



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development
Date:	15 th December 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2016/17
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Financial Summary:	The gross Housing General Fund homelessness budget, excluding Prevention, for 2016/ 17 is £48m. Of this sum about £41m relates to the provision of temporary accommodation.
Report of:	Barbara Brownlee – Director of Housing and Regeneration

1. Executive Summary

This annual report reviews the demand for and supply of social rented housing and low-cost home ownership in and considers supply and demand projections for 2016/17.

The report also makes proposals for the allocation of the supply of social housing in 2016/17 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:

- Current projections of supply and the proposed allocation of social housing for 2016/17.
- 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 That 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 Tenancy Policy and Tenancy Strategy

Tenancy Policy

To reflect updated legal advice which is that all flexible tenancies should be subject to a tenancy review it is proposed that rather than Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies, these types of tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households, and that they may be offered in the following circumstances:

- Where they can help a broader range of low income working households who have few housing opportunities in Westminster to access social housing (the Low Income Workers Tenancies referred to in recommendation 2.3 are being offered in line with this principle)
- Where they are attached to an employment or training support project
- Where they are intended to provide some transitional housing following a bereavement for discretionary successors, under the discretionary succession policy for flexible tenants

Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households may also be used in other circumstances subject to agreement by the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing.

It is also recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended to set out the general circumstances when a further tenancy may be offered to these households and the length of term to be offered following a review. These circumstances will reflect the policy aim, that in the main they are offered to assist a household for a specific period of time, so that the maximum number of households can benefit from them and that they are not intended to be a long term housing solution. A further flexible tenancy will normally therefore only be offered where the household's circumstances have changed and is assessed as now having priority for housing under the Councils Housing Allocation Scheme and a private rented tenancy is considered unsuitable for them, as the Council determines they are unable to manage one, or they need a wheelchair adapted property, or they are eligible for Community Supportive Housing (sheltered) and none of the criteria set out in 4.14 of the Tenancy Policy applies.

A further flexible Tenancy offered under the above circumstances will generally be for 5 years but there may be exceptional circumstances (as set out in section 3.7 of the Tenancy Policy) which justify granting a flexible tenancy of less than five years.

Tenants that have been issued with these types of tenancies for non-priority households will not be eligible for Cash to Move payments

It is recommended that the Director of Housing and Regeneration has delegated authority to agree any changes to the Tenancy Policy related to Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households in line with the above circumstances.

Tenancy Strategy

It is also recommended that the Tenancy Strategy, which sets out factors that Registered Providers in the district should have regard to when formulating their tenancy policies, is amended to reflect the requirement of law that all flexible tenancies be subject to a tenancy review, so Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households and that they should be subject to a review. Alongside this it is recommended that the Tenancy Strategy is also amended to highlight that registered providers should consider any exceptional circumstances of the household when deciding if these types of tenancies are renewed.

2.3 Affordable Housing for Low Income Working Households

Building on the success of the scheme to offer additional points to working households living in Temporary Accommodation it is recommended that a target quota of 10 lettings is established for working households with total gross income of £20k or less who would not otherwise have priority for social housing under the Housing Allocations Scheme. Allocations would be to studio and 1 bed properties, reflecting the relative high level of supply of these size units. Tenancies will generally be for a period of three years (an introductory tenancy followed by a two year Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households which will then be reviewed).

In order to implement this policy the following is recommended:

- The Housing Allocation Scheme is amended to include the quota and the criteria relating to who is eligible for these tenancies and how properties will be allocated (as set out in paragraph 5.1).

2.4 **Discretionary Succession**

It is recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended so that households eligible for a discretionary succession, who have been living in Community Supportive Housing for older people, are required to move to alternative housing, if they are not eligible for the Community Supportive Housing in their own right.

2.5 **Mutual Exchange**

It is recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended so that mutual exchanges are not agreed where the proposed assignee moving into the Westminster Council property would be under occupying the property as defined by the City Council's Housing Allocation Policy.

2.6 **Workers Points**

It is recommended that the additional points for working households scheme is amended to allow officers to seek formal confirmation that the household is in employment at any point and to remove the additional points if the criteria are not met.

2.7 **Intermediate Housing**

It is recommended that the allocation of future intermediate housing opportunities should be according to household size to avoid under occupancy of intermediate homes and increased priority given to children of existing Council tenants that are overcrowded in their current home. As result increased priority will no longer be given to applicants of the former family quota scheme. In addition existing Westminster Intermediate Tenants will only be given priority when moving to a different type of intermediate housing such as low cost home ownership or one that includes a savings element.

2.8 **Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas**

It is recommended that the changes set out in paragraph 5.6 to the Policy for Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas (2014) are approved to clarify the Council's offer and to update financial entitlements in line with the statutory framework

3. **Reasons for Decision**

- 3.1 The proposals contained in this report set out the issues related to the development of allocation projections for social housing for 2016/17 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.

4. Background, including Policy Context

Social Rented Housing Supply and Allocation Projections

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

Demand Profile	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1445	1338	1002	1053	954
Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	539	813	705	617	511
Households in Temporary Accommodation	1910	2450	2283	2397	2423
Category A Transfer Applicants	66	71	81	105	113
Allocation Profile	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16
Homeless Households	391	425	344	360	486
Tenant Transfers	175	151	238	245	227
Children Act Panel	19	20	20	11	17
Mental Health Hostel Move On	13	13	11	12	10
Cash Incentive Scheme	38	58	39	40	50

4.2 Demand for Social Housing

4.2.1 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.

4.2.2 Acceptances of a housing duty to households, who are either homeless or threatened with homelessness, have decreased during 2015/16 in comparison with the numbers received in 2014/15. The number of acceptances is c. 60% of applications due to thorough investigation of applications and work to prevent homelessness or by offering alternative options.

4.3 Supply Projections

4.3.2 Initial projections for the supply of new lettings of affordable rented accommodation for 2016/17 is c. 840 an increase of c. 35 against the total number of lettings forecast for 2015/16. This comprises the sum of casual voids from City West Homes, Registered Provider (RP) relets, RP first lets and tenant transfers and can be broken down as follows:

Supply by bedsize - 2016/17	Studio	1	2	3	4+	Total
CWH Casual voids	84	167	74	20	12	357
Return from rehab	0	2	4	5	2	13
RP First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	0	9	27	28	2	66
RP First Let Nominations - Social Rent	0	5	10	15	0	30
RP Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	8	34	17	2	0	61
RP Relet Nominations - Social Rent	30	74	35	13	2	154
Total Net Voids	122	291	167	83	18	681
WCC Transfers	45	92	21	26	0	183
Less Decants for major works	-2	-10	-9	-3	0	-24
Total	165	373	204	121	23	840

4.3.3 The number of new affordable homes currently projected to be delivered by Registered Providers or directly by the Council during the period 2016/17 and 2017/18 is 362 units, made up of 312 new build or converted units plus 50 spot acquisitions. However it may be possible to increase beyond the current projected figure of 50 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.

4.3.4 Included within the 362 new or converted homes, 34 are anticipated to be provided for social rent at target rents, 73 homes for affordable rent, and 3 homes for those with learning disabilities. The remaining homes will be provided as intermediate housing either at sub market rents or as shared ownership, and a further 50 spot acquisitions are anticipated to be provided for varying affordable housing types. 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. There is a strong

possibility that some of the schemes that are scheduled to complete towards the end of quarter 4 2017-18 are likely to slip in to the following year 2018/19.

4.3.5 Significant new schemes that will contribute towards these 362 new affordable homes are:

- Thorney Street SW1 a section 106 development being provided through Dolphin Square that will deliver 37 affordable rent and 30 intermediate rent homes,
- North Wharf Gardens in Paddington, also a section 106 scheme where Octavia Housing will deliver 16 affordable rent and 11 intermediate homes
- Page Street SW1 being delivered by Westminster Community Homes that will provide 11 new social rented homes
- A new build scheme located on the site of the former Estate office at Mozart where Westminster Community Homes are delivering 8 new social rented homes

4.3.6 In addition to the 385 affordable homes anticipated to be delivered during the period 2016-2018, 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 2018. This additional affordable housing supply will come from a mixture of sources including the Council's Housing Renewal areas and S106 development sites. Whilst some of the pipeline supply is under construction a number of schemes are yet to go on site or get planning consent.

4.3.7 Social Housing Relet supply from City West Homes and Registered Providers

Relet supply from City West Homes stock for 2016/17 is estimated to be 370. An anticipated 215 relets from existing registered provider social housing stock is anticipated to be provided to the City Council during 2016/17. This projection is based on the average level of relets received by the City Council over the previous three years. 72% of relets to be provided during 2016/2017 are anticipated to be provided at rents equal to or below target rent levels, with the remainder at affordable rent levels

4.3.8 In addition to other factors mentioned above, there is the uncertainty of the impact of the Housing and Planning Bill upon future supply of affordable housing within Westminster. Both WCC HRA and RP housing stock in Westminster could be reduced under the extension of the Right to Buy to RP's and the requirement for WCC's HRA to make an annual payment to government, based on the number of High Value voids that are likely to become vacant. Details of the policy relating to the sale of high value voids are unclear at present and it is not known how many High Value voids may need to be sold. An amendment has been proposed to the Housing and Planning Bill that every High Value void sold

in London another two are developed, but the issue for Westminster is likely to be that shortages of land and its high cost will mean this new supply is not in borough.

4.4 Housing Renewal and Community Build

4.4.1 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.

4.4.2 It is estimated that less than 10 households will require allocations of social housing to assist with decanting programmes during 2016/17.

4.5 Homelessness Projections and Prevention

4.5.1 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.)

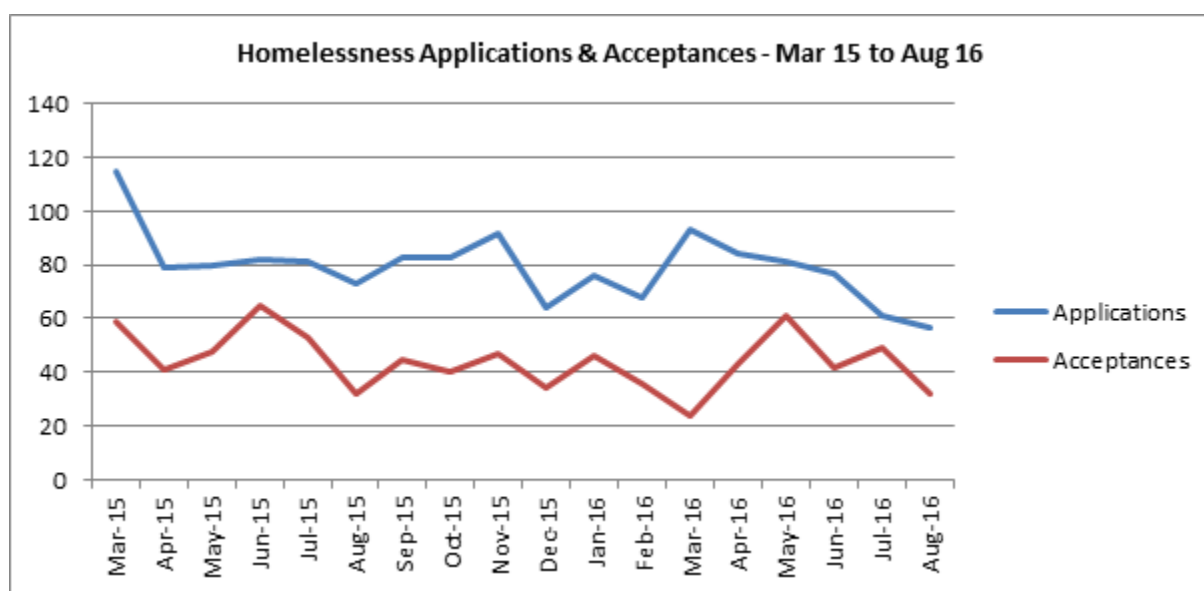
When the supply of suitable affordable accommodation is not available, the Council is required to procure Temporary Accommodation (TA) to provide housing until social housing is available.

4.5.2 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	31.3.11	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1170	1445	1338	1002	1053	954

Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	430	539	813	705	617	511
Households in Temporary Accom.	1726	1910	2450	2283	2397	2423

4.5.3 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. There is a small difference between the 3 and 12 month average for homeless applications (81 and 80) and acceptances (49 and 42)



4.5.4 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	1858	1241 (40%)
2 Bed	1743	935	808 (46%)
3 Bed	766	375	391 (51%)

4 Bed	304	155	149 (49%)
TOTAL	5912	3290	2589 (44%)

In addition, in 2011 there were 761 Shared Room claims and there are now 476. It should be noted that the above figures will also include new LHA claimants since 2011 (with most London boroughs showing an overall increase as a result.)

4.5.5 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 940 interviews have been held with households affected by the Benefit Cap in TA agreeing over 1150 action plans, and over 335 households have moved into employment.

Homeless Prevention and Forecasts

4.5.6 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 over 190 private sector prevention placements have been completed, 56 into properties in Westminster, 133 into other London boroughs and 4 outside of London. Over 100 moves into the private sector have been of accepted households living in Temporary Accommodation.

4.5.7 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. To support this we have commissioned a study of the affordability of the private rented sector to identify areas where suitable and affordable properties are available and this will inform the project to increase the numbers where we discharge of duty into a suitable property in the private sector.

4.5.8 Given the pressures on homeless acceptances during 2015/16, the forecast for 2016/17, the continued pressures in securing properties for Temporary Accommodation and the uncertainty around the funding regime the percentage of total rehousing made available to homeless households (currently over 60%) are to be retained, in particular for larger units.

4.5.9 The principal factor that is driving the high levels of homelessness continues to be the availability of private sector housing for households on benefits. Homeless acceptances were 550 in 2015/16 a reduction of over 200 from 2012 and this level is expected to continue. As a result total homeless acceptances during 2016/17 are forecast to continue at c. 550 and the total requirement for TA will remain between 2300 – 2700 during the year

Temporary Accommodation Procurement Update

4.5.10 The 2015/16 report provided detail of the delivery of the TA Commissioning Strategy. This Strategy will be updated during 2016 to reflect changes in the private sector housing market and the impact of legislative and welfare reform changes

4.5.11 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 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 2450. However the rate of cost reduction has slowed since 2015, reflecting the continuing high costs of the private rented sector and the challenges in finding affordable private sector housing.

- **Increase supply**

New self-contained properties have been sourced and this has seen reductions in the use of nightly booked properties which is now c. 225 properties;

- **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 make use of 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 outside the borough. The Council has made offers on over 360 properties for purchase and this has led to completions on over 85 and these are now occupied or being refurbished for letting. In addition a programme of in-borough purchases has commenced with 6 being completed towards a target over the next 2 years of 100.

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

4.5.13 To deliver a TA portfolio that meets budget targets is dependent upon a central government set funding regime both for TA subsidy and to purchase properties directly that allows such activity to be economic and demonstrates clear value for money. Further announcements regarding the future of TA subsidy and the management fee are expected during 2016/17 (in light of the introduction of Universal Credit.)

4.5.14 Current TA levels are c. 2525 and are expected to continue at between 2300 – 2650 during the year, depending on flows of homeless households. This represents an increase of a third since 2012. Before the increase 75% of TA was located in-borough with 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 less than 100 properties outside London, principally in Essex.

4.5.15 Legally TA is to be suitable (in terms of size and location) and affordable, with the majority of households in receipt of benefits, and where accommodation is required to be in-borough this is very challenging to deliver and/ or can only be provided above subsidy levels.

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

5.1 Housing and Physical Disability

- 5.1.1 The CityWest Homes budget for 2016/17 for major adaptations is £1.2m. Expenditure on adaptations was £1,347,589 as adaptations in vacant units were also funded to meet specific rehousing requirements.
- 5.1.2 CWH had received 202 major adaptations referrals from April 2015 to March 2016 and 104 minor adaptations requests; a total of 240 major adaptations are practically complete as at end of March 2016. In addition, 52 like for like replacements were completed under the planned and maintenance programme. There have been 19 cancellations and another 11 request on hold awaiting for clients' decisions regarding transfers to other adapted properties rather than adapting their homes. There were 48 cases still in progress or waiting for adaptations.
- 5.1.3 OT referrals were completed within 12 weeks from receipt of OT14 referrals to work start on site. The overall satisfaction in 2015-16 was 96%.

5.2 Equalities assessment and review

- 5.2.1 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. Thus the following section analyses demand for accommodation and how properties are allocated in order to ensure the allocation of accommodation corresponds with the relevant protected characteristics and demonstrate The City Council has due regard to the duty when carrying out its housing allocations functions.

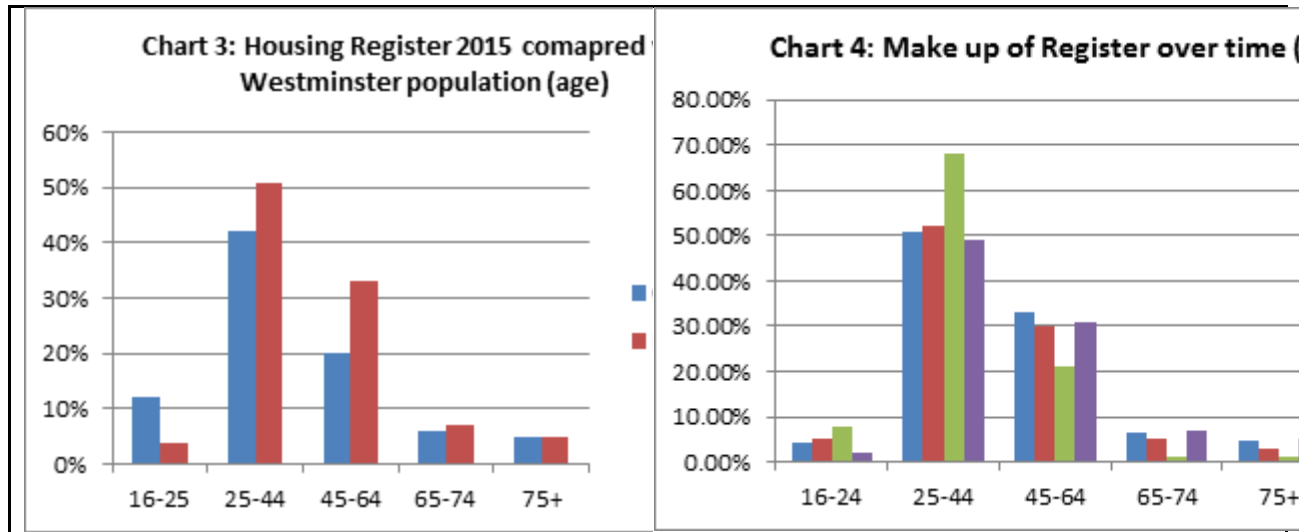
Demand for housing in 2015

- 5.2.2 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. As in previous years, certain ethnic groups (Black, Asian, Chinese and Arab) 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 2015 compared to their population share, making up 25% of need and 61% of the population



- 5.2.3 The profile of the register has changed over time – most notably the proportion of White households has fallen. In 2012 these households made up 31% of the register compared with 25% in 2015. The proportion of households with an Unknown ethnic origin rose in 2013 but has seen a gradual reduction in 2014 and 2015.
- 5.2.4 29% of applicants needed three or more bedrooms, and some ethnic groups continued to have an above average need for them i.e. 55% of Asian and 52% of Arab households needed larger homes.
- 5.2.5 A higher proportion of women (66%) were lead applicants on the housing register compared with their 49% share of the population.
- 5.2.6 The 25-44 age group continued to make up the biggest share (51%) of the housing register in 2015, albeit at a slightly lower proportion than in 2014 when they made up 54%. They also make up the largest group in the Westminster population at 42%. Older people (65 and over) are slightly under represented making up 11.5% of the register and 15% of the population – although their proportion on the register has fluctuated over time as chart 4 shows.



5.2.7 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 2014/15

5.2.8 The proportion of lets to different groups during 2014/15 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 2014/15 with the profile of the register is still useful to ensure there are no major discrepancies.

5.2.9 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 2015	% Lets 2014/15 (including CBL and direct offers)	Bids per let
Asian	13%	10%	60
Black	19%	16%	73
Chinese & Other	9%	15%	230
Middle Eastern	14%	16%	82
Mixed	3%	5%	25
Unknown	16%	8%	104
White	26%	30%	18
Average			85

5.2.10 Most groups actively participated in CBL with Chinese & Other and Unknown 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

5.2.11 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.

5.2.12 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 2015	% All lets 2014/15	% CBL lets 2014/15	Lets per CBL let
16-24	5%	6%	6%	66
25-44	54%	44%	45%	118
45-64	31%	35%	35%	54
65-74	6%	9%	9%	17
75 plus	4%	6%	5%	17
Average				54

5.2.13 Previous reports have noted that younger and older age groups make below average bids per let and this continued in 2014/15 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.

5.2.14 In conclusion and being mindful of the complexity of the housing allocations process where households often have to wait many years before successfully bidding for properties, the lower availability of family sized properties and the use of Choice Based Lettings to achieve the agreed target quotas, the above analysis shows that the Council's equalities duty is met in the letting of social housing are in line with

6. New Policy proposals

6.1 This section sets out the recommendations to be made in the full year Supply and Allocation of Social Housing report to offer access to affordable housing for low income working households and updates and clarifications to the Allocations Scheme.

6.2 Tenancy Policy and Tenancy Strategy

Tenancy Policy

To reflect updated legal advice which is that all flexible tenancies should be subject to a tenancy review it is proposed that rather than Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies, these types of tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households, and that they may be offered in the following circumstances:

- Where they can help a broader range of low income working households who have few housing opportunities in Westminster to access social housing (the Low Income Workers Tenancies referred to in 5.1 are being offered in line with this principle)
- Where they are attached to an employment or training support project
- Where they are intended to provide some transitional housing following a bereavement for discretionary successors, under the discretionary succession policy for flexible tenants

Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households may also be used in other circumstances subject to agreement by the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing. The reasons for offering these tenancies and the length of the tenancies may change over time. Their specific use will be agreed by Cabinet Member for Housing through the annual Supply and Allocation of Social Housing Report.

It is also recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended to set out the general circumstances when a further tenancy may be offered to these households and the length of term to be offered following a review. These circumstances will reflect the policy aim, that in the main they are offered to assist a household for a specific period of time, so that the maximum number of households can benefit from them and that they are not intended to be a long term housing solution. A further flexible tenancy will normally therefore only be offered where the household is assessed as now having priority for housing under the Councils Housing Allocation Scheme and a private rented tenancy is

considered unsuitable as the Council determines they are unable to manage one, or they need a wheelchair adapted property, or they are eligible for Community Supportive Housing (sheltered) and none of the criteria set out in 4.14 of the Tenancy Policy applies. A further flexible tenancy offered under these circumstances will generally be for 5 years but there may be exceptional circumstances (as set out in section 3.7 of the Tenancy Policy) which justify granting a flexible tenancy of less than five years.

Tenants that have been issued with these types of tenancies for non-priority households will not be eligible for Cash to Move payments

It is recommended that the Director of Housing and Regeneration has delegated authority to agree any changes to the Tenancy Policy related to Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households in line with the above circumstances.

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6.3 Affordable Housing for Low Income Working Households

Building on the success of the scheme to offer additional points to working households living in Temporary Accommodation it is recommended that a target quota of 10 lettings is established for working households with total gross income of £20k or less who would not otherwise have priority for social housing under the Housing Allocations Scheme. Allocations would be to studio and 1 bed properties, reflecting the high level of supply of these size units. Tenancies will be generally limited to a period of three years (an introductory tenancy followed by a two year Flexible Tenancy for Non Priority Households)

The aim of the quota is to assist a broader range of low income working households who have few housing opportunities in Westminster to access social housing. It will also help improve the economic diversity of estates, enable people to remain in Westminster and to live near to their work. The take-up of the

projection will be reviewed in the 2017/18 report and new recommendations made regarding its future use.

Westminster's draft Housing Strategy was consulted on during June and July 2015. It included a proposal to let some social housing to low income working households who would not ordinarily have priority for it. There was support for this proposal and the intention to go ahead with this objective was set out in the Housing Strategy Direction of Travel Statement published in December 2015.

The City Council is required to allocate housing in accordance with its allocation scheme pursuant to the Housing Act 1996. Pursuant to section 166A of the 1996 Act it is possible for the City Council's allocation scheme to make provision for accommodation to be allocated to persons who fall outside the reasonable preference groups provided the scheme as a whole gives reasonable preference to those in the specified groups.

There are currently few affordable housing options for this low income group as the cheapest single room can cost c. £181 per week which requires an income of c. £31k. There are also no intermediate rent properties available for households in this income bracket. As a result the quota will provide new opportunities for working households to remain in Westminster, to live close to their work if it is in central London and will also help to improve the economic diversity of estates where currently c. 71% of social tenants receive housing benefit.

The exclusions in the Housing Allocation Scheme set out in paragraph 1.6.1 will apply to the quota and in order to implement the policy it is recommended that the Housing Allocation Scheme is amended to include the quota and the criteria relating to when these tenancies may be offered and how they will be allocated.

The following criteria will be applied to establish which applicants are eligible for the quota – an applicant must have:

- A household income from paid employment of £20k or less
- Lived in Westminster for three years
- Proof of employment and income for 12 months and be in employment at point of offer of accommodation

Applicants meeting the criteria will be directly offered any suitable properties that are available within the quota. The tenancies offered will be for up to three years. A successfully completed one year introductory tenancy will be followed by a

Flexible Tenancy for Non Priority Households of two years. It is offered to help households save for other forms of housing and is intended to help the maximum number of households. During their tenancy households will receive advice on how to move into forms of intermediate housing and home ownership before the end of the 3 year period.

The scheme will be marketed through Home Ownership Westminster who maintain the register of working households seeking affordable accommodation in Westminster. Priority will be given firstly to adult members of overcrowded council households, secondly where the applicants location of work is in Westminster and finally then in relation to the length of time the applicant has lived in Westminster (with applicants that have lived in Westminster the longest having priority).

This approach to offer low income worker tenancies is consistent with the Tenancy Policy which already sets out that some flexible tenancies may be offered to households without priority for housing, where the stock allows it, in some circumstances, including where it could help someone save for a deposit.

6.4 Discretionary Succession

It is recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended so that households eligible for a discretionary succession, who have been living in Community Supportive Housing for older people, are required to move to alternative housing, if they are not eligible for the Community Supportive Housing in their own right.

The decision is needed in order to enable the City Council to make the best use of its stock for the client group and allocate it to the client group for which is intended. In the case of discretionary successors in Community Supportive Housing, they will only be able to remain in the original home if the applicant would otherwise qualify to be housed in this form of housing. If the discretionary successor is required to move they will be able to bid for an alternative property for six months after which one direct offer will be made. If the offer is refused the City Council will start proceedings to repossess the property.

6.5 Mutual Exchange

It is recommended that the Tenancy Policy is amended so that mutual exchanges are not agreed where the proposed assignee moving into the Westminster Council property would be under occupying the property as defined by the City Council's Housing Allocation Policy. Currently the City Council's policy allows a proposed assignee to have one bedroom more than they require under the Allocation Scheme. This does not make the best use of the stock and it is out of

line with national welfare policy which restricts Housing Benefit where tenants are under occupying.

6.6 **Workers Points**

It is recommended that the additional points for working households scheme is amended to seek formal confirmation that the household is in employment at point of tenancy offer. The onus remains on households to inform the Housing Options Service of any change in circumstances, including changes in employment status, and this check will confirm these details. Where there is a change in employment status, the additional points will be removed 28 days from when employment ceased (unless alternative employment is secured within this time.)

6.7 **Intermediate Housing**

It is recommended that the allocation of future intermediate housing opportunities should be according to household size to avoid under occupancy of intermediate homes and increased priority given to children of existing Council tenants that are overcrowded in their current home. As result increased priority will no longer be given to applicants of the former family quota scheme. In addition existing Westminster Intermediate Tenants will only be given priority when moving to a different type of intermediate housing such as low cost home ownership or one that includes a savings element

As a result it is recommended that within Priority 1 of the Intermediate Priority Bands,

- Third priority will go to sons and daughters of existing Council tenants that are overcrowded in their current home
- Third priority no longer goes to Ex Family Quota applicants
- Fourth priority no longer goes to existing Westminster Intermediate Rent Tenants, unless they are moving to a different type of intermediate housing such as low cost home ownership or an intermediate rent tenancy that includes a savings element

6.8 **Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas**

It is recommended that the changes below to the Policy for Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas (2014) to clarify the Council's offer and to update financial entitlements in line with the statutory framework are approved:

Section 6: Options and entitlements for resident leaseholders that do not wish to stay in, or return to, the Housing Renewal Area

6.2 the 10% home loss payment for resident leaseholders will now be paid up to a maximum of £53k (reflecting the updated statutory limit.)

Section 10 Entitlements for Non Resident Leaseholders

Point 10.2 lists a number of reimbursements that non-resident leaseholders may be entitled to and the bullet in relation to stamp duty land tax to be clarified to read as follows:

- Stamp duty land tax arising from the purchase of a replacement property capped at the equivalent stamp duty value of the agreed purchase price of the property sold to the Council
- The Council will not reimburse any capital gains tax liability arising from the sale of the property

Section 11 Further information about financial entitlements

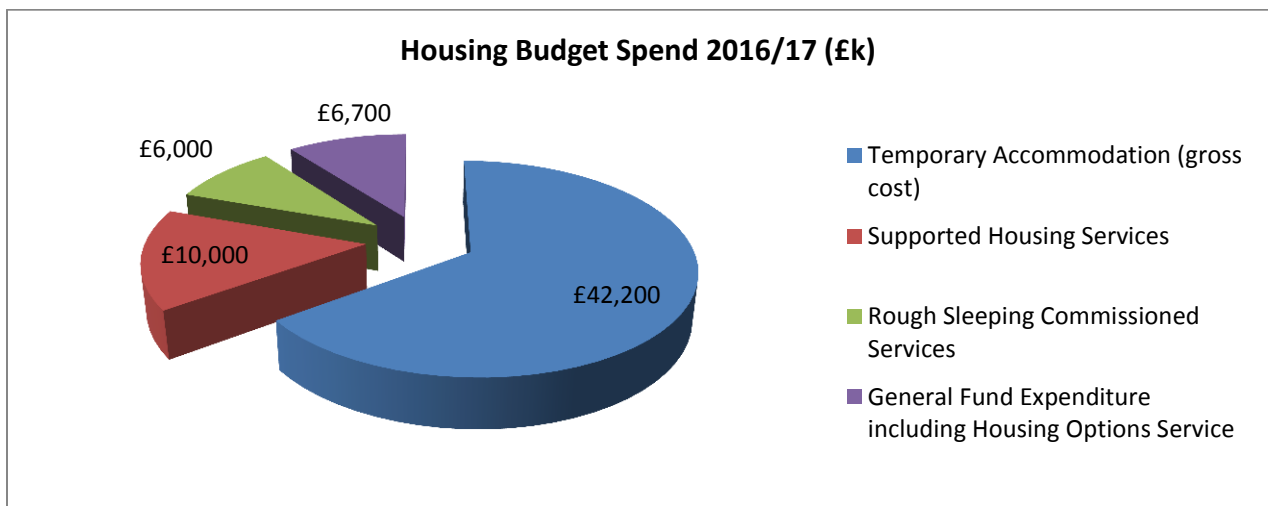
Point 11.8 lists a number of disturbance payments that resident leaseholders may be entitled to and the bullet in relation to stamp duty land tax to be clarified to read as follows:

- Stamp duty land tax arising from the purchase of a replacement property capped at the equivalent stamp duty value of the agreed purchase price of the property sold to the Council

7. Financial Implications

7.1 Housing Expenditure

7.1.1 Total Housing Expenditure can be summarised as follows:



7.1.2 In addition, there is capital funding within the 2016/17 Capital programme that will eventually increase the supply of affordable housing within Westminster by circa 327 units over a period of time

	£m
Grants to organisations to provide Affordable Housing.	32.7
Acquisition new affordable housing by WCC	18.8
Total	51.5

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council has a 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.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 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
- 8.4 The Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) enables local authorities to offer flexible tenancies for a fixed term and provides the tenant with an opportunity to review the Council's decision not to renew the tenancy, which review must be a genuine review, with at least the possibility of renewal. As it is a requirement of the law that all flexible tenancies should be subject to a tenancy review it is necessary that rather than Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies these types of tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households and that they should be subject to a review.

Accordingly the Tenancy Policy which applies to the City Council's own housing stock and sets out the City Council's approach to flexible tenure needs to be amended to reflect the above requirement of law that all flexible tenancies be subject to a review and to set out the general circumstances when a further tenancy may be offered to these households and the length of term to be offered following a review.

The Tenancy Strategy, which sets out the factors that registered providers in the district should have regard to when formulating their tenancy policies also needs to be amended to reflect the above requirement of law, so Non Renewable Flexible

Tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households and that they should be subject to a review and also amended to highlight that registered providers should consider any exceptional circumstances of the household when deciding if these types of tenancies are renewed. Accordingly, and as the general principles of when a flexible tenancy for these households is supported has not changed the modifications to the Tenancy Strategy are not considered a major change in policy giving rise to consultation requirements. The modifications or strategy as modified is required to be published.

8.5 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a public sector equality duty which requires the City Council when making decisions to have due regard to the need to

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The City Council is required to act in accordance with the equality duty and have due regard to the duty when carrying out its functions.

9. Staffing Implications

9.1 There are none

10. Consultation

10.1 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 Supported Housing and TA. Tel: 0207 641 2834. Email: grobert2@westminster.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS: none

For completion by the **Cabinet Member** *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: _____

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 2016/17** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed

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

Date

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 Director of Law, the City Treasurer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of People Services (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.

Appendix A

SUPPLY OF RENTED ACCOMMODATION PROJECTIONS 2016/7

Affordable Housing Supply	2016.17 Projection
Casual voids and returned from major works	357
Returned from conversion/rehab.	13
HA Stock	
First Let Nominations	96
Relet Nominations (inc. Homebuy)	215
Total Net Voids	681
WCC Stock	
Transfer (Existing WCC Tenants)	183
Less Decants for Major Works (-)	-24
Total Gross Voids	840

Appendix B

Supply of Rented Accommodation 2016/17 – projections by property size

Supply by bedsize - 2016/17	Studio	1	2	3	4+	Total
CWH Casual voids	84	167	74	20	12	357
Return from rehab	0	2	4	5	2	13
RP First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	0	9	27	28	2	66
RP First Let Nominations - Social Rent	0	5	10	15	0	30
RP Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	8	34	17	2	0	61
RP Relet Nominations - Social Rent	30	74	35	13	2	154
Total Net Voids	122	291	167	83	18	681
WCC Transfers	45	92	21	26	0	183
Less Decants for major works	-2	-10	-9	-3	0	-24
Total	165	373	204	121	23	840

Appendix B1

Allocations projections of rented housing 2016/17 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.

Supply - 2016/17						
Existing Tenants	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed +	Total
Decants/Major Works including Returning Decants	4	6	3	1	0	14
Decants regeneration works	3	3	2	2	0	10
Cash incentives	2	27	10	4	0	43
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	50	14	2	95
SUB TOTAL (Tenant Transfers)	21	74	87	40	4	226
Waiting List						
Homeless (including community supportive housing (including C&C general needs))	64	183	71	54	13	385
Category A Medical	5	7	5	4	0	21
Community Supportive Housing (including C&C decant; excluding homeless)	20	32	0	0	0	52
Cash Incentive (split households)	1	16	0	0	0	17
Working Households	4	6	0	0	0	10
Community Care Nominations	1	1	2	0	0	4
Children Act Rehousing	0	0	4	2	0	6
Leaving Care Quota	18	9	0	0	0	27
Street Homeless and hostel move on quota	8	1	0	0	0	9
Second Succession	2	20	1	1	0	24
Staff Rehosings	0	1	0	0	0	1
Learning Disability Quota	2	5	0	0	0	7
Reciprocals	0	4	2	2	0	8
Mental health hostel quota	13	6	0	0	0	19
Statutory overcrowded	0	0	0	1	1	2
RP severe overcrowded	0	0	1	2	0	3
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)	144	298	92	66	14	614
TOTAL TENANT TRANSFER/ HOUSING REG.	165	372	179	106	18	840

Appendix C: 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

10.1.1 The Increasing numbers of young people with a physical disability and a learning disability are living into adulthood. There is also an aging population of people with learning disabilities and ageing carers. Dementia and increased physical frailty amongst the aging population means that there is an increased need to provide more accessible and supported accommodation. Increasing numbers of young people with a physical and learning disability, and those with challenging behaviours, and autism are transitioning into adult social care.

10.1.2 Current Supply

In Westminster we have 160 supported housing properties for exclusive use for people with learning disabilities: 16% are in registered care homes; 84% are now supported living reflecting a move to increasing the availability of supported housing which offers more choice and control for people living there than registered care. The registered care units provide high needs support to people with complex needs and autism. The supported housing units offer a range of support, 43 of the supported housing units offer 24hr support which could be a waking or sleeping night “cover. There are also a further 21 units of floating support which can offer support to those who move on from home or a step down from the building based services.

10.1.3 The 2016-19 Learning Disability Housing and Support strategy will encompass the following priority areas:

- People with a learning disability and/or autism and those who display behaviours that challenge experience more choice and control in the range, quality and supply of local supported housing available as an alternative to out of borough residential care.

- People will have more access to new and improved high quality housing and support services that are fit for future needs.
- There will be robust data on needs and clear housing pathways and information on the range of accommodation and support available
- Housing and support services will maximise the opportunities for all people with learning disabilities to live ordinary lives in the community, in their own home. This is to include those with autism, complex and challenging needs.
- We will work alongside people with learning disabilities, families and carers when developing services
- We will work with our providers to ensure quality and that the work force development opportunities are taken up and we are in agreement with providers of the future workforce requirements.
- Regular inspection and monitoring of supported housing will be undertaken.

10.2 Housing Allocation and Domestic Violence

10.2.1 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) remains a major focus for the department. The Housing DV lead was part of the Evaluation Panel which appointed the Integrated Support Service provider for the Tri Borough, which is part of the new Tri Borough Service. The new service was formally launched in September 2015 and a new governance structure has been implemented. As a result Housing sits on the VAWG strategic group, executive group, risk and review group and communications and media group in order to ensure that its departmental objectives fit with the strategic and operational response to DV across the three boroughs.

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 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 MARAC self- assessment process in December 2015 which gave MARAC agencies the opportunity to examine the performance of the MARAC against the Safelives criteria for a successful MARAC.

10.2.4 The effectiveness of the response to VAWG issues at HOS continues to be monitored through an annual mystery shopping exercise of the call centre. The most recent exercise was conducted by survivors from the Phoenix Group and a service user from Stonewall Housing, which provided an overview of the response from our customer's perspective. Further VAWG training for HOS staff was identified as a result of this exercise and subsequently the Housing lead and a trained member of HOS staff has provided DV Awareness training to over 55 staff. The housing DV lead continues to represent Westminster on the Tri Borough Housing Operational Group (HOG), which monitors the housing sector's response to violence against women and girls. The Westminster lead has continued to work with HOS to assess their response against a set of Service Standards formulated by Standing Together against Domestic Violence (STADV).

6.3 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.

6.3.2 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 has been extensively 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 Mental Health team.

6.3.3 Westminster Supported Housing is jointly commissioned by Housing, Adult Services and NHS Westminster. 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 Mental Health team care coordinator.

- 6.3.4 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 Options service; floating support; ward managers; senior practitioners from the Mental Health team including an Occupational Therapist and the Commissioner for Mental Health 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.
- 6.3.5 The SARP also agrees the Move-on Quota applications which agree access to independent accommodation for those service users currently in supported accommodation. Mental health 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.

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 continues to be an effective means of support and housing provision and the number of planned moves through the pathway remains above the target of 75% averaging at 91% and the number of Children Services placements have increased annually and a review of the pathway is underway to consider the commissioning arrangements.

10.4.3 Over the last year there has been an increase in the numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children entering the Country aged under 18 becoming Looked After under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and therefore eligible for services. Many of these young people aged 16/17 are being placed in the Young Persons Supported Housing Pathway and Children Services and Housing are working in partnership to ensure an enhanced package of support to this cohort.

10.4.4 Improving Health & Well-being for young people within supported accommodation is a key priority and an action plan was developed to increase the take up of primarily health services by young people; increase access to health interventions and improved recording of health outcomes. A number of specific initiatives have been undertaken and these include:

- Free Dental screening and a general health and well-being workshop held
- Young People have taken part in a Dental Health Survey commissioned by NHS England
- Improving the partnership arrangements with Westminster substance misuse teams has led to a 50% increase of referrals and screening
- Training for supported housing staff on substance misuse particularly around 'legal highs'
- More access to preventative services and healthy activities Joint work with Public Health colleagues to increase access to preventative services and healthy activities
- A health and well-being training day was held for commissioned supported services supported by Public Health to develop health questionnaires templates, defining and evidencing health outcomes and reporting which has led to services taking a more robust approach in monitoring performance.

10.4.5 The second Brighter Futures Event jointly sponsored Children Services for young people aged 15-25 within supported accommodation, at risk of homelessness or coming into statutory care was held. The aim of the event was to advise and manage expectations on provisions available, to promote health and well-being and to increase employment and training opportunities particularly for those who are not in employment, education and training. Just over 40 young people

attended and a range of Organisations supported the event either leading on workshops or providing an information stall and a number of young people were awarded achievement certificates. The feedback from both young people and Organisations was extremely positive.

10.4.6 There continues to be a strong track record of involving young people in service commissioning and 2 young people were invited to attend the Young Persons Supported Housing Forum and supported the delivery of the Brighter Future Event.

10.4.7 Safeguarding continues to a high priority for all housing related support services and a questionnaire is being drafted for young people on safety particularly in relation to internet safety and safeguarding awareness to support the wider work on sexual exploitation and cyber bullying.

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF DECISION

**SUBJECT: SUPPLY AND ALLOCATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING REPORT
2016/17**

Notice is hereby given that the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

Summary of Decision

1. That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development noted the projected supply and proposed allocation of rented housing, as discussed in paragraph 3.1 and set out in Appendices A, B and B1 of the report.

2. **Tenancy Policy and Tenancy Strategy**

(i) Tenancy Policy

(a) That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies be renamed Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households, and that they may be offered in the following circumstances:

- Where they can help a broader range of low income working households who have few housing opportunities in Westminster to access social housing (the Low Income Workers Tenancies referred to in recommendation 2.3 are being offered in line with this principle)
- Where they are attached to an employment or training support project
- Where they are intended to provide some transitional housing following a bereavement for discretionary successors, under the discretionary succession policy for flexible tenants

Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households may also be used in other circumstances subject to agreement by the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing.

(b) That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the Tenancy Policy be amended to set out the general circumstances when a further tenancy may be offered to these households and the length of term to be offered following a review and noted that these circumstances will reflect the policy aim, that in the main they are offered to assist a household for a specific period of time, so that the maximum number of households can benefit from them and that they are not intended to be a long term housing solution. A further flexible tenancy will normally therefore only be offered where the household's circumstances have changed and is assessed as now having priority for housing under the Councils Housing Allocation Scheme and a private rented tenancy is considered unsuitable for them, as the Council determines they are unable to manage one, or they need a wheelchair adapted property, or they are eligible for Community Supportive Housing (sheltered) and none of the criteria set out in 4.14 of the Tenancy Policy applies.

A further flexible Tenancy offered under the above circumstances will generally be for 5 years but there may be exceptional circumstances (as set out in section 3.7 of the Tenancy Policy) which justify granting a flexible tenancy of less than five years.

Tenants that have been issued with these types of tenancies for non-priority households will not be eligible for Cash to Move payments

(c) That the that Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development delegated authority to the Director of Housing and Regeneration to agree any changes to the Tenancy Policy related to Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households in line with the above circumstances.

(ii) Tenancy Strategy

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the Tenancy Strategy be amended to reflect the requirement of law that all flexible tenancies be subject to a tenancy review, so Non Renewable Flexible Tenancies are now called Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households and that they should be subject to a review that the Tenancy Strategy and highlight that registered providers should consider any exceptional circumstances of the household when deciding if these types of tenancies are renewed.

3. Affordable Housing for Low Income Working Households

- (i) That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that a target quota of 10 lettings be established for working households with total gross income of £20k or less who would not otherwise have priority for social housing under the Housing Allocations Scheme and noted that: allocations would be to studio and 1 bed properties, reflecting the relative high level of supply of these size units; and tenancies will generally be for a period of three years (an introductory tenancy followed by a two year Flexible Tenancies for Non Priority Households which will then be reviewed).
- (ii) That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the Housing Allocation Scheme be amended to include the quota and the criteria relating to who is eligible for these tenancies and how properties will be allocated (as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report).

4. Discretionary Succession

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the Tenancy Policy be amended so that households eligible for a discretionary succession, who have been living in Community Supportive Housing for older people, are required to move to alternative housing, if they are not eligible for the Community Supportive Housing in their own right.

5. Mutual Exchange

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that Tenancy Policy be amended so that mutual exchanges are not agreed where the proposed assignee moving into the Westminster Council property would be under occupying the property as defined by the City Council's Housing Allocation Policy.

6. Workers Points

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the additional points for working households scheme be amended to allow officers to seek formal confirmation that the household is in employment at any point and to remove the additional points if the criteria are not met.

7. Intermediate Housing

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the allocation of future intermediate housing opportunities should be according to household size to avoid under occupancy of intermediate homes and increased priority given to children of existing Council tenants that are overcrowded in their current home and noted that as a result, increased priority will no longer be given to applicants of the former family quota scheme and in addition, existing Westminster Intermediate Tenants will only be given priority when moving to a different type of intermediate housing such as low cost home ownership or one that includes a savings element.

8. Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development agreed that the changes as set out in paragraph 5.6 to the Policy for Leaseholders in Housing Renewal Areas (2014) are approved to clarify the Council's offer and to update financial entitlements in line with the statutory framework.

Reasons for Decision

The proposals contained in this report set out the issues related to the development of allocation projections for social housing for 2016/17 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.

**Charlie Parker, Chief Executive,
Westminster City Hall,
64 Victoria Street
LONDON SW1E 6QP**

Publication Date: 16 December 2016

Implementation Date: 23 December 2016, 5pm

Reference: CMfHRBED/2016-2017/14