodation who require support to prevent the loss of tenancy.

10.3.2 The range of supported housing services has been expanded since the beginning of the Supporting People programme by opening six new mental health schemes and redeveloping a rough sleepers scheme to work with people with low level mental health problems. A new 24 hour high support service to cater for people recovering from severe and enduring mental illness opened in 2012 and is operating effectively in providing additional cost effective options to out of borough residential care. A women only 24/7 high supported commissioned service is currently going through extensive reconfiguration to include self contained units. Referrals into these units will be for those clients who are highly functioning but with complex needs who ordinarily would be placed in a more specialist scheme out of the borough. Additional clinical support will be offered by the relevant MH team.

10.3.3 Westminster Supported Housing is jointly commissioned by Housing, Adult Services and NHS Westminster. Anyone accommodated within the supported housing provision should be allocated to a Central and North West London (CNWL) Mental Health Trust team and be on the Care Programme Approach (CPA). Individuals are supported to move from supported housing into independent living along a pathway of care and support as a joint process with the housing provider and the allocated MH team care coordinator. It should be based on assessment of need and regular placement reviews by the allocated MH team.

10.3.4 The Kensington and Westminster Placement Review panel is used as the basis for sharing information across the joint commissioners about those clients that potentially may require a placement move back to the borough into MH supported accommodation. This forum ensures that any financial savings

implicated in accommodation costs are monitored and recorded for the respective commissioners of the services

10.3.5 Access to the range of supported housing provision is via the Single Access referral Panel [SARP] The SARP has a multi disciplinary membership including housing providers; the Housing option service; floating support; ward managers; senior practitioners from the MH team including an Occupational Therapist and the Commissioner for MH accommodation. The SARP works to prevent homelessness and where possible avoids using out of borough expensive placements. This is achieved by ensuring that there is a steady flow of people through all of our in borough supported accommodation. Referrals are received for clients already living in supported who require a step down to less supported, occasionally a like for like move; directly from the wards; from out of borough projects, tenancy breakdowns and family homes. It is essential that all clients who access MH supported housing have housing related support needs that cannot ordinarily be managed in the community.

10.3.6 The SARP also agrees the Move On Quota applications which agrees access to independent accommodation for those service users currently in supported accommodation. MH services receive an annual quota of independent housing units from the City Council for people with mental health problems living in supported housing who are able to live independently. Readiness for independent accommodation is assessed robustly by care coordinators and housing providers and then again by the SARP that accepts or rejects MSHS quota applications. The panel only accepts applications for people where there is clear evidence about the service user's readiness for independent living. Once accepted onto the quota the SARP liaises closely with the Housing Options Service who have the capacity to restrict and delay bidding where it is felt that a situation has changed and people can be removed from the quota when necessary. Once people have moved there are a range of community support services available including floating support services that are able to support the person through the move, to settling in and establishing themselves in the community and other support provisions including flexi care, befriending and day services. In addition there have been several referrals from supported housing placements through the panel onto the single homeless housing pathway, into independent accommodation

10.3.7 Quarterly training on housing issues for the MH teams and the housing provider is provided by Westminster. The training programme incorporates all aspects of housing and access via the relevant housing pathway including the Move On

Quota, the Single Persons Homeless Pathway as well as the SARP processes into supported housing,

10.3.8 Monthly housing surgeries are held in all of the Mental Health teams facilitated by the SARP coordinator, a senior practitioner in the JAS team and the Commissioner for MH Accommodation. The surgeries reinforce the information shared at the housing training and for mental health practitioners specifically to discuss service users' housing needs and to pre-empt future placements that may be required within the Supported Housing services.

10.4 Supported Housing for Young People

10.4.1 138 units of supported and hostel accommodation are commissioned, managed by 4 different organisations for young people up to the age of 25. Services prioritise looked after children, care leavers, young parents and young people at risk of homelessness, and that services respond effectively to meet the needs of this client group improving life chances and opportunity.

10.4.2 The Young Persons Supported Housing Pathway has been remodelled following a review reducing the provision where it has been under-utilised and expanding provision to meet need. Whilst these changes have been implemented the number of planned moves through the pathway remains above the target of 75% averaging at 91% and the number of Children Services placements continue to increase annually.

10.4.3 A Best Practice Guide has been developed to promote best practice across supported housing providers and to be used as a tool by statutory agencies to achieve better outcomes for young people. The document has been updated and now includes a set of standards for supported housing providers for each stage within the housing pathway.

10.4.4 An Information Fact Sheet was developed in partnership with the Westminster Learning Disability Partnership to support workers to recognise adult service users who may have a learning disability and therefore might benefit from either reasonable adjustment to their support or from specialist assessment and advice from the WLDP. The fact sheet has been widely circulated to statutory agencies.

10.4.5 Housing briefings were held for Children Services staff to provide details on the wider housing supply and demand issues and the revised Young Persons Supported Pathway.

10.4.6 Safeguarding

There is a responsibility on contracted service providers to demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults and children. All housing related support services are required to evidence through policy and procedures and front line service delivery. There has been a significant amount of activity across the sector particularly in light of the new Care Act being introduced this has included:-

- All services have been assessed as achieving a 'Good or Excellent' score against the self-assessment tool used to monitor standards and continuous improvement for housing related support services
- Healthy relationships sessions which includes sexual exploitation have been held within services to promote awareness and literature have been updated
- Hostel representatives have begun the Adult Safeguarding Train the Trainer program which is being rolled out
- A briefing was held for housing related support staff on Safeguarding and the Care Act
- A focus group was held with young people (including care leavers) across hostels and supported housing to discuss the experiences on safeguarding matters in particular sexual exploitation. The responses highlighted young people's understanding of the issues; knowledge on how to keep safe and report concerns and the feedback is being fed into a wider reported drafted on SE by Cllr Rowley.