

# Review of Homelessness and the Customer Journey: Witness Session 1

<b>Committee name</b>	Residents' Services Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Melissa Blower, Housing Project Manager
<b>Papers with report</b>	Updated Scoping Report

## HEADLINES

This item will encompass the first witness session regarding the Committee's review into Homelessness and the Customer Journey in Hillingdon.

## RECOMMENDATION:

**That the Residents' Services Select Committee notes the evidence heard at the witness session and seeks clarification as necessary in the context of its review of Homelessness and the Customer Journey in Hillingdon.**

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

At its meeting on 16 January 2024, the Residents' Services Select Committee agreed to undertake a major review of the Council's Housing Advice and Homelessness Service, with a particular focus on the residents' journey through the system and customer service. The scoping report for the review was subsequently approved at the Select Committee meeting on 13 February 2024.

At this first witness session, key officers representing the Housing Team, namely Dan Kennedy (Corporate Director of Central Services), Maggie Nelson (Head of Housing Needs) and Melissa Blower (Housing Improvement Programme Manager) will be in attendance to briefly outline their roles and answer any questions that may arise.

Dan Kennedy (Corporate Director of Central Services) is responsible for Planning & Regeneration, Health & Safety, Legal Services, Human Resources, Business Administration, Democratic Services, Corporate Communications, Health & Strategic Partnerships, in addition to Housing.

Maggie Nelson (Head of Housing Needs) has responsibility for the leadership and management of the Homeless Prevention, Housing Advice and statutory homeless functions together with the Housing Allocations Service delivering creative and innovative solutions to resolve housing issues for residents with a housing need.

Melissa Blower (Housing Improvement Programme Manager) is responsible for project management and change management within Housing to support the delivery of business plans, transformational work streams and service efficiencies.

## **Terms of Reference**

The following Terms of Reference were noted for this review, subject to any changes agreed by the Committee:

1. To gain a thorough understanding of the Council's Homeless Prevention Service and the resident's journey through this process.
2. To scrutinise the service delivery and review its effectiveness.
3. To review service users' feedback to explore the challenges faced by residents accessing the service.
4. To look at other local authorities that may have different models of service delivery for best practice, including research and findings from charities, housing bodies, regional bodies and organisations, e.g. GLA.
5. Subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose practical and deliverable actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

## **How this report benefits Hillingdon residents**

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations from the Committees are presented to Cabinet to consider, and ultimately seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

## **Financial Implications**

None at this stage.

## **Legal Implications**

None at this stage.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.