

Cabinet Supplementary

- Scrutiny Recommendations and Exec Response from 8th and 9th July 2024 Scrutiny Meetings



6. **Scrutiny Stage 2: Responses to Recommendations** (Pages 3 - 16)

- **Attached Appendix 2: Recommendations and Drafted Executive Response:** Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy at Homes Sub-Committee on 16th April 2024
- **Attached Appendix 3a/b: Recommendations and Drafted Executive Response:** Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Housing Resident Engagement Strategy at Homes Sub-Committee, both 9th July 2024.
- **NEW Additional Appendix - Recommendations and Drafted Executive Response - Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools** Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 8 July 2024

7. **Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools** (Pages 17 - 20)

Repeat as above, appendix published under agenda item.

10. Council Housing Asset Management Strategy 2024/29 (Pages 21 - 22)

Repeat as above, appendix published under agenda item.

11. Housing Resident Engagement Strategy for Croydon 2024-29 (Pages 23 - 26)

Repeat as above, appendix published under agenda item.

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Item: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 16 April 2024

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
Pages 17.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that a review of the new housing homelessness service structure is conducted to provide reassurance that it is meeting its intended outcomes and where these are not being achieved, that an action plan is developed to address these failings as a priority.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Completed</p> <p>The Housing Needs and Homelessness Service completed a formal review of the service structure in May 2024 and concluded that the new structure is agile, and the additional resources have been put in the right places to ensure the service fully complies with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</p> <p>To support staff, establish working standards and strengthen the 'one team' culture, a training programme is being delivered to ensure all staff working directly with people experiencing homelessness have the right skills. This is complemented by regular staff engagement events, held to bring the service together to collaborate, share successes and learn from each other. This will be monitored through all the priorities of the Strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Completed	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.18.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that prevention workstreams within the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are fast-tracked wherever possible, including hospital engagement.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>Some key homelessness prevention initiatives have already started which will be built on. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deployment of a dedicated caseworker in local hospitals to support homeless residents following discharge. 	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of	N/A	March 2026	TBC

Pages 17.23/24

Agenda Item 6

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are working with the Voluntary Sector to find alternative accommodation with asylum seekers given positive decisions who have been asked to leave Home Office hotels or accommodation. A staff member is co-located within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to facilitate & promote joint working between Housing and Children's Social Services. These changes will be monitored through Priorities 1,2 & 6 of the Strategy. 	Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation			
Page 4 HS.19.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council identifies high performing local authorities and engages with them to learn from best practice on how to build more effective working relations with private sector landlords to maintain tenancies where possible.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>The Housing Needs and Homeless Service meets on a monthly basis with Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Advisors who draw on best practice from other local authorities and provide support to improve service delivery. They are encouraged by the approach to service improvement being taken.</p> <p>The Council is also an active participant in Pan London Housing Directors, Housing Needs and Temporary Accommodation groups. Sub-regionally the Service participates in local professional forums between local boroughs. This will be monitored through all the priorities of the strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Already Implemented	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.20.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council introduces a gas, electrical and EPC document check for private sector tenants claiming housing benefits.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Rejected</p> <p>The Council is not lawfully allowed to check these documents but will review and implement enhanced ways of working with private tenants in the borough with a view to</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	N/A	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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			raising awareness so that tenants know their rights and the options available to them if their landlord acts unlawfully towards them. This will be monitored through Priorities 1,2 & 6 of the strategy.				
HS.21.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council establishes a designated point of contact for the charity and voluntary sector for all housing and homelessness-related matters.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>The Service is committed to working with the charity and voluntary sector organisations. As stated in 4.10.12, active engagement with organisations has started and it is intended to establish a 'Homelessness Prevention Partnership Board' to formalise the framework for constructive engagement with key partners including the charity and voluntary sector to deliver the objectives set out in the strategy. This will be monitored through Priority 6 of the strategy.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	To be agreed with Partners Oct/Dec 2024	TBC
HS.22.23/24	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Council takes a more proactive role to facilitating good practice amongst housing associations providing accommodation in the borough e.g. on nomination rights and organising estate walkabouts with tenants and local Councillors.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>The Housing Directorate has already re-established senior level meetings with all housing associations that work in the borough with a view to share good practice and enhance working relationships. This is a requirement of the new Consumer Standards published as part of the new social housing regulations. The Directorate will be monitored on this partnership work by the Social Housing Regulator.</p>	Beatrice Cingtho-Taylor, Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Accommodation	N/A	Completed	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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Item: Council Housing Asset Management Strategy 2024-29

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 9 July 2024

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HS.1.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends clarifying before consideration by full Council, how the Asset Management Strategy interlinks with the HRA Business Plan and what mechanisms will be used to inform decision making e.g. the use of options appraisals.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	Already in Progress The strategic asset management function that underpins the asset management strategy will make full use of tools such as options appraisals and appropriate valuation approaches to both align with and inform the HRA business plan. This linkage will further be strengthened by scenario modelling around required investment in the current stock	Sue Hanlon, Director of Estates and Improvement	This approach will inform future financial analysis to support transparent and accurate decision making	There are a series of steps that are being taken between now and September 2025 including: a new structure, new software and better data.	TBC
HS.2.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that, before it is considered by full Council, that it is acknowledged within the Asset Management Strategy that changes to culture and ways of working are instrumental to the successful delivery of the strategy's objectives.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	Accepted This is agreed entirely and is reflected in the document that will go to full Council. The success of the strategy is fully dependent on the cultural change initiatives and new ways of working that are currently being rolled out within the wider team	Sue Hanlon, Director of Estates and Improvement	No	Strategy document that goes to full Council in July 2024 will reflect this	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.3.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends, before consideration by full Council, how satisfaction survey data is presented in the Asset Management Strategy is clarified, particularly in relation to the number of residents participating in the	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	Accepted Agreed, this will be clarified in the document that is presented to full Council	Sue Hanlon, Director of Estates and Improvement	No	Strategy document that goes to full Council in July 2024 will reflect this	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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	survey and how the participants were selected.						

Item: Housing Residents Engagement Strategy for Croydon 2024-29

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 9 July 2024

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 9</p> <p>HS.4.24/25</p>	<p>The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy be updated ahead of consideration by Full Council to include more information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how barriers to engagement will be proactively identified and • how engagement activities will be tailored to accommodate the diverse needs of Croydon’s population. • how engagement work can be proactively targeted to specific harder to reach groups. 	<p>Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>We will continue to identify and address barriers to engagement, by continually analysing and reviewing residents who are involved and/or whose experiences we use to design the service. This will allow us to target those who are not represented or not as involved, understand the reasons why and make changes on the methods we use to engage. In doing so we will strive to remove all barriers to involvement, supporting marginalised and under-represented residents whenever possible.</p> <p>This will assist in allowing us to develop a range of ways to engage residents so that we have a wide representation from all sections of the community, maintaining a strong focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure that all residents voices can be heard. For example, we have recently begun to ensure that roadshows also take place in sheltered blocks to include more elderly and vulnerable residents, who are more confident in their own space.</p>	<p>Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>September 2024 but continually under review for improvement</p>	<p>TBC</p>

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HS.5.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy place greater emphasis on improving the data gathered on protected characteristics and equality.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in Progress</p> <p>The Council will continue to collect data on all protected characteristics. In addition to using current means such as roadshows and door knocking exercises, the Council will increase its use of its tenancy audit process to ensure that all tenants are visited in the period from August 2023 – August 2026, to facilitate increased data being captured. The Council will also continue to collect this data at the point of sign up and utilise our Repairs Contact Centre to enhance the capture and update of data. This data will be subject to continual review to decision making and thus improve services.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	April 2025	TBC
HS.6.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy is updated ahead of full council to include more specific examples of the types of engagement activities that the Council is planning to deliver.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in Progress</p> <p>The current range of resident engagement activity includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door knocking exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themed roadshows • Task and Finish Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers Groups • Estate Walkabouts • Service Improvement Panels <p>The impact of events will be reviewed to ensure we increase the voice of our resident. There will be an ongoing focus on developing events, which improve accessibility and provide flexible opportunities for involvement,</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	Completed but under continual review.	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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			<p>thereby encouraging greater diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>We will also incorporate the following principles and methods to maximise engagement:</p> <p>Where appropriate, we will ensure consultation events and activities are fun, have child related activities, are accessible to all groups, and provide transportation and interpreter facilities when required.</p> <p>Where barriers to using digital technology exist, using our Digital Champions to support residents to become involved digitally.</p> <p>We will also seek to increase the number of involved young people, ensuring resident involvement is inclusive of young people, and that they are engaged and become future resident leaders.</p> <p>Being socially inclusive. For many residents face to face social interaction is an important part of involvement. We recognise that we must not lose this as a motivation for involving residents who are socially isolated or lonely, particularly in a more digital world.</p> <p>We will regularly review the way, we engage and involve residents to ensure it continues to be dynamic, effective, and representative.</p> <p>Finally, we will develop a strong culture of involvement and driving business improvement by applying for and achieving</p>				

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			the TPAS Engagement Accreditation in year 3 of the strategy (April 2027)				
Page 12 S.7.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy stress the importance of not trying an initiative such as door knocking once as repeating certain actions helps build trust over time which can lead in turn to positive engagement.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>Trust is a key requirement to both initial engagement with residents and for those residents to be willing to further engage with the Housing Service, willingly giving their views and experience to enable the services ability to improve.</p> <p>We will build into engagement activities with residents 'You said, we did' feedback so that residents can see that their views are being heard and acted upon.</p> <p>We will enhance trust by going back to resident groups when initial efforts were poorly attended.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	Completed but under continual review.	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.8.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that a system of recording both informal feedback and views on resident experience with housing (sub)contractors is developed.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Accepted</p> <p>This is a helpful idea, and we will discuss with residents and contractors the best way to implement this recommendation.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	To be agreed with Partners Oct/Dec 2024	TBC

NEW Supplementary Appendix

Item: Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 8 July 2024

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SOC.35.23/24	Considering that the Crosfield and Selhurst nurseries have submitted a model that, if implemented, would restore them to a budget surplus in 2024/25, and they have expressed their preference not to join a soft federation, the Committee recommends granting them a 12-month period to execute their plan, before deciding on moving to the soft federation model. Progress on implementation should be reviewed at regular intervals to check sufficient progress was being made. *	Councillor Maria Gatland Children & Young People	REJECTED The concerns over the funding of Maintained Nursery Schools have been evidenced over a number of years and it is important that we take a robust approach to ensure the sustainability of this valued early years provision. The outcome of the review and the recommendations are positive, we have listened to families, through the informal consultation, engaged with the MNS and the recommendations will ensure that we retain all 5 MNS. The outcome of the review also reflects the work done by the MNS to improve the deficit position. Continuing the nurseries' work alongside the recommended model will bring the pace needed to reduce the financial instability in some of the settings as quickly as possible.	Shelley Davies, Director of Education	N/A	N/A	TBC

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			We cannot and should not wait another 12 months to take robust action. This could lead to a position where closure has to be reinstated as an option to tackle the financial deficit.				
SOC.36.23/24	Although it was acknowledged that council officers had offered the opportunity to have individual meetings with the maintained nursery schools, further steps needed to be taken to make this clearer in future engagement, as feedback from the maintained nursery schools indicated they would have appreciated more opportunities to discuss their unique circumstances individually.	Councillor Maria Gatland Children & Young People	REJECTED Officers met with each of the MNS individually at the start of the review process and during the informal consultation. The MNS were also offered additional meetings.	Shelley Davies, Director of Education	N/A	N/A	TBC

** This recommendation was passed following a vote of the Committee. 3 voted in favour and 3 against, with the Chair using her casting vote in favour.*

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NEW Supplementary Appendix

Item: Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 8 July 2024

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** This recommendation was passed following a vote of the Committee. 3 voted in favour and 3 against, with the Chair using her casting vote in favour.*

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Item: Council Housing Asset Management Strategy 2024-29

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 9 July 2024

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HS.2.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that, before it is considered by full Council, that it is acknowledged within the Asset Management Strategy that changes to culture and ways of working are instrumental to the successful delivery of the strategy's objectives.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	Accepted This is agreed entirely and is reflected in the document that will go to full Council. The success of the strategy is fully dependent on the cultural change initiatives and new ways of working that are currently being rolled out within the wider team	Sue Hanlon, Director of Estates and Improvement	No	Strategy document that goes to full Council in July 2024 will reflect this	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.3.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends, before consideration by full Council, how satisfaction survey data is presented in the Asset Management Strategy is clarified, particularly in relation to the number of residents participating in the	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	Accepted Agreed, this will be clarified in the document that is presented to full Council	Sue Hanlon, Director of Estates and Improvement	No	Strategy document that goes to full Council in July 2024 will reflect this	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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	survey and how the participants were selected.						

Item: Housing Residents Engagement Strategy for Croydon 2024-29

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 9 July 2024

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<p>Page 23</p> <p>HS.4.24/25</p>	<p>The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy be updated ahead of consideration by Full Council to include more information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how barriers to engagement will be proactively identified and • how engagement activities will be tailored to accommodate the diverse needs of Croydon’s population. • how engagement work can be proactively targeted to specific harder to reach groups. 	<p>Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes</p>	<p>Already in Progress</p> <p>We will continue to identify and address barriers to engagement, by continually analysing and reviewing residents who are involved and/or whose experiences we use to design the service. This will allow us to target those who are not represented or not as involved, understand the reasons why and make changes on the methods we use to engage. In doing so we will strive to remove all barriers to involvement, supporting marginalised and under-represented residents whenever possible.</p> <p>This will assist in allowing us to develop a range of ways to engage residents so that we have a wide representation from all sections of the community, maintaining a strong focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure that all residents voices can be heard. For example, we have recently begun to ensure that roadshows also take place in sheltered blocks to include more elderly and vulnerable residents, who are more confident in their own space.</p>	<p>Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>September 2024 but continually under review for improvement</p>	<p>TBC</p>

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HS.5.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy place greater emphasis on improving the data gathered on protected characteristics and equality.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in Progress</p> <p>The Council will continue to collect data on all protected characteristics. In addition to using current means such as roadshows and door knocking exercises, the Council will increase its use of its tenancy audit process to ensure that all tenants are visited in the period from August 2023 – August 2026, to facilitate increased data being captured. The Council will also continue to collect this data at the point of sign up and utilise our Repairs Contact Centre to enhance the capture and update of data. This data will be subject to continual review to decision making and thus improve services.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	April 2025	TBC
HS.6.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy is updated ahead of full council to include more specific examples of the types of engagement activities that the Council is planning to deliver.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p>Already in Progress</p> <p>The current range of resident engagement activity includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door knocking exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themed roadshows • Task and Finish Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers Groups • Estate Walkabouts • Service Improvement Panels <p>The impact of events will be reviewed to ensure we increase the voice of our resident. There will be an ongoing focus on developing events, which improve accessibility and provide flexible opportunities for involvement,</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	Completed but under continual review.	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024

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			<p>thereby encouraging greater diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>We will also incorporate the following principles and methods to maximise engagement:</p> <p>Where appropriate, we will ensure consultation events and activities are fun, have child related activities, are accessible to all groups, and provide transportation and interpreter facilities when required.</p> <p>Where barriers to using digital technology exist, using our Digital Champions to support residents to become involved digitally.</p> <p>We will also seek to increase the number of involved young people, ensuring resident involvement is inclusive of young people, and that they are engaged and become future resident leaders.</p> <p>Being socially inclusive. For many residents face to face social interaction is an important part of involvement. We recognise that we must not lose this as a motivation for involving residents who are socially isolated or lonely, particularly in a more digital world.</p> <p>We will regularly review the way, we engage and involve residents to ensure it continues to be dynamic, effective, and representative.</p> <p>Finally, we will develop a strong culture of involvement and driving business improvement by applying for and achieving</p>				

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			the TPAS Engagement Accreditation in year 3 of the strategy (April 2027)				
Page 26 S.7.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy stress the importance of not trying an initiative such as door knocking once as repeating certain actions helps build trust over time which can lead in turn to positive engagement.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Already in Progress</p> <p>Trust is a key requirement to both initial engagement with residents and for those residents to be willing to further engage with the Housing Service, willingly giving their views and experience to enable the services ability to improve.</p> <p>We will build into engagement activities with residents 'You said, we did' feedback so that residents can see that their views are being heard and acted upon.</p> <p>We will enhance trust by going back to resident groups when initial efforts were poorly attended.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	Completed but under continual review.	Homes Sub-Committee 11 September 2024
HS.8.24/25	The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that a system of recording both informal feedback and views on resident experience with housing (sub)contractors is developed.	Councillor Lynne Hale, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes	<p style="text-align: center;">Accepted</p> <p>This is a helpful idea, and we will discuss with residents and contractors the best way to implement this recommendation.</p>	Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management	N/A	To be agreed with Partners Oct/Dec 2024	TBC