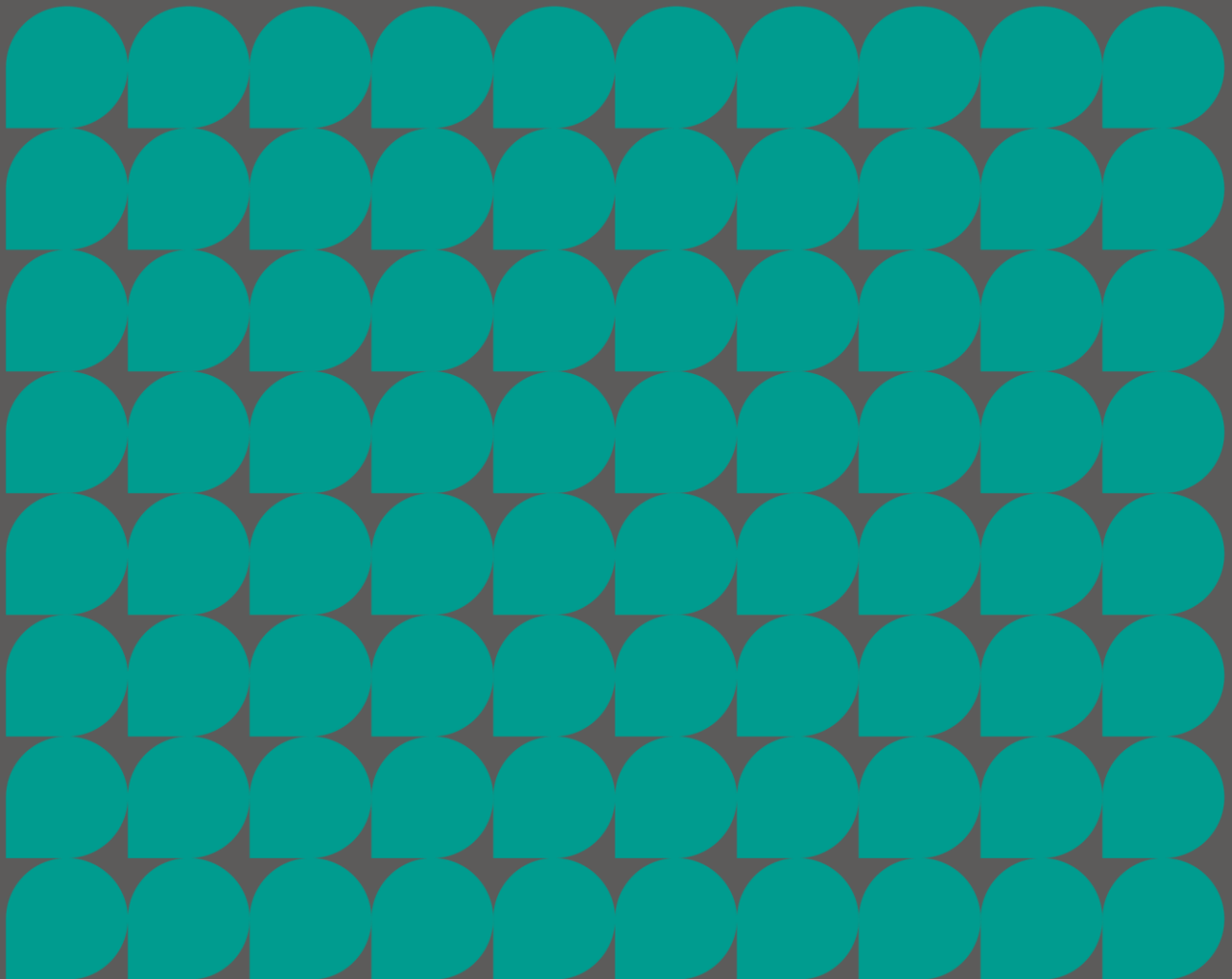


Cross Borough Homelessness Placements

Pan Greater Manchester Out of Borough Placement
Protocol

September 2024



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2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Placing borough:** the borough which acquires temporary or other homelessness related accommodation for a homeless household in another borough in Greater Manchester (GM)
- 2.2 **Host borough:** the borough in which the temporary or other homelessness related accommodation is located in which the homeless household is placed
- 2.3 **Homeless household:** a household, couple or individual person who applies to one of the 10 GM Local Authorities for assistance, either as homeless or threatened with homelessness under Pt VII Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) and is placed temporarily or in alternative accommodation as a discharge of function
- 2.4 **Temporary accommodation placement:** any placement in a unit of temporary accommodation, either made under s.188, s.193 Pt VII Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017), or on a discretionary basis where the duty to accommodate does not exist, or no longer exists. This would also include households with no recourse to public funds and others not placed as part of a statutory housing duty or power
- 2.5 **Other Homelessness Related Accommodation Placement:** any placement made pursuant with a homelessness function including the securing of accommodation on other than a temporary basis in order to discharge duty under the Act and all preventative placements and informal placements made outside the Act. This may include any accommodation used to end any homeless duty; prevention, relief or the main duty, by virtue of their occupation of any accommodation, such accommodation will not be regarded as temporary.

- 2.6 **Temporary accommodation:** is housing such as hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation, hotels, refuges and self-contained accommodation occupied under licence that is used to accommodate a household who is homeless.
- 2.7 **The Act:** Part VII Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
- 2.8 **GM:** Greater Manchester
- 2.9 **GM Local Authority/ties:** All Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan)
- 2.10 **OOB Placements:** Out of Borough Placements

3. Introduction

- 3.1 This agreement covers the use of temporary accommodation throughout Greater Manchester (GM), specifically the placements of homeless households made by any of the Homelessness and Housing Options services within each of the 10 GM local authorities.
- 3.2 This agreement also extends to other placements of homeless households in the discharge of duties, as a preventative intervention or other homeless household placement within or without The Act by GM Local Authorities.
- 3.3 The agreement is for use between the GM Local Authority Homelessness Services and also the Housing Provider organisations who are contracted to provide the homelessness functions on their behalf.
- 3.4 The agreement applies whenever the placing borough secures accommodation for a homeless household within GM which is outside of the boundaries of their own local authority.
- 3.5 The agreement refers to all forms of accommodation used to fulfil any homelessness functions including Bed & Breakfast, hostel, supported housing unit, leased accommodation, refuges and other rented accommodation.

4. Aims of the Agreement

- 4.1 Local Authorities are experiencing immense pressures as the demand for Homelessness Services to provide accommodation has significantly increased. In the latest available data, Greater Manchester saw record levels of Temporary Accommodation placements, with 5,649 households and 7,679 children in TA (Jan-March 2024).
- 4.2 In alleviating these extreme, sustained pressures and meeting their statutory duties, Local Authorities are required to source accommodation at extremely short notice and at unpredictable volumes, which can mean placing people beyond Borough boundaries. Indeed, 85% of local authorities nationally placed at least one household outside of their area between January and March 2024.
- 4.3 Consequently, there is no prohibition on the use of out of area temporary accommodation placements and this agreement does not seek to achieve that.
- 4.4 There is also significant variability in the quality and suitability of Temporary Accommodation placements of various types and the least desirable placement types are Bed and Breakfast placements. A principal focus of this protocol is to support a reduction in bed and breakfast placements for families, with dependent children, as this provision for placements can never be suitable, can only be used in exceptional circumstances and then for no longer than 6 weeks.
- 4.5 Whilst the aim of the protocol is to minimise placements out of borough, equally, given the challenges faced by all GM Local Authorities, this agreement does not proscribe a maximum time-limit on an out of area temporary accommodation placement.
- 4.6 This agreement aims to enhance coordination of OOB Placements for households across Greater Manchester, focussing on six key objectives:
- 4.7 **i) Ensure suitable notification of placements of individual families in need**

4.7.1 To ensure that information is shared between the placing and host boroughs each time a temporary accommodation and other homelessness related placement is made, and to develop open and transparent information sharing between Officers in different authorities concerning homeless households in GM. This includes ongoing communication with any GM authority area within which any Council are operating or are seeking to operate regarding placements and planned placements (to the end of securing temporary and other accommodation placements related to homelessness).

4.8 ii) Address the shortage of accommodation in certain geographical areas in an appropriate manner

4.8.1 To ensure that particular neighbourhoods are not disproportionately impacted due to high numbers of short term, temporary placements or other placements of households and that the placing borough are aware of any community cohesion issues or service demand issues which may impact on the suitability of any property proposed to be used.

4.8.2 To ensure that any interventions in the local housing market by one borough in another borough does not adversely impact the receiving area's ability to meet needs locally.

4.9 iii) Prevent price inflation and promote fair market practises across the Greater Manchester region

4.9.1 In order to minimise the number and lengths of OOB placements, an LA should take reasonable steps, in accordance with its Temporary Accommodation Policy and the code of guidance, to source TA within its district.

4.10 iv) Foster improved communication amongst GM Local Authorities and Landlords for existing and planned placements

4.10.1 To support the monitoring of movement of homeless households within GM.

4.10.2 To improve communication between the local authority homelessness services in GM, and to enhance information sharing procedures and safeguarding commitments.

4.10.3 To ensure that all OOB placements are fully supported within other Boroughs to avoid the impact and increased demands on Local services but to also ensure the OOB placement household receives and has access to the required and appropriate support.

4.11 V) Enhance the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation

4.11.1 To ensure that homelessness households placed in temporary and other accommodation are safeguarded and that all relevant information is shared with the appropriate services.

4.11.2 To ensure that the accommodation where households are placed complies with relevant housing quality standards including health and safety, hygiene and fire legislation and regulations.

4.11.3 To ensure that accommodation provided meets relevant legal housing quality standards, including health and safety, hygiene and fire regulations. Moreover, aligning with Greater Manchester's Good Landlord Charter ('supporter' participation) and ensuring the level of support is suitable for all household members' needs.

4.11.4 To ensure the suitability of accommodation in line with the homelessness code of guidance and recognise that Bed and Breakfast placements for families (with dependent children) is unsuitable but permitted up to 6 weeks if no suitable alternative provision is available.

4.12 Vi) Improved consistency and practise

4.12.1 GM Local Authorities' temporary accommodation practices will be in line with the Homelessness Code of Guidance and additional guidance published by the Local Government Association. This ensures that all practices adhere to the latest standards and best practices recommended by national and local bodies.

5. Background

- 5.1 There are a number of Bed & Breakfast, hostels, supported housing units and leased accommodation schemes throughout GM that are used as temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- 5.2 Whilst in the majority of cases, each of the homeless services in GM is able to accommodate the households they assist within their own local authority area, increasing demands on homelessness services has meant that the use of out of borough placements has been escalating. Although it is recognised that some placements that are classed as out of area may improve a household's housing situation (e.g. where a household is at risk of violence in the home borough), or may still be close to the home borough, increasing numbers are being placed a long way from their last settled accommodation.
- 5.3 The increased use of low cost, low quality private sector accommodation in areas where there are already a disproportionate number of people on short term placements (e.g. due to asylum dispersal) is having a significant impact on these communities and causing increased, unpredictable demand for school places, health and social care services. Local services are not equipped to respond to the scale and pace of population change and concerns have been raised regarding the poor condition of some of the properties being used.
- 5.4 Councils have been criticised for not considering the full circumstances surrounding a homeless household when making the offer of temporary accommodation, and for not alerting the host borough authority when placing a homeless family there. Such concerns were highlighted in the case of *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* 2015.
- 5.5 There is a requirement under The Housing Act 1996 for the placing borough to give notice to the host borough (a section 208 notice) whenever a household is placed in temporary accommodation outside the local area is used:

“So far as reasonably practical, a local housing authority shall in discharging their housing functions under this part secure that accommodation is available for the occupation of the applicant in their district

If they secure that accommodation is available for the occupation of the applicant outside their district, they shall give notice to the local housing authority in whose district the accommodation is situated.”

- 5.6 The process of notifying the host borough about placements of temporary accommodation across boroughs lacks consistency and completeness, failing to adhere to and comprehensively share information as required under s.208.
- 5.7 The purpose of this agreement is to agree on a set of parameters for out of borough placements made to meet homelessness statutory duties not only in relation to temporary placements but also any placements that are secured in order to discharge homelessness functions.
- 5.8 Reconvening this protocol will ensure that in an event where it is necessary to place a household out of their locality area, this placement is coordinated between both the placing and host authority with full transparency to ensure there is continuation of support for the vulnerable household.
- 5.9 GM Local authorities shall negotiate and procure accommodation with landlords based on agreed-upon terms and inducements outlined in the protocol

6. Principles of the Agreement

6.1 The key principles that will inform the way cross borough temporary accommodation and other homelessness related placements will be undertaken and managed in GM are:

Principle 1: Commitment to Inform

6.2 All boroughs who place a household in relation to homelessness circumstances into accommodation in another borough will inform the host borough of the placement in all circumstances. This includes all placements made to discharge a duty under The Housing Act, including all temporary and discharge of homelessness functions.

6.3 The information to be shared with the host borough, as a minimum, will include each of the following;

- The placing borough
- The full name, date of birth and contact details for the applicant
- The number of people & ages of adults & children in the household
- The address and postcode of the temporary accommodation used
- The date on which the accommodation was made available
- Which function the housing authority is discharging in securing accommodation
- The tenure of the accommodation, e.g, lease, assured shorthold tenancy
- The name, contact telephone number and email address of the officer making the temporary accommodation placement
- The name, contact telephone number and email address of the accommodation officer or landlord at the temporary accommodation
- Details (including name and contact details of officers) for any other agencies (e.g. social services / probation / support agencies) who are working with the household
- Whether the household includes a child on the child protection register or a child in need
- Whether the household includes any vulnerable adults

- 6.4 There maybe a range of information a placing authority wishes to share, either through the S208 notice (appendix 2) or through another form to support the placement. (A more complete list suggested by the LGA can be found in appendix 1)
- 6.5 Where there is a placement of a vulnerable household, e.g someone subject to adult social care and/or families with children, subject to high level child concern/child protection, and others who may present with issues associated with risk, the placing authority must advise as to these vulnerabilities and detail of relevant agency involvement, including contact details. They should also inform those relevant agencies of the placement and request they undertake any appropriate disclosures to the receiving authority as necessary.
- 6.6 For an out of area placement made in a property for the first time, the placing authority will notify the host authority when a HHSRS inspection has been undertaken.
- 6.7 This information will be entered into a pro-forma (see appendix 2) and emailed to the host borough within 5 working days of the placement being made.
- 6.8 The placing borough will also notify the host borough, within 5 working days, the date that any placement ends and a household is no longer placed within that borough.
- 6.9 Each of the local authorities in GM will supply contact details (email address and telephone number) of the officer or team who will receive the notification of placement. (see appendix 3)
- 6.10 Generic team email addresses (eg:homelessdutyofficer@authorityname.gov.uk) and contact telephone numbers should also be used, to ensure that staff absence or change in personnel does not result in a notification not being picked up (see appendix 3).
- 6.11 The completed pro-forma will always be shared via a secure email address or other secure notification methods in order to ensure the safety of the personal data it contains.

- 6.12 Placing boroughs notify the host boroughs, within 5 working days, not only when a household is placed but also when they are returned to their own borough or if there are any changes in address.

Principle 2: Own Borough First

- 6.13 Each local authority in GM will aim to use accommodation within their own borough in the first instance, wherever reasonably practical.
- 6.14 Where suitable temporary accommodation cannot be found within their own borough, the cross-borough placement must be made as close to their own borough as reasonably possible. This does not mean an LA has to exhaustively consider all potential temporary accommodation options in LA areas that are closer to the placing LA.
- 6.15 The cross borough placement should be made with the intention of returning the household to their own borough as soon as reasonably practicable. The placing borough should notify the host borough when they place a household within accommodation and then notify again when they move them back to their own borough or there is another change of address.
- 6.16 Where possible local authorities using the same temporary accommodation providers should seek to work with them to facilitate the 'swapping' of provision to enable households to return back in borough at the earliest possible convenience and reduce the use of OOB placements.
- 6.17 Intent for Return – temporary accommodation placements made outside the borough should be with the explicit intention of returning the household to their own borough as soon as practicably possible and safe to do so.
- 6.18 All Local Authorities should aim to minimise the term of an out of area placement but the protocol does not express any maximum time-limit on an out of area temporary accommodation placement.

Principle 3: Safeguarding

- 6.19 Local authorities should avoid placing the particular vulnerable households in temporary or accommodation arrangements outside of their own borough

(where appropriate). When prioritising applicants for in area placements: work, education and support needs take priority.

- 6.20 If a vulnerable household is placed outside of an authority's own borough, the intention should be that this placement is made for the shortest time possible and that adequate support is provided and/or facilitated by the placing authority.
- 6.21 If a vulnerable household is placed outside of an authority's own borough, the intention should be that this placement is made for the shortest time possible/appropriate and that adequate support is provided and/or facilitated by the placing authority.
- 6.22 All support agencies and organisations who are working with the household shall be notified, to ensure continuity of support for the household and that all safeguarding and risk management requirements are met.
- 6.23 The safety and protection of vulnerable households remains paramount and all existing local safeguarding protocols and procedures will continue to be followed.
- 6.24 The named officer and team within the placing borough and/or host borough may also be required to pass on information about the accommodation placement to other agencies in certain circumstances, for example for the prevention and detection of crime and/or to manage potential risks to local community. The decision when to share such information, and who to share this with, shall be made at a local level within each individual borough.
- 6.25 Any placement and in particular longer term private rented / discharge of homeless functions placements should be avoided where there may be ongoing Children or Adult Safeguarding concerns (whether subject to current protection interventions or not) and / or where there are significant mental health or addiction treatment service implications. However, if such a placement is required where there are significant potential for safeguarding, mental health or treatment concerns, the primacy of Children Act or Care Act as well as mental health/treatment implications should prompt the placing authority to raise each case with the social care teams / services both within

their own authority and those of the receiving authority area in advance of any placement where ever possible or as soon as practicable thereafter where this is not possible in advance.

- 6.26 Service users' rights, preferences, and needs shall be respected and taken into consideration in placement decisions.
- 6.27 Fairness: All individuals and families in need of accommodation shall be treated equitably and without discrimination.
- 6.28 Where an authority places a household out of area and subsequently discharges functions, the placing authority, where necessary, will commit to making any social care referrals (be that Children Services or Adult Social Care) to the relevant team within their own authority.
- 6.29 It is noted that the Children Act and Care Act have differing approaches to local connection and residence. This protocol recognises that once a function has been discharged and the temporary accommodation has been withdrawn, that household will cease to be resident. The protocol suggests further work to be undertaken by Greater Manchester Directors of Children and Adult Services to agree processes for any Children Act or Care Act assistance that may be necessary after the discharge of functions for an OOB placement.

Principle 4: Information to Tenants

- 6.30 To support the transition to a new area, all local authorities should support households before, during and after their move. This should include providing the household with key information on their new area.
- 6.31 Households being placed out of area should be provided as a minimum with the following information:
 - Provision of a clear occupancy agreement, be it that a licence or tenancy agreement
 - Details of the accommodation that they are being offered, including how to report any repairs and who to contact if they have any difficulties

- Details of the support to be provided and who to contact if they have any difficulties
- Information about their new local area e.g. details regarding local authority services, health services or access to places of worship
- Information on local travel and transport, especially back to their home area

Principle 5: Collaboration

- 6.32 GM Local Authorities will collaborate to address any issues or challenges that arise from OOB Placements, ensuring that the needs and welfare of the households are prioritised.
- 6.33 Regular meetings or communications will be established between placing and host boroughs to discuss ongoing cases, share best practices and coordinate efforts to return households to their home boroughs where feasible.
- 6.34 Host boroughs will provide feedback within 5 working days to placing boroughs regarding any concerns or issues with the placements to facilitate prompt resolution and support for the households involved.
- 6.35 Boroughs will work collaboratively to develop and implement approaches/strategies to minimise the need for OOB Placements to enhance the availability of suitable accommodation within each borough.

Principle 6: Fair market practices

- 6.36 The placing borough should, as far as is practical, ensure that the rent paid on accommodation takes reasonable account of what the host borough could pay and is not at a level that is likely to encourage unduly the inflation of local rent levels and other associated charges. Nor should any disproportionate inducements be paid to landlords to secure accommodation in another borough. The amount of rent and other housing costs proposed to be charged, to the household who will be placed within the property, will be recorded on the form attached at appendix 4.

- 6.37 Where there is evidence that the rent and/or incentives being paid or proposed in respect of the placement(s) are higher than levels the host borough would pay or are able to pay and/or is in excess of amounts normally paid by the receiving borough for comparable accommodation, the placing borough commits to engaging with the receiving borough in order to reduce such rent and incentive levels in line with those normally paid locally.
- 6.38 Where there are existing arrangements on similarly higher rent / incentives than normally provided locally, the placing borough commits to reduce rent/ incentives through any periodic review between the placing borough and the provider landlord.
- 6.39 The placing borough also commits to avoid any concerns that current residents are being or may be displaced so that the landlords can achieve an increased payment for the accommodation.
- 6.40 Any discharge of functions placements are to be into accommodation that is affordable beyond any initial incentive, short-fall top up period and must not rely upon any assumed access to local Discretionary Housing Payments within the receiving area.
- 6.41 The points set out in paragraphs 6.36 to 6.40 do not represent a prohibition on any Local Authority from negotiating a financial package with an accommodation provider for a letting made in another area.
- 6.42 The intention of paragraphs 6.36 to 6.40 is to ensure that each Local Authority become more mindful of the impact on other Local Authorities of financial arrangements negotiated with accommodation providers and are committed to minimising disproportionate use of inducements and negative impacts upon receiving authority area.
- 6.43 Where an authority have ongoing placement arrangements with a provider / landlord for sequential placements into a property or portfolio of properties, the placing authority will undertake to inform the receiving area the levels of rents and other financial incentives paid for those properties.
- 6.44 GM Local Authorities commit to the development and agreement of pricing matrix which will set out agreed rent levels and incentives for all types of

provisions used for homelessness placements, including Private Rented Sector properties, Hostels, Bed & Breakfast and nightly paid provisions. The pricing matrix aims to promote consistency, fairness and transparency across all GM Local Authorities, preventing the inflation of rent levels and ensuring cost-effective use of public funds.

- 6.45 Temporary Accommodation is a national issue and Local Authorities from outside Greater Manchester also make placements within the region. The pricing matrix will be developed in consultation and collaboration with the Local Government Association and/or the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, in order to secure a wider national approach to pricing for OOB Placements.
- 6.46 The aim of the pricing matrix is to promote consistency, fairness and transparency across all GM Local Authorities, preventing the inflation of rent levels and ensuring cost-effective use of public funds.

The pricing matrix will be reviewed and updated as appropriate to reflect changes in the housing market and ensure it remains fair and effective. Feedback from all GM Local Authorities will be considered in these reviews to ensure the pricing matrix meets the collective needs of the Greater Manchester area.

Principle 7: Properties meet a good standard, aiming for alignment with GMCA's Good Landlord Charter

- 6.47 The Housing Act 2004 (section 4) requires that local authorities inspect residential properties for hazards in situations where it either believes hazards may exist or it is otherwise reasonable to do so. Properties which are being used to accommodate households will be free of category 1 hazards as defined by the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) at the time of the offer.
- 6.48 When an out of area placement is made in a property for the first time, the placing authority must make arrangements to ensure that the property is inspected by a competent council officer or an HHSRS qualified inspector independent of any managing agent involved in the booking of the property.

This should be within five working days of the placement being made. If agreed by both placing and receiving authorities, inspections could be carried out by the receiving authority. Where article 3 of the 2012 suitability order applies, the authority should have information in relation to the property before the placement is approved and, in such cases, it may be necessary for an inspection to be carried out before the placement. The requirement for an independent inspection does not apply where the household has found their own accommodation or has expressed a preference to move to a distant area and agreed in writing that they are happy to move to accommodation which has not been independently inspected.

- 6.49 Where properties are used for anything other than a short-term emergency basis, all authorities commit to ensuring the adequacy of that accommodation. Where an accommodation is used for an on-going basis, beyond anything other than a one-off short term individual placement, authorities will commit to ensuring standards are sufficient by undertaking a HHSRS inspection.
- 6.50 Where a short-term placement is extended to a period beyond 28 days the authority will commit to undertaking an HHSRS inspections, or utilise other mechanisms to ensure the property is of an adequate standard.
- 6.51 The placing borough should ensure that landlords of multi-occupied residential buildings have in place appropriate management and maintenance systems to ensure any fire safety equipment or equipment which may represent a fire hazard, is maintained in good working order, and in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. Landlords are also required to ensure that furniture and furnishings supplied must comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended).
- 6.52 All properties will be visited by an officer, from the placing borough who is appropriately qualified in assessing a property under the HHSRS to ensure that it is in a reasonable condition (does not have a CAT 1 Hazard and CAT 2 hazards are being adequately addressed) before any household is placed there and ensure through an annual inspection or other mechanisms to ensure that the property remains at a suitable standard. This should include

that the property is a 'safe and healthy environment' for any household placed there.

- 6.53 All properties must meet the required standard in relation to Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. Households will be given a copy of the current Gas Safety Certificate before they move in.
- 6.54 A copy of the energy performance certificate must also be provided to the household. All properties to have a minimum rating of E for all new tenancies from April 2018.
- 6.55 All properties will have a working smoke detector on each floor. This will be tested before a household moves into the property and the main applicant will be given instructions on testing these regularly. Carbon monoxide detectors will also be in place in properties where there is any gas appliance.
- 6.56 The placing borough will ensure that the landlords of any properties being proposed for use are 'fit and proper persons to act as landlords'. This will include:
- Enquiries being made to determine if any local authority housing enforcement action has been taken against the landlord
 - Enquiries being made to determine if the landlord has any criminal convictions which would deem them not to be a fit & proper person
- 6.57 While immediate needs are a priority, there is a long-term commitment by all GM Local Authorities to improving the quality of temporary accommodation, with a future aspiration to have all accommodation used for Homelessness Services in alignment with Greater Manchester's Good Landlord Charter ensuring a good standard of living for all households.

7. Property Use

- 7.1 In the case of *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* 2015 the Supreme Court reiterated the council's statutory duties under sections 206 and 208 Housing Act 1996, which state that local authorities must provide homeless applicants with suitable accommodation, which as far as reasonably practicable must be within their area. Failing this, authorities must try to place the household as close as possible to where they were previously living and to avoid serious disruption during the process. However it was clear that this doesn't preclude out of area placements where they are unavoidable. The Court also emphasised that authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare under s11(2) of the Children Act 2004, when making decisions regarding temporary accommodation placements. The judgment made it clear that this duty requires a proactive approach in determining suitability and made particular reference to access to school places and health services.
- 7.2 The case of *Adam v Westminster* (2018) further informs the position on out of area placements. The judgement made the following key points:
- A housing authority is entitled to take account of its own resources, the difficulty of procuring sufficient temporary accommodation and the practicalities of securing that it is local.
 - If there is in-borough accommodation, it does not follow that the authority must offer it to a particular applicant
 - The decision in an individual case may depend of the temporary accommodation policy adopted by a local housing authority which should set factors which will be considered in allocating accommodation, including that which in in-district and that which is out of area.
 - if a local housing authority has a lawful temporary accommodation policy, which it implements correctly, then its decision making on an individual case will be lawful

The judgment highlights the importance of accommodation suitability taking precedence over in-borough availability.

- 7.3 Where local authorities are seeking to procure private rented accommodation outside of their own borough with the intention that a property will be used on an ongoing basis as temporary accommodation they should have a discussion with the host borough and share all relevant information (see appendix 4) prior to procuring the property. This should include any accommodation secured under a leasing arrangement.
- 7.4 This information will be entered into a pro-forma (see appendix 4) and emailed to the host borough in advance of any property being procured. A telephone discussion between relevant service managers would also be useful where there are genuine concerns over:
- the quality of accommodation
 - the concentration of short term accommodation within a neighbourhood
 - the capacity of local health, education or other support services
 - risks to social cohesion/levels of ASB/crime within a neighbourhood
 - level of rent charged or inducements paid
- 7.5 These issues should form a significant part of the placing boroughs decision whether to proceed with the procurement of the property in question.
- 7.6 The host borough will respond within 14 working days as to whether or not a property is suitable for procurement. Where the host borough does not respond within this time period the placing borough may assume that there are no issues and proceed with procurement of the property. The host borough will maintain records of the addresses of properties being requested and will raise concerns regarding any impacts in relation to capacity issues due to large numbers of properties being requested within particular areas.
- 7.7 The need to source temporary accommodation in a timely way, and often on an emergency basis, means that the placing LA has the right to use the property offered pending the host LA responding in the 14 day period. The placing LA should have regard for the views of the host LA but ultimately the

legal duties associated with the securing of temporary accommodation under Part VII 1996 Housing Act are the responsibility of the placing LA'.

- 7.8 Further guidance is available on the Homelessness Code of Guidance & LGA's 2023 guidance.
- 7.9 Where accommodation has been sourced and placements made, where this subsequently gives rise to concerns as to the appropriateness of particular placements within any given locality, including for example, neighbour complaints and political objection the placing authority commits to proactively work with the receiving authority to mitigate concerns.

8. Support for Households placed outside of the Borough

- 8.1 Local authorities must have regard to the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty & where appropriate/required undertake an EIA assessment with particular regards to suitability and location of the accommodation.
- 8.2 Likewise, all households with particular needs should be taken into account as per statutory guidance.
- 8.3 Households who are in receipt of statutory services should be prioritised for being accommodated within their own local authority. Where this is not possible, they should be prioritised for a move back to their own borough as soon as a suitable property becomes available. Where households are in receipt of a statutory service the responsibility for providing that service will be retained by the placing local authority unless specific arrangements are made with the host borough.
- 8.4 The placing borough should ensure that ongoing support is provided to all households placed outside of their area. This should include regular home visits to ensure that the property in which they are placed is still suitable for the households needs and that any repairs have been identified and reported promptly. All households placed outside of their own local authority should be contacted on a minimum weekly basis, with property visits conducted on at least a monthly basis for the initial period of two months and subject to a further needs assessment frequency may be increased or reduced depending on needs. However, a minimum contact and property visit should be no less than three months.
- 8.5 The placing borough should ensure that any households, whose support needs escalate following the allocation of a property, or where their vulnerability or behaviour is having an impact on the neighbourhood, are prioritised for a move back into their home borough and in the interim period additional support is provided. The placing borough will notify the host

borough on a weekly basis of action taken to progress the move back into the home borough and confirm the additional support in place.

- 8.6 Where a placement breaks down – for example through loss or abandonment of the interim / temporary accommodation – the placing borough should ensure it continues to fulfil any ongoing legal duties in terms of rehousing and support.
- 8.7 The Secretary of State considers that applicants whose household has a need for social services support or a need to maintain links with other essential services within the borough, for example families with children who are subject to safeguarding arrangements, should be given particular attention when temporary accommodation is allocated, to try and ensure it is located in or close to the housing authorities own district. Careful consideration should be given to applicants with a mental illness or learning disability who may have a particular need to remain in a specific area, for example to maintain links with health service professionals and/or a reliance on existing informal support networks and community links. Such applicants may be less able than others to adapt to any disruption caused by being placed in accommodation in another district.

9. Monitoring movement throughout Greater Manchester

- 9.1 Monitoring of the cross-border placements in Greater Manchester shall be conducted on a case by case basis between the placing borough and the host borough as minimum & outlined in the statutory guidance.
- 9.2 All GM Boroughs commit to supporting the work on monitoring of out of OOB placements and discharge duties.
- 9.3 All GM Boroughs commit to providing the host borough with an updated property list of addresses that are being used on an on-going basis, including detail of rent and other charges paid for the accommodation (quarterly basis).
- 9.4 Any concerns regarding any aspects of the operation of this protocol including policy, process and individual placements will be dealt with between named Officers and escalated as appropriate to more Senior Officer within each local authority.
- 9.5 Any amendments, updates or issues with this overarching agreement shall be discussed and implemented through the GM Housing Needs Group.