



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Housing
Date:	7 th November 2017
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2017/18
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Financial Summary:	The gross Housing General Fund homelessness budget, excluding Prevention, for 2017/ 18 is £53.1m. Of this sum about £45.9m relates to the provision of temporary accommodation.
Report of:	Barbara Brownlee – Executive Director Growth, Planning and Housing

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 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 2017/18.
- 1.2 The report also makes proposals for the allocation of the supply of social housing in 2017/18 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.
- 1.3 In particular the report sets out:
 - Current projections of supply and the proposed allocation of social housing for 2017/18.
 - 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 Local Lettings Plan for City West Homes infill sites

The Council has been assessing the potential to deliver housing on smaller sites in the City as part of the Infill Programme to provide new homes, promote work and support the local economy. Infill opportunity sites can occur throughout the City. Phase 1 of the programme will deliver 26 homes for City West Homes, across multiple sites, with the first lets due in late 2017. To promote the benefits of potentially disruptive development to existing communities and to encourage local resident support it is recommended that a local lettings plan is developed for each new City West Homes infill housing development that prioritises meeting local housing need in line with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. Direct consultation with local residents on the formation of each local lettings plan will be completed and approval of each plan is delegated to the Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member. To support the delivery of this it is further recommended that paragraph 16.1 of the Allocations Policy is amended to include that the objectives of Local Lettings Plans are to 'Promote the benefits of development to existing communities to encourage local resident support.' Where it is determined there does not exist a local need for a particular property type, e.g. wheelchair adapted properties, such properties will be let in accordance with the Allocations Policy to those higher priority households in greatest need.

2.3 Management Transfers

Given that management transfers are directly linked to the management of household risk, it is recommended that direct offers of the next suitable (like for like) property for the household's needs (depending on the individual risk for that household) will replace the three month bidding period and that a review of the requirement for a management transfer is undertaken every 12 weeks.

It is also recommended that Director's Discretion will be considered on a case by case basis where possession action is being taken by CWH against the tenant and a management transfer is required.

2.4 Veteran's Nomination Scheme (VNS)

It is recommended that the Council provide 2 one bed properties per year for the Veteran's Nomination Scheme to secure social housing for former members of the armed forces.

2.5 Workers Points Scheme

It is confirmed that the additional points for working households scheme applies to those who have been awarded the points and are now on maternity leave from their employment.

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 2017/18 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	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16	31.3.17
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1338	1002	1053	954	878
Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	813	705	617	511	496
Households in Temporary Accommodation	2450	2283	2397	2423	2518
Category A Transfer Applicants	71	81	105	113	124
Allocation Profile	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16	31.3.17
Homeless Households	425	344	360	486	354
Tenant Transfers	151	238	245	227	209
Children Act Panel	20	20	11	17	21
Mental Health Hostel Move On	13	11	12	10	10
Cash Incentive Scheme	58	39	40	50	40

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 2016/17 in comparison with the numbers received in 2015/16. The number of acceptances is c. 55% of applications due to thorough investigation of applications and work to prevent homelessness or by offering alternative options.

4.3 Supply Projections

4.3.1 Initial projections for the supply of new lettings of affordable rented accommodation for 2016/17 is 770. This comprises the sum of casual voids from City West Homes, Registered Provider (RP) relets, RP first lets, spot purchases by WCH and CWH, delivery of infill schemes and tenant transfers. This is broken down as follows:

Supply by bedsize - 2017/18	Studio	1	2	3	4+	Total
CWH Casual voids	110	149	60	27	6	352
Return from long-term works	0	1	2	1	1	5
RP First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	0	9	11	14	0	34
RP First Let Nominations - Social Rent	0	0	6	2	0	8
RP Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	3	36	18	1	0	58
RP Relet Nominations - Social Rent	11	81	37	13	1	143
WCH/ CWH Spot purchases - Social Rent	0	0	10	3	0	13
CWH Infill schemes - Social Rent	0	1	5	12	8	26
Total Net Voids	124	277	149	73	16	639
WCC Transfers	43	64	27	9	1	144
Less Decants for major works	-2	-7	-3	-1	0	-13
Total Supply	165	334	173	81	17	770

4.3.2 The number of new affordable homes currently projected to be delivered by Registered Providers (RP) or directly by the Council during the period 2017/18 and 2018/19 is 565 units, made up of 515 new build or converted units plus 50 spot acquisitions. However it may be possible to increase this 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.

4.3.3 Included within the 565 new or converted homes during 2017 - 19, 37 are anticipated to be provided for social rent at target rents, 181 homes for affordable rent, 26 on City West Homes infill sites and 45 sheltered homes. The figures for social and affordable housing projected during 2017/18 are included in the table above.

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 possibility that some of the schemes that are scheduled to complete towards the end of quarter 4 2018-19 are likely to slip in to the following year 2019/20.

4.3.4 Significant new schemes that will contribute towards these 565 new affordable homes are:

- Ladbroke Grove, W10 a section 106 development being provided through Westminster Community Homes delivering 23 intermediate rent homes
- Lisson Arches, NW8 a council sheltered scheme delivering 45 homes on a housing renewal site
- Sentinel House, NW1 a section 106 development delivering 41 affordable rent homes
- North Wharf Gardens in Paddington, also a section 106 scheme where Octavia Housing will deliver 16 affordable rent and 11 intermediate homes

4.3.5 In addition to the 565 affordable homes anticipated to be delivered during the period 2017-2019, an additional pipeline of new housing developments exists that has the capacity to deliver c.1,300 additional affordable homes over a 5 year period starting from April 2019. 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.

4.3.6 Social Housing Relet supply from City West Homes is estimated to be 352 based on analysis of previous years' numbers.

An anticipated 201 relets from existing registered provider social housing stock is to be provided to the City Council during 2017/18. This projection is based on the average level of relets received by the City Council over the previous three years. 71% of relets to be provided during 2017/2018 are anticipated to be provided at rents equal to or below target rent levels, with the remainder at affordable rent levels

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.

4.4.2 On Tollgate progress on the estate is now well advanced. All residential blocks have been demolished to clear the site for the construction of five new buildings. The scheme will include the refurbishment of the retained block and improved community facilities. There will be a net gain of 27 affordable homes on completion in March 2019.

4.4.3 On Ebury Bridge Estate a new options appraisal is required to enhance viability. The Council proposes to co-create a new scheme with residents by engaging in a full and transparent consultation process that will explore a range of options.

4.4.4 The Council has also identified a number of small scale infill sites to bring forward for development or disposal. 45 homes will be retained in the current phase. Work will start on site on the first schemes in May 2017. Further opportunities are being progressed to ensure an on-going pipeline.

4.4.5 It is estimated that less than 10 households will require allocations of social housing to assist with decanting programmes during 2017/18.

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

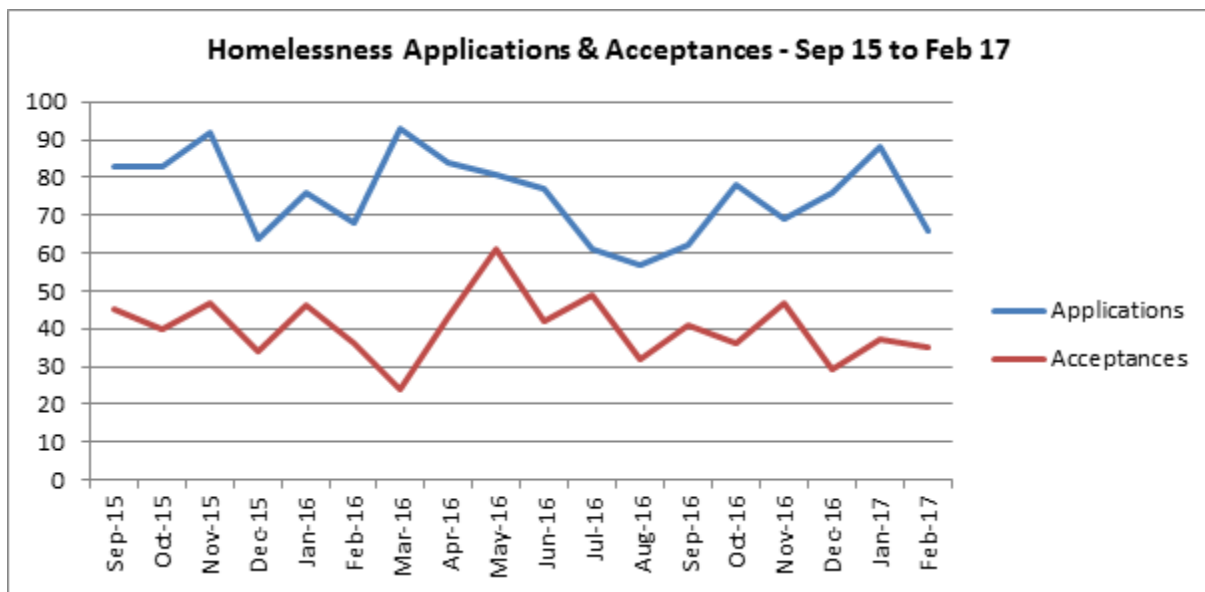
- Has a local connection (or no local connection elsewhere.)

The Council is required to offer suitable Temporary Accommodation (TA) to accepted homeless households pending allocation.

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	31.3.12	31.3.13	31.3.14	31.3.15	31.3.16	31.3.17
Homelessness Applications (p.a.)	1445	1338	1002	1053	954	878
Homelessness Acceptances (p.a.)	539	813	705	617	511	496
Households in Temporary Accom.	1910	2450	2283	2397	2423	2518

4.5.2 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 (74 and 73) and acceptances (37 and 40) .



4.5.3 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.

Bedsizes	Claim numbers before 2011 Cap	Current total claim numbers (6/1/17)	Reduction
1 Bed	3099	1844	1255 (40%)
2 Bed	1743	892	851 (49%)
3 Bed	766	365	401 (52%)
4 Bed	304	150	154 (51%)
TOTAL	5912	3251	2661 (45%)

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.)

- 4.5.4 A system has been set up to respond directly to those households in TA whose claims are currently 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.

The Welfare Reform Team (WRT) have been contacting residents and have held 980 first interviews since August 2013) and over 350 households have moved into employment.

Homeless Prevention and Forecasts

- 4.5.5 Homeless prevention remains the central focus of work with households in housing need, whether challenging illegal evictions, providing debt advice, supporting families to remain together and assisting with moves into the private rented sector. In the past 12 months 216 private sector prevention placements have been completed, 76 into properties in Westminster, 128 into other London boroughs and 12 outside of London. Over 100 moves into the private sector have been of accepted households living in Temporary Accommodation.

- 4.5.6 Most applicants currently wait 7-10 years for a social housing tenancy and a new policy framework e has recently been introduced to identify more households for whom the private rented sector would be suitable and we have successfully started making offers to them to bring our duty to an end. To support this we commissioned a study of the affordability of the private rented sector to identify areas where suitable and affordable properties are available and this is informing the project to increase the numbers where we discharge of duty into a suitable property in the private sector. The study has highlighted however the challenges in sourcing private sector properties at or close to LHA rates and which would remain affordable for at least 2 years.
- 4.5.7 Given the pressures from homeless acceptances during 2016/17, the forecast for 2017/18, 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%) are to be retained, in particular for larger units.
- 4.5.8 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 are 496 in 2016/17 a reduction of over 275 from 2012 and this level is expected to continue. As a result total homeless acceptances during 2017/18 are forecast to continue at c. 500 - 525 and the total requirement for TA will remain between 2300 – 2700 during 2018

Temporary Accommodation Procurement Update

- 4.5.9 The TA Commissioning Strategy was updated during 2017 as part of the wider update of homeless placement policies to reflect changes in the private sector housing market and the impact of legislative and welfare reform changes
- 4.5.10 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 remain valid. This is supported by the recent budget reports that highlighted the impact of high rental costs within the private sector.
- 4.5.11 Few families are now placed in non-self-contained accommodation 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)

4.5.12 Increasing supply of properties that are affordable and sustainable for households on low incomes, whether for use as Temporary Accommodation, for private sector discharge of housing duty or to prevent homelessness remains very challenging within the current housing market. This is particularly the case for family sized accommodation.

4.5.13 The Council continues to make use of its own properties that are temporarily vacant through the regeneration programme and currently makes use of c. 55 units. Whilst clearly not a long-term solution this has provided a source of in-borough accommodation.

4.5.14 The Council has entered into a programme of purchasing properties for use as TA outside the borough and has completed 100 purchases within Greater London and 45 within Westminster and these purchase programmes will continue during 2017/18.

4.5.15 The above strategy will continue to aim 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.

4.5.16 To deliver a TA portfolio that meets budget targets remains 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 are expected during 2017/18 (in light of the introduction of Universal Credit and the understanding of the challenges of short-term housing placements of all types within the Universal Credit framework.) The Council will continue to set rents for TA properties in line with the maximum amount eligible for HB subsidy within this formula.

4.5.17 Current TA levels are c. 2518 and 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 and half remains within Westminster.

- 4.5.18 There are legal criteria for the suitability of TA, taking in its physical aspects, location and considerations of affordability amongst other matters. The majority of households requiring TA are in receipt of benefits, and where accommodation is situated in-borough, this presents a financial challenge 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 £1.037m as at 17 February 2017. 11 vacant units with adaptation requirements identified by OT and HOS were also funded to meet specific rehousing needs.

- 5.1.2 CWH had received 181 major adaptations referrals from April 2016 to January 2017 and 51 minor adaptations requests; a total of 169 major adaptations are practically complete as at end of January 2017. In addition, 40 like for like replacements were completed under the planned and maintenance programme. There have been 20 cancellation and another 12 request on hold awaiting for clients' decisions regarding clarification of specification and/or transfers to other adapted properties rather than adapting their homes. There were 46 cases still in progress awaiting for asbestos surveys to be completed or waiting for adaptations.

- 5.1.3 OT referrals were completed within 16 weeks from receipt of OT14 referrals to work start on site. Since September 2016, all refurbishments to tenanted homes must have a Refurbishment and Demolition Survey completed prior to work start on site; this has added additional lead-in time and slight delay to project commission. This should be re-aligned to 12 weeks in 2017-18.

- 5.1.4 The overall satisfaction levels in 2016-17 is c. 96% with no complaints upheld as at January 2017.

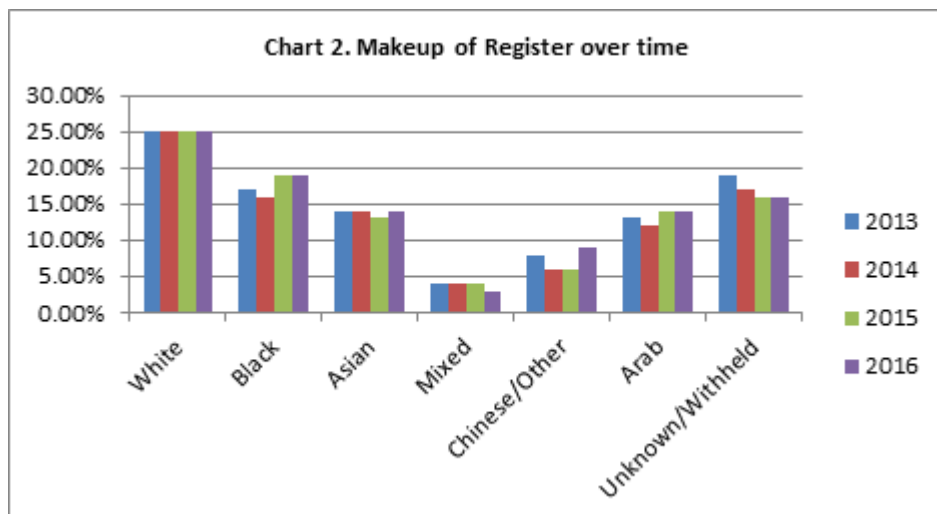
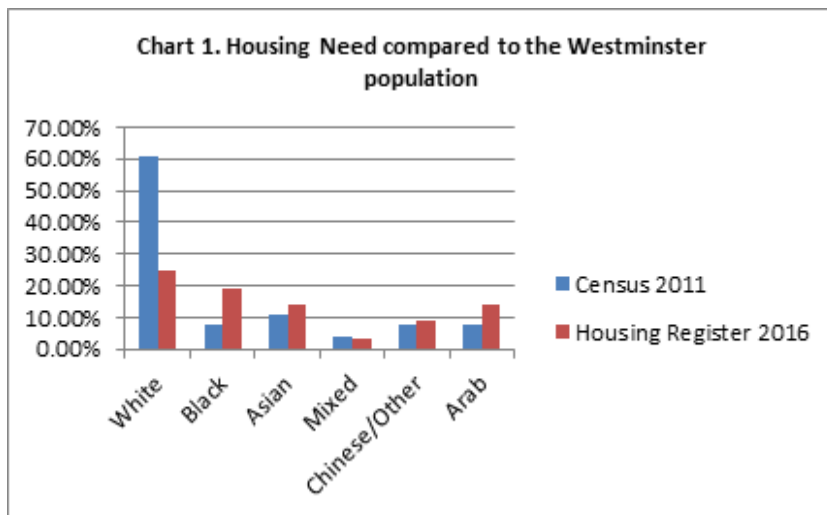
5.2 Equalities assessment and review

- 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 in compliance with the law. The following section analyses demand for accommodation and how properties are allocated. Each allocation will be treated on individual consideration of the merits of the application and in accordance with the City Council’s lawful Allocation Policy. The City Council seeks to meaningfully observe the Public Sector Equality Duty in its policy and housing functions.

Demand for housing in 2016

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 2016 compared to their population share, making up 25% of need and 61% of the population

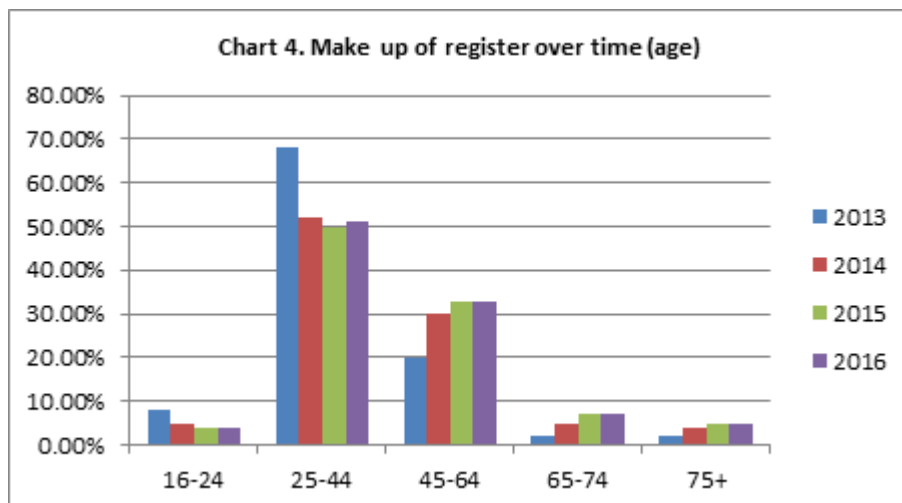
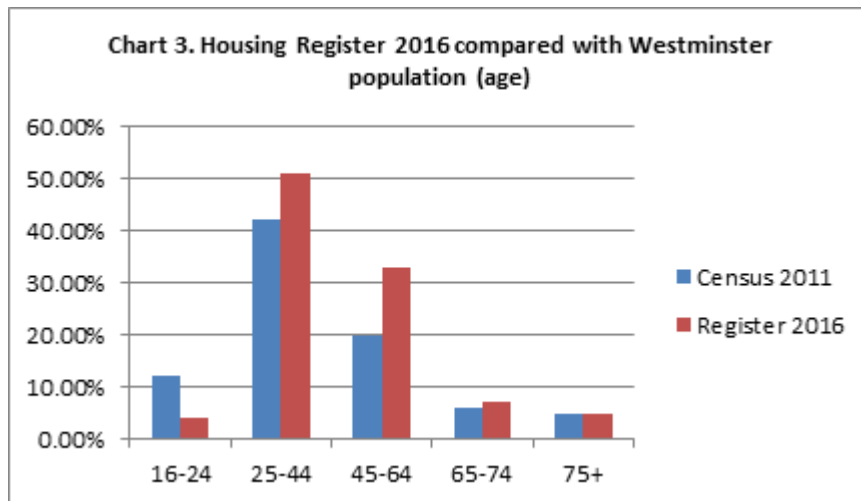


5.2.3 The profile of the register has changed over time, most notably the proportion of White households has fallen. In 2012 these households made up 31% of the register compared with 25% in 2016. However, over the last four years the proportion of White households has remained stable. The proportion of households with an Unknown/Withheld ethnic origin was higher in 2013 but has seen a gradual reduction between 2014 and 2016.

5.2.4 38% 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 54% of Arab households needed larger homes.

5.2.5 A higher proportion of women (67%) 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 2016, which has remained the same compared to 2015. They also make up the largest group in the Westminster population at 42%. Older people (65 and over) are slightly under represented making up 12% 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 2015/16

5.2.8 The proportion of lets to different groups during 2015/16 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 60% 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 2015/16 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 2016	% Lets 2015/16 (including CBL and direct offers)
Asian	14%	11%
Black	19%	15%
Chinese & Other	9%	9%
Arab/Middle Eastern	14%	19%

Mixed	3%	3%
Unknown/Withheld	16%	7%
White	25%	36%

5.2.10 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 2016 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 studios 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 2016	% All lets 2015/16	% CBL lets 2015/16
16-24	5%	6%	5%
25-44	54%	45%	52%
45-64	31%	35%	34%
65-74	6%	9%	6%
75 plus	4%	5%	3%

5.2.13 Previous reports have noted that younger and older age groups make below average bids per let and this continued in 2015/16 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 the profile that would be expected.

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 Local Lettings Plan for City West Homes infill sites

The Council has been assessing the potential to deliver housing on smaller sites in the City as part of the Infill Programme to provide new homes, promote work and support the local economy.

The proposals take the form of range of development opportunities including refurbishment of vacant space such as basements, drying rooms and storage area; redevelopment of underutilised garages and storages areas; development on vacant land adjacent to housing blocks and rooftop development on housing blocks. Given the need for affordable family homes within Westminster the programme prioritises the delivery of family units which have two or more bedrooms but also includes some one-bed units. The proposed new homes will be retained by the council and allocated to people on the housing register. These are likely to be for a mix of individuals, couples and families.

Infill opportunity sites can occur throughout the City. Phase 1 of the programme will deliver 26 homes to be retained by the HRA, across multiple wards, with the first lets due in late 2017. Further sites are undergoing formal feasibility assessments. The location of the infill sites mean that construction work may cause disruption and inconvenience to existing residents. There will be a loss of amenity use for some residents as storage units and car park spaces are converting to new homes. Achieving support from local residents is an important factor in the successful on-going delivery of the programme.

To promote positively the benefits of the potentially disruptive Infill programme to local residents as a way of responding to local housing need, it is recommended that a local lettings plan is developed for each new City West Homes infill housing development that prioritises meeting local housing need in line with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. Direct consultation with local residents on the formation of the each local lettings plan will be completed and approval of

each plan is delegated to the Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member. To support the delivery of this it is further recommended that paragraph 16.1 of the Allocations Policy is amended to include that the objectives of Local Lettings Plans are to 'Promote the benefits of development to existing communities to encourage local resident support.' Where it is determined there does not exist a local need for a particular property type, e.g. wheelchair adapted properties, such properties will be let in accordance with the Allocations Policy to those higher priority households in greatest need.

The equalities implications of the use of Local Lettings Plans specifically for infill sites have been considered and an Equalities Impact Assessment is available. The conclusion of this is that although households with priority for housing in some defined local areas will benefit from the Infill Programme Local Lettings Plan – by having priority for housing sooner than they may do otherwise – there are not considered to be any negative equalities implications arising from this. This is because the analysis suggests that these groups will still be more likely to have protected characteristics and that their profile is broadly similar to those with priority for housing overall. There will of course always be variations and percentages can vary significantly when numbers are small. The policy is thus considered justified as without the support of local people, who will be affected by significant disruption arising from the Infill Programme, this much needed new supply of housing may not be developed.

6.3 Management Transfers

Management transfers are used where there are serious concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a household and are usually agreed where there is a pressing housing need for someone to move for example where someone is fleeing domestic violence or harassment. Currently once applicants are approved for a management transfer they can bid for another property via Choice Based Lettings for a period of three months and if unsuccessful during that period are given one direct offer.

CityWest Homes in partnership with the Council and HOS are currently reviewing the procedures to make them more fit for purpose. This includes focusing the procedures to be more risk-based including a risk assessment before proceeding with an application to determine the best resolution for the household's circumstances. This includes securing additional evidence (and the format to be used) from external agencies (such as the Police) as required and consideration

is also being given to how households can be supported when they are placed out of borough.

Given that management transfers are directly linked to the management of household risk, it is recommended that direct offers of the next suitable (like for like) property for the household's needs (depending on the individual risk for that household) will replace the three month bidding period and that a review of the requirement for a Management Transfer is undertaken every 12 weeks (and can be completed within existing resources.)

In addition under the current scheme applicants cannot be approved for a transfer if they are subject to action on their tenancy (e.g. for possession proceedings for rent and/or ASB). However there will be occasions where a transfer is appropriate based on the level of risk. It is recommended that Director's Discretion will be considered on a case by case basis where action is being taken by CWH against the tenant and a management transfer is required.

6.4 Veteran's Nomination Scheme (VNS)

The Council has signed up to the Armed Forces Community Covenant and The Allocation's Scheme already gives priority (through additional points) to Armed Forces Personnel who are eligible for re-housing and who meet the criteria.

The Veteran's Nominations Scheme is run by the organisation Stoll in partnership with the Royal British Legion with the support of the Ministry of Defence and is designed to secure social housing for former members of the armed forces. Under the scheme Stoll would nominate applicants who are able to live independently and may be Armed Forces personnel that are within 5 years of discharge or have been medically discharged.

It is recommended that the Council provide 2 one bed properties per year for the Veteran's Nomination Scheme

6.5 Workers Points Scheme

It is confirmed that the additional points for working households scheme applies to those who have been awarded the points and are now on maternity leave from their employment.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 Housing Expenditure

7.1.1 The latest revised budget is as follows:

Service Area	Expenditure	Income	Grand Total
Homelessness	7,248,344	(2,413,339)	4,835,005
Temporary Accommodation	45,865,951	(41,540,410)	4,325,541
Grand Total	53,114,295	(43,953,749)	9,160,546

7.1.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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 As a public authority, the council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right. Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

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 for Housing**

Declaration of Interest

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NAME: **Councillor Rachael Robathan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

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 recommendations in the report entitled **Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2017/18** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed

Councillor Rachael Robathan, Cabinet Member for Housing

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, 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 2017/18

Affordable Housing Supply	2017/18 Projection
Casual voids and returned from major works	352
Returned from conversion/rehab.	5
RP Stock	
First Let Nominations	81
Relet Nominations	201
Total Net Voids	639
WCC Stock	
Transfer (Existing WCC Tenants)	144
Less Decants for Major Works (-)	-13
Total Gross Voids	770

Appendix B

Supply of Rented Accommodation 2017/18 – projections by property size

Supply by bedsize - 2017/18	Studio	1	2	3	4+	Total
CWH Casual voids	110	149	60	27	6	352
Return from rehab	0	1	2	1	1	5
RP First Let Nominations - Affordable Rent	0	9	11	14	0	34
RP First Let Nominations - Social Rent	0	0	6	2	0	8
RP Relet Nominations - Affordable Rent	3	36	18	1	0	58
RP Relet Nominations - Social Rent	11	81	37	13	1	143
WCH Spot purchases - Social Rent	0	0	10	3	0	13
CWH Infill schemes - Social Rent	0	1	5	12	8	26
Total Net Voids	124	277	149	73	16	639
WCC Transfers	43	64	27	9	1	144
Less Decants for major works	-2	-7	-3	-1	0	-13
Total	165	334	173	81	17	770

Appendix B1

Allocations projections of rented housing 2017/18 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	2	4	2	1	0	9
Decants regeneration works	3	2	3	0	0	8
Cash incentives	4	21	10	2	0	37
Children Act Rehousing	0	0	0	1	0	1
Community Supportive Housing for the elderly	6	18	2	0	0	26
Overcrowded tenants	0	2	38	15	2	57
Studio to 1 bed	0	26	0	0	0	26
Category A	2	12	8	9	2	33
Management Transfers	4	14	4	3	0	25
SUB TOTAL (Tenant Transfers)	21	99	67	31	4	222
Waiting List						
Homeless (including community supportive housing)	74	141	90	42	12	359
Category A Medical	7	9	5	3	0	24
Community Supportive Housing (exc. homeless)	25	24	0	0	0	49
Working households	4	6	0	0	0	10
Assist Cash Incentive	1	8	0	0	0	9
Community Care Nominations	1	1	0	0	0	2
Children Act Rehousing	9	11	2	3	0	23
Street Homeless and hostel move on quota	8	2	0	0	0	10
Second Succession	2	12	3	1	0	18
Staff Rehousings	0	1	0	0	0	1
Learning Disability Quota	2	5	0	0	0	7
Reciprocals	2	2	2	1	0	7
Mental health hostel quota	5	5	0	0	0	10
Statutory overcrowded	0	0	0	0	0	0
RP severe overcrowded	0	0	1	0	1	2
Veterans Nomination Scheme	0	2	0	0	0	2
Right to Move Scheme	1	2	1	0	0	4
Pan London Housing Moves (GLA scheme)	3	4	2	0	0	9
SUB TOTAL (Housing Register)	144	235	106	50	13	548
TOTAL TENANT TRANSFER/ HOUSING REG.	165	334	173	81	17	770

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 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 behaviors, and autism are transitioning into adult social care.

Moving forward, there will be an increased need to develop purpose build, well designed accommodation to take into account the increased complexities of needs and ensure future accommodation continues to be fit for purpose.

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.

There are 7 priority nominations for people with a learning disability to access main stream housing, which enables people to maximize their

independence with minimal support.

In 2017, a new scheme, shared lives, will start to offer people with a learning disability the opportunity to live with a 'shared lives carer'. This scheme will suit people who may benefit from a 'family type' support. By the end of 2017 there will be 5 shared lives schemes operating within Westminster.

Work is currently going on to convert a building in the north of the borough into 3 1-bedroom flats for people with a learning disability. These will be completed by August 2017 and will add to the supported living scheme provision within the borough.

10.1.3 The updated Learning Disability Housing and Support strategy will encompass the following priority areas:

- People with a learning disability and/or autism and those who display behaviors 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 maximize 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 continues to sit on the VAWG strategic group, executive group, and Housing Operational Group. Progress this year in the Housing Operational Group has focussed on working in partnership with Rough Sleeping team colleagues and commissioned services to ensure the needs of vulnerable VAWG victims who are street or hidden homeless are addressed. The Housing Operational Group has also begun working on developing a Housing First model and bringing together housing providers and support services 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 the Butterfly Group, a peer mentoring programme for those who have/ are experiencing domestic violence, which is coordinated by the refuge provider Hestia. Joint work has already begun to examine the needs of refuge provision across the boroughs which will inform the re-commissioning process in 2017/18.
- 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.
- 10.2.4 The Housing DV lead was actively involved in the recent Local Safeguarding Children Board Multi-agency perspective on Practice; examining the housing role in relevant cases.
- 10.2.5 The effectiveness of the response to VAWG issues at HOS continues to be monitored and quarterly statistics are provided to the Housing Operational Group for evaluation. Service Standards formulated by Standing Together against Domestic Violence (STADV) continue to be followed. The recent ITT for the new HOS contract includes the provision of an IDVA role within the front-line HOS service; a role that will also support staff training. The ITT also requires the new provider(s) to work towards the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation; an accreditation that very few Local Authorities have or are currently aiming to achieve.

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. 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.

10.3.3 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.

10.3.4 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 from a wide variety of sources including for clients already living in supported who require a step down to less supported; directly from the wards; from out of borough projects; from individual's whose tenancy is breaking down for reasons related to mental health and family homes.

10.3.5 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 MSHH 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 85% and the number of Children Services Placements continues to increase annually.

10.4.3 Following a Pathway review a number of recommendations were put forward and the principle decision approved is to undertake competitive tendering of the current contracts to allow for the new remodel Pathway to commence from April 2018. A project group has been established made up of representatives from Children Services to inform and be involved in the competitive tendering process. As part of the process officers will consult directly with young people who will be invited to participate in the process.

10.4.4 Over the last year a number of initiatives have been developed with Children Services to support the numbers of numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children who have been placed in the Young Persons Supported Housing Pathway and these include:

- UASC support worker offering enhance support for up to month for all new UASC moving in the Young Persons Supported Housing Pathway. The primarily focus is to offer practical support accompany them to appointments and to help the young person to feel less isolated and to increase their confidence. During the year a review was undertaken and the feedback was positive from both young people and Children Services and it was recommended that funding be made available to extend the support provision for a further 6 months.
- Recognising that UASC moving into a hostel need to develop their English language skills funding was made available to Cardinal Hume Hostel to extend their current offer to accommodate Westminster's UASC. A part time tutor has been recruited and supports the young people to progress English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and citizenship towards settlement. Children Services have agreed to continue funding this service for a further 6 months.

10.4.5 Supporting the City Council's wider agenda to increase the numbers of young people into Education, Employment and Training, the EET Pilot a strengths based programme was delivered in partnership with Children Services through the Young Persons Supported Housing Forum. The Programme runs for six months and each young person has a triangle of support, including a mentor, attendance at monthly workshops and workbook to complete. Themes explored include core self, belonging and learning. As part of the programme all young people also have to undertake research into their chosen career path, numeracy and literacy assessments, engage in volunteering in the hostels or in the local community and develop a new skill through undertaking a six week art project. A total of 13 young people not in education, employment and training attended the monthly workshops and it is anticipated that 8 young people will complete the programme and also achieve a Duke of Edinburgh Certificate.

10.4.6 One of the key priorities within the Young Persons Supported Housing commissioning plan is improving the support provided to young people through transition to independence and through a programme of joint workshops delivered for both hostel staff and Children Services Social Workers and Personal Advisors a Toolkit has been developed to show young people's transition to independence in seven areas:

- Finance stability
- Health

- Risk management
- Education, Employment and Training
- Citizenship
- Life skills
- Resilience

Officers have consulted with young people directly whilst developing the Toolkit and a series of further workshops are being delivered for staff and guidance notes are being drafted and the Toolkit is expected to be implemented from April.

10.4.7 A number of documentations have been produced and updated for care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness to provide a consistent message about their housing options. To support those Care Leavers moving into the City Council accommodation a protocol entitled ' Supporting Care leavers moving into Social Housing' was developed to ensure that an enhance package of support was being delivered in partnership across agencies including City West Homes, Floating Support Service and Children Services to sustain tenancies. Alongside this tenancy workshops are also being delivered to support this package of support.

10.4.8 Improving the Health and well-being for young people continues to be important with over 90% of young people in supported accommodation registered with a GP and Dentist. Support continues to be offered to those requiring specialist services and other health interventions. In partnership with Children Services colleagues a health event is being planned for early spring.

10.4.9 Safeguarding continues to a high priority for all housing related support services and is discussed at monthly meetings or at joint Risk Management meetings. As part of the annual scheme visits officers will consult directly with young people on safety and safeguarding awareness to support the wider work on sexual exploitation and cyber bullying.