

# WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

## STATEMENT OF DECISION

### SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS POLICIES

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

#### Summary of Decision

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development approved:

- The Private Rented Sector Offers Policy for Homeless Households (Appendix 2 of the report), to be adopted and implemented from 30th January 2017 and that it can apply to any household where the law allows and is not exempt from the policy.
- The Accommodation Procurement Policy for Homeless Households (Appendix 3), to be adopted and replace the Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy 2013 from 30th January 2017.
- The Accommodation Placement Policy for Homeless Households (Appendix 4), to be adopted and implemented from 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and that it will apply to all private rented offers, and offers of temporary accommodation, that are made from this date.
- The Accommodation Placement Policy for Homeless Households (Appendix 4), to be adopted to replace section 15.2 (15.2.1 – 15.2.10) of the Housing Allocation Scheme (March 2016) from 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017, with regards to the offers of temporary accommodation.

#### Reasons for Decision

1. These policies are required to ensure availability of enough affordable, suitable private sector accommodation to allow the council to meet its homelessness duties at a cost it can sustain against the background of:
  - An increasingly difficult market, marked by rapid increases in rent costs
  - The likelihood of increased numbers of households accepted as being homelessness
  - Changes to national policy and legislation likely - in the short term at least – to constrain the supply of social rented housing, and
  - A shift in emphasis in homelessness policy towards use of resources to prevention.

2. They are also intended to provide more prompt, certain, affordable and sustainable outcomes for households and will be accompanied by a programme of support services for those involved.
3. The Private Rented Offers Policy is needed as a response to the continuing high levels of homeless acceptances in Westminster and the associated need for temporary accommodation, which currently costs the council £4.3m annually.
4. The Accommodation Procurement Policy is needed to respond to difficulties in procuring sufficient volumes of affordable private accommodation to meet demand.
5. The Accommodation Placement Policy is needed because the future supply of private rented properties, both for private rented offers and for temporary accommodation, in Westminster and London, is likely to be limited – and that there is likely to be an increase in cost.

**Charlie Parker, Chief Executive,  
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**Publication Date:** 13 January 2017

**Implementation Date:** 20 January 2017, 5pm

**Reference:** CMfHRBED/2016-2017/17