

# Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

## Agenda

Wednesday 5 July 2017

7.00 pm

Courtyard Room - Hammersmith Town Hall

### MEMBERSHIP

Administration:	Opposition
Councillor Daryl Brown Councillor Adam Connell Councillor Alan De'Ath (Chair)	Councillor Lucy Ivimy Councillor Harry Phibbs

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Date Issued: 27 June 2017

# Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

## Agenda

5 July 2017

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Members and residents are invited to submit suggestions for the work programme, either at the meeting or by email to [ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk)

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*\*If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.*

*At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.*

*Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.*

*Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Audit, Pensions and Standards Committee.*

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham



# Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Tuesday 13 June 2017

## **PRESENT**

**Committee members:** Councillors Adam Connell, Alan De'Ath (Chair) and Harry Phibbs

**Other Councillors:** Andrew Jones and Lisa Homan

**Officers:** Kathleen Corbett, Labab Lubab and Jane Martin

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Daryl Brown, owing to her attending another Council meeting, and Councillor Lucy Ivimy.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Adam Connell explained that he lived in a Shared Ownership property in the borough. Councillor Alan De'Ath explained that he was on the Council's HomeBuy register. Councillors Connell and De'Ath did not feel that their interests precluded them from taking part in the discussion as the report on Low Cost Home Ownership was for the committee's information rather than for a decision and the whole of the meeting was open to the public.

### **3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April were agreed to be accurate.

Councillor Connell explained that he had requested that the figure for how many children in the borough were affected by the benefit cap be shared with

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Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting as a correct record of the proceedings and any amendments arising will be recorded in the minutes of that subsequent meeting.

him, which had not yet happened. The Clerk agreed to remind officers of the request.

#### **4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Councillor Lucy Ivimy was elected as Vice-Chair for the 2017-18 Municipal Year.

#### **5. LOW COST HOME OWNERSHIP UPDATE**

Labab Lubab, Partnership and Strategy Manager, explained that Low Cost Home Ownership was intended for those who were not eligible for Social Housing, but could not afford market prices.

A variety of products were offered to help residents onto the housing ladder, including: Intermediate Rent, which was a lower than market rent and allowed people to save for a deposit on a property; Shared Ownership, where people bought a proportion of a property and then paid rent on the remaining portion, and; Council Shared Equity, when a portion of the property was sold to a resident with the remainder being owned by the council, which did not charge rent on its portion.

There were 9,000 people on the HomeBuy register, of whom approximately 80% were actively looking for Low Cost Home Ownership properties in the borough. The Council had used information from the register to develop affordability bands to ensure that a broad range of households could access properties; the three bands were those households with a gross annual income of up to £29,000, those with incomes up to £43,550, and those with incomes up to £50,550. Developers were asked to make a third of their Low Cost Home Ownership Properties affordable to people in each of the bands. This meant that Low Cost Home Ownership in Hammersmith and Fulham more affordable than in other areas where Low Cost Home Ownership was provided for households with annual gross incomes of £90,000, which was the limit in the London Plan.

The number of properties available each year varied significantly, depending on the number of larger developments approaching completion. The HomeBuy service controlled the allocation of properties and this allowed the Council to ensure that they were offered to those with the greatest need and to whom the properties were truly affordable. As well as a front desk at 145 King Street, the service held regular engagement events and would be reintroducing an annual open day to publicise schemes and homes available.

Councillor Jones, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, explained that a significant proportion of the properties which would be available over the next few years would be sold at 80% of their value using the Council Shared Equity scheme which had been favoured by the previous administration. He explained that the present administration aimed to provide truly affordable homes and felt that the affordability bands would help to do this; however, the Council would be prioritising the provision of homes at Social Rents as these would help those in the greatest need. He

said that there were also real problems with an uncompetitive mortgage market for shared ownership properties which meant that it was often not a good value way of getting onto the housing ladder.

Councillor Phibbs agreed that providing sufficient affordable housing in London was difficult. He asked whether, when someone bought a share of a property, they paid a proportionate amount of the service charge, or if they paid the full service charge. Labab Lubab explained that service charges, for things like cleaning and gardening etc were paid by the resident of the property. Any major works costs would be split proportionately. Mr Lubab explained that before a resident was allocated a property the HomeBuy service would ensure that they were able to afford all of their housing costs, including service charges. Kath Corbett suggested that if the Council were to try to split the service charge they might encounter legal difficulties. Councillor Phibbs said that he understood that in Wandsworth those living in Shared Ownership properties only paid a proportion of the service charge. Labab Lubab agreed to speak to colleagues in Wandsworth to understand the benefits and operation of the scheme.

Councillor Phibbs noted that there was a significant variation in the number of sales each year and noted that a lack of supply was a problem. Labab Lubab explained that sales were dependent on new properties being built as part of development schemes. He said that the council tried to use planning negotiations, and its affordability bands, to ensure that the limited supply was targeted to meet the needs of residents.

Councillor Phibbs asked about the relationship between affordable home ownership and a Council tenant's Right to Buy their home. Labab Lubab explained that affordable home ownership schemes could be more affordable to residents as they could buy a share of a property whereas, even with the maximum discount applied, most tenants would be unable to buy their council home. Councillor Phibbs asked whether a Right to Buy Part Scheme had been considered. Councillor Homan explained that the Council needed to retain its social housing stock and so had not introduced a right to buy part scheme which offered limited benefits to residents. She said that tenants who wished to buy a property, but could not afford to buy their home, were able to buy a shared ownership property which both allowed them to get on the housing ladder and the council to keep its social housing stock for those in need. Councillor Jones added that for many tenants a part right to buy scheme would not be useful as competitive mortgages were not available, for example, to those living in tower blocks. Councillor Phibbs noted that right to buy receipts were supposed to be used to replace housing or else be given up to the government; he understood that Hammersmith and Fulham had not been sending money back to government and said that houses sold must therefore be being replaced. Councillor Homan said that the receipts were indeed used to replace properties, however, the replacements were often not equivalent to the homes which had been sold. She also said that it could take years for a new property to be ready for occupation, during which time the social housing stock would be reduced.

Councillor Phibbs noted that at the Factory Quarter development tenants had been offered a small share of their homes in return for taking on additional maintenance responsibilities. He asked whether this had been done elsewhere. Labab Lubab agreed to look into the scheme and see if it benefitted residents.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether any further detail on the government's scheme to allow tenants the right to buy their housing association properties had been made available. Labab Lubab explained that the scheme was being trialled in five pilot areas and that details of the main scheme was expected to be made available in 2018.

Councillor Connell asked whether the London Living Rent scheme would be used in the borough as this was intended to allow residents the opportunity to save and buy their own home. Labab Lubab explained that the scheme might work for better off residents moving into one or two bed flats but that most residents would face affordability problems with the scheme owing to high rents in the borough.

Councillor Connell asked what was done to ensure that those on the HomeBuy register were still interested on affordable home ownership in the borough. Labab Lubab explained that a new IT system was to be introduced which would make it easier to manage the list and remove those who were inactive. Around 80% of those currently on the register were looking for affordable homes in the borough but an annual refresh of the list would be introduced. The new system would also allow users to change their details more easily.

Councillor Phibbs asked if those expressing an interest in properties knew how likely they were to be allocated a home. Labab Lubab said that the council's allocation scheme could guide residents, however, as the procedure was based on who expressed an interest an accurate prediction of whether an allocation would be made to a resident could not be given until later in the process. Priority was given in the following order: 1) Armed Services (and Ex Armed Services) personnel living (or previously living as an adult) for twelve consecutive months in the borough 2. Social tenants in either council housing or Private Registered Provider housing. 3. Police officers living or working in the borough 4. Homeless Working Households in Temporary Accommodation 5. Customers with physical disability using a wheelchair 6. Households living for twelve consecutive months in the borough 7. Households working for twelve consecutive months in the borough 8. Households living or working in the borough with an income within the relevant thresholds.

The Chair said that often too short a period of time was given for people to express an interest in a property. Labab Lubab agreed that short periods of time were given for people to express an interest, however, he highlighted that expressing an interest would not commit people to buying a property; no penalties would be applied until after contracts had been exchanged. Councillor Homan suggested that the information sent to residents be passed through the reading group for their comments.

The Chair asked whether the engagement events were good value, noting the number of people attending them. Labab Lubab said that the events were thought to be worthwhile, especially as the cost of the events was only the officer time to attend them as all venues used were free.

The Chair noted that some properties had a very high savings requirement and asked why this was. Labab Lubab said the properties which were being sold would require a high level of savings as the proportion which would need to be bought might be quite large.

Councillor Connell asked what the minimum percentage of a property sold under Council Shared Equity Scheme was. Labab Lubab explained that as little as 16% of properties had been sold, the affordability bands were used to ensure that this scheme was available to residents. An incremental 'staircasing' scheme was planned to allow residents to buy more of the property from the Council.

## **6. HOUSING SERVICES PERFORMANCE DATA**

Councillor Homan explained that the council had focussed on improving performance by increasing resident involvement. She noted that this work had led to a significant fall in the number of repairs complaints which had been escalated to her as the Cabinet Member for Housing and that improvements had been made across the department. The Council's intention was to give people a good impression throughout their time as residents; recently a group of tenants had reviewed the process for new tenants and the information they were given which would ensure that residents first impression was a good one.

Kath Corbett explained that officers reviewed a wide range of performance indicators to ensure that the service was performing well. Jane Martin said that contractors also had performance indicators and that those for Mitie had recently been reviewed; these and improved contract management would lead to improvements in Mitie's service to residents.

The Chair said that whilst performance indicators were a useful tool, it was important that residents' experiences were used to improve services, especially in more complex cases. Jane Martin said that more difficult repairs were an issue which she would be looking at in detail over the coming months as there were still unacceptable delays in some cases.

Councillor Phibbs said that he felt that performance indicators ought to be published on the transparency section of the Council's website.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether there was a mechanism by which the council decided to stop repairing lifts and instead replace them and whether it would provide better value for money to replace lifts more quickly. Councillor Homan said that there was a large lift replacement programme which was ongoing, however, the programme was limited by budgetary constraints, the need to ensure value for money and effective project management and the need to sometimes decant residents whilst a lift was taken out of action.

Councillor Phibbs noted that the void time was significantly worse in the South of the Borough than in the North and asked why this was. Kath Corbett started by explaining that the number of void properties was quite low, and so the impact of the delays was smaller than it might otherwise have been. She also explained that properties void because of major works were not included in the figures. Jane Martin said that the letting of properties on the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estate was taking longer as it was being used as temporary accommodation. Councillor Homan explained that she monitored void times closely. Councillor De'Ath asked that a briefing note on void times and the main reasons for delays was sent to members of the PAC.

Councillor Connell asked what the financial impact of having void properties was. Kath Corbett explained that the impact was small because of the low numbers of voids, but that delays did cost the council both through lost rent and because the property could be used to move people out of expensive temporary accommodation.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether a joint inspection was carried out when a tenant was moving out. Jane Martin said that a joint inspection would take place if the tenant gave the Council notice that they were leaving. Councillor Phibbs asked what the number referring to Anti-Social Behaviour cases meant. Jane Martin explained that each report of Anti-Social Behaviour was a case, even if multiple cases were perpetrated by one person. Councillor Homan said that unfortunately it was very difficult to evict a resident for Anti-Social Behaviour; she said that she met with Housing Officers and the Community Safety Team regularly to ensure that progress was being made on difficult cases.

Councillor Connell commended officers work to keep the number of families in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation at zero. He asked referred to the indicator called '% of lettings to households making a community contribution' and asked what defined a community contribution. Kath Corbett explained that a wide range of activities were included, but that all were making a difference in the community.

Councillor Connell said that the rent collection achieved at 99.09% was very good. He asked how the 'Properties Recovered – Fraud' target had been set. Kath Corbett explained that this had been a target based on previous performance.

Councillor Connell said that he felt the tolerance for Caretaking Quality Inspections was too great. Kath Corbett said that a number of changes had been made to the Pinnacle contract and that deep cleans were ongoing across the borough which would hopefully improve the score. A resident said that Robert Gentry House had been deep-cleaned and that she did not feel that this had been good enough. The weeding of a communal yard area was also not up to the standard she felt was necessary.



Councillor Connell said that he was pleased that the Council had received many more raves than rants, meaning that generally residents were happy with the service they were getting.

**7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME**


Councillor Phibbs requested that an item on planning policies restricting the conversion of sites, such as Ravenscourt Hospital, from being converted to housing. Councillor Connell advised that the site at Ravenscourt Hospital was likely to be covered by national policy as it was so large. The Clerk agreed to look into whether a report, as requested by Councillor Phibbs, could be added to the PAC work programme.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm  
Meeting ended: 8.25 pm

Chair .....

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# Agenda Item 4

<p><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p><b>ECONOMIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND THE ARTS POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>5 JULY 2017</b></p>	
<b>ARTS STRATEGY UPDATE AND 2017/18 ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>Report of the Director for Cleaner Greener and Cultural Services</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	
<b>Classification - For Policy &amp; Advisory Review &amp; Comment</b> <b>Key Decision: NO</b>	
<b>Consultation:</b> <i>Planning and Regeneration</i>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sue Harris – Director for Cleaner Greener and Cultural Services	
<b>Report Author:</b> Thomas Dodd, Arts Development Officer	<b>Contact Details:</b> Thomas.dodd@lbhf.gov.uk

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The LBHF Arts Strategy was signed off in September 2016 and included a comprehensive action plan. Since then, an Interim Arts Officer has been appointed and begun implementation, working with colleagues in Events, Regeneration, and partners within the wider Arts world including HammersmithBid.
- 1.2 A plan for the next 12 months has been drafted and for maximum impact, will require support from other stakeholders. This is attached as an appendix.
- 1.3 The activities proposed for 2017/18 are expected to cost in the region of £300k to be funded from various sources.
- 1.4 Funding is required for some of the more ambitious projects will require ongoing consultation with the arts community.
- 1.5 The Arts Network (AN) has proved a valuable link with local creative industries and practitioners. Two AN meetings have so far occurred in 2017 and we are on target for four per calendar year. The format of the meetings is collaborative

and informal; serving as an opportunity for local creatives to develop their own networks as much as it is for the council to find synergies between related arts activities.

- 1.6 On 13 June 17 the Arts Development Officer attended a London Cultural Forum meeting held at Guildhall Art Gallery. The subject of the session was an examination of the arts and culture as agents of social change. The session yielded some interesting insights and useful takeaways applicable to the Art Strategy. Keynote speaker Andrew Barnett (director of the UK Branch of Calouste Gulbenkian) described a forthcoming report by his organization; the culmination of a year's nationwide research into the civic role of arts institutions. Whilst the report is not due to be published until 10 July 17, two of the key findings seem to be;
- a) the danger that arts organizations have been slower to integrate digital platforms than other sectors
  - b) the lack of diversity within arts organizations will risk the sectors' relevance and growth in future generations unless the issue can be directly addressed.
- 1.7 The CB report will be a useful resource on its publication and should further reinforce the ambitions of our own strategy. Coral Flood of the GLA also discussed this year's London Borough of Culture award. A new competition for the 32 London boroughs to apply for funding to lead a 'game changing' cultural programme in 2019 and 2020. With LBHF's Arts Development Officer in place and the art strategy underway we should be well positioned to submit an application in the autumn.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. To comment on planned trajectory of the Art Strategy.

## **3. REASONS FOR DECISION**

- 3.1. Based on the initial success of the art strategy we want to move forward by highlighting the programme across the council and throughout London, working within existing budgets, and fundraising where any additional budget is necessary.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1. Whilst drafting the Art Strategy a public consultation was conducted that included the advice of local partners, members of the creative industries and the wider arts community.

## **5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. In keeping with our core theme of 'Inclusion' officers maintain that Equality Implications are a pre-requisite of any arts activity running as part of the strategy.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no legal implications relevant to the proposal that have not already been considered as part of the background in drafting our Art Strategy published last year.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Indicative costs within for activities in the proposed Arts Strategy for 2017/18 are in the region of £300k.
- 7.2. External funding of £20k from HammersmithLondon has been agreed and is matched by the Council – please see further detail in the table below.

<b>Confirmed funding</b>	
s.106	£18,000.00
H'Smith London	£20,000.00
<b>Forecasted funding</b>	
Forecasted grant funding	£25,000.00
<b>Cost of delivering full programme</b>	
	£292,983.00
<b>Additional funding required</b>	
	<b>£229,983.00</b>

## 8. IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- 8.1. It is our vision that Hammersmith and Fulham be a place where the arts are at the centre of a dynamic local economy, fostering local jobs and stimulating economic growth.

	Activities 17/18 – LBHF Arts Strategy	DATES
	<b>SUPPORTING CREATION</b>	
The Glass Atrium	Exhibition Curated and Launched	completed
	Artists Fee	completed
	Summer Exhibition Installation	July
Artists	Artists in residency at unit 50	completed
	Open days	completed
	Exhibitions	June
	Workshops & Events	June
	<b>SUPPORTING DESTINATION</b>	
Cecil French Bequest Loans	Albert Moore's Apricots (1866)   Buitenplaats Museum in the Netherlands	completed
	Edward Burne-Jones' Morgan le Fay (1862) and Cupid Delivering Psyche (1867)   Tate Britain	Sept
	Lawrence Alma-Tadema's Interrupted (1880) and Pomona Festival (1879)   Osterreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna	completed
	Lawrence Alma-Tadema's Interrupted (1880) and Pomona Festival (1879)   Leighton Hse, London	July
	Watts Gallery Loan   Surrey, UK	Feb
	Restoration of the collection	Nov
Regeneration/Development	Landmark House/ Thames Tower - Eastern & Oriental plc (E&O) and Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP)	Nov
	Shipping Containers	Aug
	Place shaping for Cultural industries – seminar?	Dec
LARA	LARA at King's Mall Shopping Centre including Long term solution	Aug - Jan
Festivals	HF ArtsFest – ongoing support	completed
	SLIDE @ Lyric Hammersmith * based on installation, artist costs and benchmark projects. Money could be sought from sponsorships etc, but will need seed funding	Dec
	Comedy Festival *Based on increasing size, venues, marketing and event production. Would look to recoup costs through commercial avenues	June '18
	<b>SUPPORTING INCLUSION</b>	
	Dancing Books in Libraries	completed
Dance West	Ignition Dance Festival	Sep
	Bolder Not Older	Aug
	Move It Mondays	Aug
	JOY: Disability in the Arts	Oct
	Commissioning of 'Touchscreen Experience'	July

	<b>SUSTAINING THE STRATEGY</b>	
<b>Cultural Trust</b>	Meeting with Richard Bernas and interested parties	
	Feasibility study & Draft terms of reference	Sep
	Arts Officer post (£18k s.106 & £18k from Hammersmith London)	July
	Draft fundraising strategy	July
	Set up subscribers portal on Council website	July
<b>Arts Network</b>	Set up email inbox (arts@lbhf.gov.uk) to receive information on events for inclusion	July
	Recruit volunteer to manage social media	July
	Send out quarterly newsletter	July
	Set up H&F Arts Social Media platforms	July

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ECONOMIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND THE ARTS POLICY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>5 JULY 2017</b></p>	
<p><b>Housing for Refugees and Asylum Seekers</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification</b> - For Information  <b>Key Decision:</b> No</p>	
<p><b>Other services consulted:</b> None</p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected:</b> All</p>	
<p><b>Accountable Director:</b>          Jo Rowlands, Lead Director of Regeneration, Planning and Housing Services</p>	
<p><b>Report Author:</b> Glendine Shepherd,          Head of Housing Solutions</p> <p>Brendan Morrow, Reviews &amp; Complex Cases Manager.</p>	<p><b>Contact Details:</b>          E-mail: <a href="mailto:glendine.shepherd@lbhf.gov.uk">glendine.shepherd@lbhf.gov.uk</a>          Tel: 020 8753 5813          E-mail: <a href="mailto:brendan.morrow@lbhf.gov.uk">brendan.morrow@lbhf.gov.uk</a>          Tel 020 8753 4546</p>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report illustrates the support available to Refugees, Asylum Seekers and households with No Recourse to Public funds (NRPF) and demonstrates how the Council addresses requests for support from these groups within the context of statutory obligation and Government and Council policies.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is requested to review and comment on the contents of the report.

### 3. INTRODUCTION – LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT & PROVISION OF SUPPORT

#### **Overview – Refugees, Asylum Seekers and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**

- 3.1. Persons who have been granted Refugee status have rights to housing, benefits and work so are eligible to apply to the Council for housing if necessary and claim mainstream benefits. The Council records on its database whether those who approach for accommodation are eligible or ineligible for assistance with housing and does not specify the immigration status of eligible applicants in accordance with the Authority's Public Sector Equality Duty, to eliminate discrimination.
- 3.2. The Home Office's National Asylum Support Service (NASS) provides accommodation and subsistence for asylum seekers who are destitute, or likely to become destitute, while their application is being considered. As NASS retains this responsibility under the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999, there is no statutory obligation on Local Authorities to provide accommodation for asylum seekers, who are subject to immigration control. Asylum Seekers are offered accommodation across the UK in dispersal areas away from London and the South East, in accordance with agreed ratios.
- 3.3. Persons who have "No Recourse to Public Funds" (NRPF) are those who are subject to immigration control and are also subject to the condition that they have no legal entitlement to certain welfare benefits, social housing and homelessness assistance in accordance with s.115 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.
- 3.4. This group has the right to remain in the UK and most persons with NRPF have the right to work in the UK but with the attached condition that they "maintain and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds". Public funds are defined within the legislation and include access to social housing and homelessness assistance, and mainstream benefits e.g. Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Tax Credits, Income Support and Child Benefit.
- 3.5. Assistance provided under Social Services legislation is not a public fund for immigration purposes so most people will be eligible to apply for support from Social Services.
- 3.6. An application to Social Services for support from families with children will be assessed under s.17 of the Children Act 1989. Children's Services have a duty to undertake a Child in Need assessment to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child in need and the assessment will determine eligibility for accommodation and subsistence payments. In cases where single adults or Care leavers with NRPF request support, Adult Social Care (ASC) will conduct an assessment under the Care Act 2014 to assess eligibility for care and support.



### **3.7. Housing Solutions - managing the provision of accommodation and subsistence to persons with NRPF**

- 3.8. Housing Solutions manages the accommodation and subsistence budgets for both Children's Services and Adults Social Care to ensure the provision of suitable accommodation and subsistence payments to NRPF households who have been assessed as eligible for the service. Children's Services budget for 2017/18 is £247,300 and the Adult Social Care budget is £80,700.
- 3.9. Following a request for support, the relevant Social Services team will conduct an assessment and authorise placement if appropriate. The assessment to provide accommodation and/or subsistence is based on the relevant legislation and particular circumstances of each case. Duties arise from safeguarding responsibilities to children and vulnerable adults.
- 3.10. Housing Solutions will liaise with housing providers to procure a suitable placement for the household and make arrangements for subsistence payments to destitute households with NRPF
- 3.11. Housing Solutions procure accommodation from private sector providers so will always seek to ensure value for money in sourcing suitable accommodation for families and single adults. All the relevant checks are conducted to ensure accommodation meets statutory requirements in accordance with Health & Safety regulations and meets the standards outlined in the Council's Temporary Accommodation Standards policy.

### **NRPF partnership working with Children's Services & Adult Social Care**

- 3.12. The NRPF service is currently undergoing a review to explore ways to enhance partnership working with Children's Services and Adult Social Care and streamline service provision, to maximise value for money and ensure a comprehensive service is offered to eligible households.
- 3.13. The NRPF service is co-ordinated by one full-time NRPF Assessment Officer and overseen by the Reviews & Complex Cases Manager within Housing Solutions. The current review of procedures ensures that referrals and requests for the provision of accommodation and subsistence payments are administered efficiently. Processes have been enhanced so that Social Care conduct the appropriate assessment at an early stage in the process, to determine eligibility for the provision for accommodation. This is arranged on confirmation that the eligibility criteria for accommodation and subsistence have been met.
- 3.14. The NRPF service arranges fortnightly subsistence payments to eligible households and cash payments are made 145 King Street. Persons in receipt of case payments are obliged to inform the service if there has been a change in their financial circumstances so that payments can be reassessed. The current weekly subsistence rates are being reviewed and are likely to increase in accordance with policy recommendations. Requests for additional payments to cover costs beyond subsistence (e.g. school uniforms) are considered on a discretionary basis. The review will consider the option of introducing payment cards to increase efficient use of resources.

- 3.15. There has been a recent reduction in the number of households in NRPF accommodation following case reviews into individual circumstances of each household, which has reduced pressure on the budget. Regular case reviews expose changes in circumstances and households may cease to be eligible for the service (e.g. their income from employment enables them to afford their own accommodation costs), so accommodation and subsistence provision may be withdrawn.
- 3.16. Currently, the NRPF service accommodates 17 households with children and 8 single adults. The average yearly accommodation and subsistence cost to accommodate an adult is £15,000 pa while the average yearly accommodation and subsistence cost to accommodate a family is approximately £20,000 pa.

<b>Household</b>	<b>Accommodated</b>	<b>Average cost p.a</b>	<b>Average total p.a.</b>
Family	17	£20,000	£340,000
Single Adult	8	£15,000	£120,000

- 3.17. Once accommodated, Children's Services and ASC provide appropriate support in relation to any care and support elements that promote individual well-being. Housing issues and subsistence payments are addressed directly by the NRPF Assessment Officer who will assess a re-location request or resolve disrepair or landlord enquiries.
- 3.18. The NRPF Assessment Officer is responsible for managing the case-load and conducting periodic reviews to ensure that households remain eligible for the service. The officer ensures that households have legal representation to pursue an application for recourse to public funds with the Home Office which will allow the household to claim mainstream benefits and end reliance on the NRPF service. This is usually a slow process and has been known to take the Home Office several years to resolve cases. Two households in the H&F NRPF service are still being supported after several years as their applications for public funds remain unresolved. It is hoped that the Connect system will strengthen links with the Home Office to resolve these cases.
- 3.19. As part of the review, the NRPF has acquired Connect, a database which allows the Council to check the immigration status of applicants through direct interaction with a dedicated Home Office team to access immigration information when required. The aim is to manage and resolve cases more efficiently and achieve more cost-effective outcomes which result in overall budget savings.
- 3.20. Casework and outcomes are geared towards ensuring NRPF households gain access to public funds as quickly as possible so households are supported and referred to local legal advice agencies to assist with applications for public funds. The NRPF service will use Connect to liaise with the Home Office to fast-track outstanding claims for public funds, thus negating the need for reliance on the Service and reduce associated costs. The Home Office can also assist households to voluntarily return to their country of origin if this is recommended following Social Services assessment.

3.21. In addition to managing provisions to NRPF households, the Council has committed to re-settle and support refugee households displaced by the Syrian conflict under the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Currently, the Council has helped to arrange accommodation in H&F for two families under this scheme. The Council has also resettled a family recently in H&F under the Vulnerable Children's Relocation Scheme with another expected later in June 2017. The Council continues to work with housing providers and the local community to procure further accommodation to fulfil its commitment under these initiatives.

#### **4. NRPF Case Studies**

##### **Case study 1:**

Ms Smith was an Asylum Seeker from Jamaica with two dependent children aged nine and two.

While her Asylum application was being considered by the Home Office, Ms Smith was accommodated by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and provided with subsistence payments. She was granted Leave to Remain in the UK until September 2018, with the attached condition that she has NRPF. As she had been granted Leave to Remain, NASS withdrew housing support and subsistence payments.

Ms Smith then went to live with her sister in Hammersmith & Fulham but approached the Council for assistance in April 2016 when this arrangement broke down, rendering her destitute as she had no accommodation or support and had no income because she was not working or entitled to mainstream benefits.

Ms Smith requested support under s.17 of the Children Act and following an assessment by Children's Services, accommodation was made available to her and her children in Greenford in April 2016.

In December 2016, Ms Smith received confirmation from the Home Office that the NRPF condition had been lifted, thereby granting her access to public funds.

Ms Smith continued to receive accommodation and subsistence support from the NRPF service until she successfully applied for mainstream benefits in February 2017. As she was then eligible for homelessness services and in receipt of benefits, she was referred to H&F Advice who provided temporary accommodation under homeless legislation and accepted a statutory duty to accommodate her.

Ms Smith is currently resident in long-term temporary accommodation and her children attend local schools.

##### **Case study 2:**

Mrs Ali is a Somalian national with one dependant, aged 11, who is a British citizen. Ms Ali came to the UK in 2015 on a Spousal visa to join her British husband under family reunion provisions, on the condition that she had NRPF.

Mrs Ali, her husband and daughter were provided with temporary accommodation by the Council.

However, Mrs Ali approached the Council for assistance in January 2016, fleeing domestic violence from her husband. As she had NRPF and was in low-paid, part-time work, she was unable to support herself and her daughter.

Children's services assessed Mrs Ali's circumstances and the Council provided accommodation for her and her daughter under NRPF provisions.

In October 2016, Mrs Ali was granted Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK with access to public funds.

Mrs Ali was then eligible to claim mainstream benefits and was referred to H&F advice to explore housing solutions. She was provided with long-term temporary accommodation for herself and her daughter.

### **NRPF – current and future considerations**

- 4.1. The Immigration Act 2016 introduced legislative changes which came into effect in April 2017 and which further restricts access to accommodation and support for certain groups. The provision which enables asylum-seeking families with children to remain supported under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 until they leave the UK has been removed.
- 4.2. These legislative changes are likely to increase demand on the service so a review into the existing budgets may be necessary to meet a potential increase in demand.
- 4.3. Under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, Councils retain the power to support families who do not qualify for support under the new framework. It is also intended that local authorities provide for any other needs of children additional to support and accommodation under section 17. Given the complexities of the different provisions for support and accommodation to families, there is a risk of families with children falling through the gaps between the various systems.
- 4.4. At the end of March 2017, 43 local authorities were supporting 2245 households with NRPF by providing accommodation and financial support at a combined annual cost of £36.4 million (NRPF Network)
- 4.5. To improve budget management and consider better value for money options, the current review of the NRPF service will evaluate the impact of introducing payment cards and assess the cost of offering accommodation outside London. These options could negate the requirement for households to come to Council buildings to collect subsistence cash payments every fortnight, while making the potential provision of accommodation in other parts of the country, where costs are cheaper, a more viable option for consideration.

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

13 <sup>th</sup> June 2017 Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Low Cost Home Ownership	Labab Lubab	To consider what schemes are available, how they are performing and what the Council has been doing to try to get more people into homes they own.
Performance Data for the Housing Department	Nilavra Mukerji / Kath Corbett	To scrutinise the performance of Housing Services against key targets.

5 <sup>th</sup> July 2017 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Arts	James Fitzgerald	To consider an update on progress made against the Arts Strategy.
Housing for refugees and asylum seekers	Glendine Shepherd / Jo Rowlands	To provide an overview of what the Council does to provide housing for refugees and asylum seekers, and the rules and funding streams relating to these.

6 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Council's home energy strategy and measures to tackle fuel poverty	Nick Austin/Justine Dornan	To review the work of the Council to make homes as fuel efficient as possible and how vulnerable residents will be protected during the winter.
Communal Heating Charges	Kath Corbett	To consider whether improvements could be made to the way in which residents with communal heating are billed.

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

Tackling ASB with Housing Providers	Jonathan Shaw	To consider the strategies Anti-Social Behaviour Officers use to work with housing providers to deal with ASB issues.
Fire Safety in Council Blocks	Jane Martin	To consider the Council's Fire Safety measures in its tower blocks.

### 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.

ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Culture Led Place Making	Jo Rowlands	To consider the administration's strategy of developing a sense of place through cultural venues, activities and events.
Housing Allocations Policy	Jo Rowlands/Glendine Shepherd	To consider proposed amendments to the Council's allocations policy.

### 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.

ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Budget Proposals 2017-18	Kath Corbett / Mike Clarke	To consider the budget proposals for 2017-18.
Tenants and Residents Halls	Nilavra Mukerji	To discuss the council's work to try to get tenants and residents halls used more.

## Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

19 <sup>th</sup> March 2018		
Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
TBC		

Potential Future Items		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Industrial Strategy	Jo Rowlands	To discuss the new Industrial Strategy
Garages	Nilavra Mukerji	To consider efforts made to improve lettings rates and to investigate whether the Council is using its garages on Housing Revenue Account land effectively.
Housing for disabled people	Jo Rowlands	To consider the proposed actions for meeting the housing needs of disabled people following the report of the disabled persons commission.
Leaseholder Services	Kath Corbett / Jana Du Preez	To hear about the improvements made to leaseholder services and identify further changes which could be made.