

## **Committee: Cabinet**

**Date: 19 June 2023**

Wards: All

### **Subject: Reference from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Homelessness in Merton**

Lead officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Stuart Neaverson, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer, 0208 545 4035

#### **Recommendations:**

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1. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel requests that Cabinet respond to its reference set out in paragraph 2.6 to 2.7 below.
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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. During the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, members received a presentation on homelessness prevention. The Head of Housing Strategy and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Sustainable Development responded to questions and provided further detail where needed.

## **2 DETAILS**

### **2.1. Scrutiny process**

- 2.2. The Head of Housing Strategy gave an overview of the work being undertaken to reduce homelessness in the borough.
- 2.3. The Panel were concerned about the rise in people seeking temporary accommodation and welcomed attempts to increase availability of housing.

### **2.4. Scrutiny response**

- 2.5. The Panel RESOLVED (all ten members voted in favour) to send the following recommendations to Cabinet
- 2.6. This panel recommends supporting the council's plans to increase the amount of temporary accommodation through schemes such as the Empty Houses scheme which is coming forward.
- 2.7. The Panel recommends that the council do everything within its power to house people in Merton as a top priority and as close as possible to the borough. Also, to increase the procurement of accommodation through empty homes and Capital Letters.

**3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. None – Cabinet is required under the council’s constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny.

**4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

**5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

**6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Cabinet is required under the council’s constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires Cabinet to respond to reports and recommendations made by scrutiny committees within two months of written notice being given.

**7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. There are no human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications as a result of this report.

**8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. These are no crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

**9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. There are no risk management and health and safety implications as a result of this report.

**10 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- None

**11 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None