

Minutes

SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

19 April 2012

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON
LONDON

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Judith Cooper (Chairman) Peter Kemp (Vice-Chairman) Patricia Jackson John Major David Benson Sukhpal Brar Wayne Bridges Phoday Jarjussey</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Neil Stubbings (Deputy Director, Social Care, Health and Housing) April Southern (Housing Benefits Manager) Emma Humphrey (Housing Needs Manager) Anna Crispin (Chief Education Officer) Charles Francis (Democratic Services)</p>	
18.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Kuldeep Lakhmana substitute Cllr Phoday Jarjussey.</p>	
19.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	
20.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2012 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of 22 March 2012 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
21.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED IN PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>All items were considered in Part 1</p>	

22.

POPULATION FLOWS (AND THE IMPACT ON HOUSING SERVICES) - WITNESS SESSION 2 (*Agenda Item 5*)

The second witness session for the review examined population flows in Hillingdon from a local, Hillingdon perspective. The following officers attended the meeting and provided their views:

- April Southern, Housing Benefits Manager, Social Care, Health and Housing
- Emma Humphrey, Housing Needs Manager, Social Care, Health and Housing
- Anna Crispin, Chief Education Officer, PEECS.

The following points were noted:

Housing Benefit Information

Effects of April 2011 Local Housing Allowance changes

- From April 2011 restricting rents to 30th percentile of rent market had a clear and immediate effect on rental payments.
- In monetary terms the households feeling the greatest impact are 5 bed need claimants as these are also restricted to 4 bed rate (based on claim start date vs. April 2012 LHA rate).
- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates reduced in April 2011 to 30th rather than 50th percentile of market rents.
- LHA rates have been increasing over the last year, with rates for 2 and 3 beds now equal to, or higher than the rate in March 2011.
- From April 2012 LHA rates have been set for 12 months.

Transitional Protection

Current cases affected

- Claims made prior to April 2011 receive transitional protection for nine months after they anniversary date.
- There are currently 2410 receiving transitional protection and depending on when the claim was initially made transitional protection will end between January and December this year.
- There are currently no 5 bed households receiving transitional protection as rents charged were similar to new LHA figures. However, all new claims from April 2011 were restricted to 4 bed rate.
- Due to LHA rate rises since April 2011 58% of cases currently receiving transitional protection (TP) will not face a loss when TP ends.
- There are currently 10 households that will face a loss of over £100 per week - 2 of these are large households with 9 family members. Of those losing £50 - £100 - 5 are large households with families of 7 to 10 members.
- An overall cap for bedroom size was also introduced in April 2011. A total of 113 cases are affected.

Payments and Cases

- Local Housing Allowance was introduced for Private Rented Sector claims in April 2011.
- Overall Housing Benefit payments to claimants have increased by £34,318,502 or 32.97%, from £104,094,256 in 2007/08 to £138,412,762 in 2011/12.
- Temporary Accommodation is the only area (by tenure) to reduce claimant payments; payments to residents in temporary accommodation have reduced by £14,969,010 or 61.31%, from £24,412,552 to £9,443,542.
- Rent Allowance payments to Private rented sector and Registered Social Housing claims increased by £45,768,858 or 89% from £51,322,652 to £97,091,510.
- Between March 2008 and March 2012 Private rented sector and Registered Social Housing cases increased by 5,108 (63.52%), from 8,041 to 13,149.
- The main increase is in the private rented sector, an increase of 3,837 or 84% since 2007/08.
- The decline in payments to claimants in Temporary Accommodation reflects the continued reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by L.B.
- Hillingdon, -229 households in temporary accommodation over the course of 2011.
- Nationally and regionally local authorities have been reporting increases in approaches and increases in the use temporary accommodation.
- In Hillingdon we have seen the increase in approaches but to date have been able to provide alternative private sector solutions to households threatened with homelessness. Private sector tenancies offer a more economically efficient solution to threats of homelessness than temporary accommodation and accepting homelessness duty;
- In "Protecting The Public Purse – November 2011" the Audit Commission calculated the cost of managing and maintaining a household in temporary accommodation at £18,000 p.a.

Discretionary Housing Payments

- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are additional help that can be given to help people who qualify for housing or council tax benefit, but are having trouble paying their rent or council tax.
- There is an overall cap (set by Government) on payments that can be made in any financial year and once the fund for the year runs out, no more payments can be made. Government makes a contribution, any spend above this has to be funded by the Authority.
 1. Overall permitted cap £426,660
 2. Government contribution £170,664
 3. Total payments made £90,285
- Normally any 'unspent' Government contribution has to be returned at the end of the financial year, however, due to the ending of transitional protection between January and

December 2012 for claims made prior to April 2011 changes, Government are allowing a 'one off' carry over to 2012/13.

Migration

- Based on this limited information there is no evidence of migration from Inner London yet. However, staff are identifying a large proportion of new claims from people moving from Ealing, Newham and Lewisham.

Housing Needs Information (April 2012)

Service Demand:

Homelessness

- The number of households approaching the Council for help with housing during the last 3 years has been roughly consistent.

Source of approaches to L.B. Hillingdon – 2011/12

- In 2009/10 7.5% of approaches to housing needs came from outside the borough. This dropped to 5.7% of approaches in 2011/12.

Out of borough households - Reasons for approach:

The principle reasons for homelessness have been grouped into 4 rough categories –

1. Private sector tenancies ending, which account for 27%
2. Risk of Violence, which account for 17%
3. Having to leave the family home due to overcrowding/unsuitability, which accounts for 33%
4. And “unresolvable” homelessness reasons such as leaving prison, returning from abroad, illegal eviction, eviction for rent arrears etc, which account for 23%

Known Housing Migration:

Households placed in to Hillingdon – inward migration:

- In response to concerns about population flow, London boroughs have started recording temporary accommodation placements into other boroughs
- During 2011/12 other boroughs placed 220 households into Hillingdon, 84.5% of these (186 households) were placed into temporary B&B accommodation & the remaining 15.5% (34 households) were placed into private sector accommodation.
- The number of households placed into Hillingdon are broadly in keeping with those placed into our neighbouring boroughs from across London, Brent having taken in 127 households, Ealing 131 households, and Hounslow 166 households.

Households placed outside Hillingdon – outward migration:

- Until recently, LB Hillingdon has been able to procure and provide enough accommodation within the borough to meet local need. This means that before 2010/11 we did not place

people into accommodation outside Hillingdon.

- In recent years the supply of affordable private sector and temporary accommodation has reduced and so there has been a need for LB Hillingdon to look outside of the borough for accommodation for our homeless families.
- During 2011/12, Hillingdon placed 60 households out of borough. 75% (45 households) of these were short term placements in B&B and 25% (15 households) were placed in private sector tenancies in other boroughs.
- The L.B. Hillingdon housing register has 1142 (11.62%) out of borough applicants. The numbers and percentages of out of borough applicants to the housing register has grown steadily over the past three years from 750 (10.03%) in April 2010 to 1142 (11.62%) in April 2012. The majority (1098) of out of borough applicants have no priority need for social housing (Band D).

Net Migration:

- Households approaching Hillingdon to join the housing register from outside the borough who do not have a local connection here are usually awarded the lowest priority band (band D). This means that they have very little likelihood of being offered a property through choice based lettings.
- The net migration into private sector accommodation during 2011/12 was 19 households – a sum of 34 households placed into Hillingdon by other boroughs and 15 households placed into other boroughs by Hillingdon.
- It is expected that the forthcoming changes in welfare benefits - the application of a universal credit cap and the LHA cap will increase the number of households migrating from one borough to another.
- As a result of this increase it is expected that Hillingdon will expand its use of private sector accommodation outside the borough.

3) Welfare reform & Recession impacts:

Household size:

- The changes to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and new and proposed caps on benefits will affect large families (those with a 4-bed need and greater) and single person households the most.
- From a demand side, single person households represent almost 50% of approaches for housing assistance. Whilst large families comprise only 5.8% of overall demand, the number of these households has increased in recent years.
- It is known that changes to LHA rental payments will/have most heavily impacted large households (5 bed +). LHA rent payments for these households have declined some 27.5%, within the last 2 years while private sector rentals for 4 bed + properties over the same period have increased at an annual rate of 10.3%.

4) The bigger picture:

Housing tenure:

- Demand for social housing has been increasing since 2007/8, this is in line with increases in the number of households renting (private sector)

Population flows:

- In the 2011 London Councils report "Does the cap fit" the authors concluded: "Significant migration between London boroughs and, in particular, significant net migration to more affordable areas within the capital may have significant impacts on the households themselves and on the provision of local services and on the wider community."
- Pre LHA caps and changes to welfare benefits inner London to outer London migration was at a ratio of 1.5/1.0. This is more likely to increase with the introduction of universal caps and LHA caps.
- It is expected that the migration from inner to outer London and other parts of the country will gather pace, although there is no evidence of this happening as yet.
- As the Westminster Council Housing Options Service state to clients visiting their website for renting advice "Remember - the cost of living in Central London is outside most budgets. You should be flexible and consider accommodation in the outer parts of London, which is often cheaper."

Chief Education Officer

The Chief Education officer provided her views on population flows as experienced from the perspective of class numbers.

During the course of discussions the following points were noted:

- The Local Authority holds the statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all children and young people. This is irrespective of whether the school is maintained by the LA, a Foundation or Voluntary Aided School or Academy / Free School.
- The January census for 2012 shows an approximate 700 child increase in Hillingdon schools when compared to the 2011 census.
- The annual forecast - an analysis of the number of places required in future years - is published in July and contains an analysis of the following factors:
- Birth rates, ONS/GLA information, local housing developments and any other local factors that may impact on the numbers of children requiring education in Hillingdon. The demography demonstrates that the south of the Borough requires more additional places than the north.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pressure for places is also having an impact on places in Special Schools and Specialist Resource Provision for those children with Special Educational Needs. • At present, based on monitoring of applications since September 2011, reasons for new (in-year) applications are split into three key areas, they are pupils arriving from another country, pupil mobility within LBH and pupils moving from other parts of London and further afield. • There have been over 2500 in year applications across all year groups during this academic year. <p>Resolved –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the information be noted 2. That Officers be requested to provide a short summary report to the 19 June 2012 meeting detailing the progress made on the population flows review to date 3. That ‘Population Flows in Hillingdon’ be included as an option for the Committee to consider as a possible review topic for 2012/13. 	
23.	<p>FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>The Head of Commissioning introduced a briefing note on Cabinet Item Cabinet Item 668 - <i>Contract Award: Framework Agreement for support planning and brokerage</i> which had been circulated outside the meeting.</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <p>That the report be noted</p>	
24.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>This is a standard item.</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <p>That the timetable of meetings and proposed work programme for 2011/12 be noted</p>	
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.00 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Charles Francis on 01895 556454. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.