

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 23 August 2021	Meeting Name: Individual Decision Making Cabinet Member for Council Housing and Homelessness
Report title:		Background paper: Case studies of households placed into temporary accommodation outside the borough of Southwark and private rented accommodation in the borough of Southwark.	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Electoral ward(s); All	
From:		Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	

Introduction

1. This paper demonstrates some examples of successful placements both inside and outside of the borough of Southwark and the support in place to help make sure the placements settle in well to their homes.
2. Examples have been pseudonymised and initials used do not represent their real names.
3. Housing Solutions will continue to monitor the impact of policy across its services and will provide regular feedback and analysis to Members and senior management through an annual temporary accommodation (TA) scrutiny report.

Case Study 1 – Household placed into private rented sector accommodation inside the borough of Southwark

4. LR approached as threatened with homelessness in mid-February 2021 when her family asked her to leave due to overcrowding at the property. She had a young child and was working part-time for the NHS.
5. She was given an initial assessment by the housing advice team in the same week. Mediation between her and her family was not successful and she was referred to the Homelessness Prevention Team in the first week of March 2021. Her full homelessness assessment was booked for the second week of April 2021.
6. The Prevention Officer referred her to several viewings which were unsuccessful. LR was only willing to live in Southwark. She viewed a 2 bedroom property in Southwark which was procured by the Supply Officer, who referred LR to the Resettlement team for an affordability assessment. The client moved in the new property in mid-April 2021 and was supported by the Resettlement Officer with advice for sustaining her tenancy and for income maximisation. She was also referred to Beam homelessness crowd-funding for training and employment.

7. LR was issued with a notification confirming her homelessness had been successfully prevented. LR sent a compliment to the housing Solutions team for preventing her homelessness and to express her happiness to find her a home:
8. *"I want to say the biggest thank you to Oxxxxxx and the entire team who worked hard on my case. They were really all supportive to me and my daughter, ready to help, very good....listener. And they made sure I got a good accommodation to stay for me and my daughter. I pray the Almighty God continue to bless each one of you. Thank you"*

Case Study 2 – Household placed into temporary accommodation outside of the borough of Southwark

9. JN is a woman with a three-year-old old son, who was made homeless from her family home due to relationship breakdown with her father.
10. JN has a heart condition and is suffering from post-natal depression so is unable to work currently and can find it stressful and overwhelming dealing with daily living issues such as completing forms and communicating with Services.
11. JN approached Southwark Housing Solutions in April 2021 and was placed in temporary accommodation in the Borough of Barking and Dagenham in May 2021. At this point J was referred to the Southwark Resettlement Service as she felt very vulnerable and was struggling due to living away from the support networks that she had in Southwark.
12. A Resettlement Officer made contact with JN and explained the service and support that could be provided, while JN is in temporary accommodation. JN had applied for Housing Benefit but was struggling to apply for Council Tax Support so the Resettlement Officer supported JN to do this. They also had a discussion about JN's homelessness and accessing Private Rented Accommodation. As JN is interested in working, which would also improve her opportunities in accessing Private Rented accommodation, the Resettlement Officer informed JN about the Southwark Works Service managed by Thamesreach and a referral was made to the service to support J with accessing employment.
13. The Resettlement Officer also liaised with colleagues in the Southwark Placements Team, Income Team and Housing Benefit Service to ensure that Housing Benefit payments were awarded to prevent rent arrears. The Resettlement Officer also supported JN to liaise with the Barking and Dagenham Council Tax Service and provide the relevant documents to ensure that Council Tax Reduction was awarded.
14. There was an issue with the extension of temporary accommodation placement so the Resettlement Officer also liaised with the Homelessness Caseworker to ensure that the temporary accommodation was extended appropriately so that JN did not end up homeless again.

15. JN felt that the support she received from the Resettlement Officer was pivotal in helping her to deal with the complexities that arise from becoming homeless and navigating these successfully. JN expressed her thanks to the Resettlement Officer:

16. *'I just want to thank you for everything you have done and are doing to support me, if it wasn't for you I don't know where my mental health would be at this point, you have gotten me through the worse times during my time in temporary accommodation, done the impossible for me when I couldn't and got the ball rolling on situations when I hit a brick wall, honestly I couldn't have been where I've been at without you so thank you very much for the help you have given and I hope I am able to continue to receive this help so thank you very much'*