

MAYOR OF LONDON

Sian Berry AM

C/o Andree.Frieze@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA111022-0925

Date: 12 January 2023

Dear Sian,

Thank you for your letter concerning Motion 6 on Safer Homes for Women Leaving Prison which you proposed at the London Assembly's Plenary on 3 March 2022. I am sorry for the delayed response.

I too recognise the connection between domestic abuse and women's homelessness when they leave prison. This is one of the key issues I am leading partners to address as part of the London Blueprint for Women in Contact with the Criminal Justice System. We have set up a specific Blueprint Accommodation and Housing Task Group and together with the Safe Homes for Women Leaving Prison initiative, London's partner agencies have drafted a Women's Prison Release Practice Briefing, which is deemed more beneficial than a protocol in achieving these outcomes.

The Practice Briefing offers a unique resource for agencies, not only in London but across England and Wales, that seek to improve accommodation outcomes for women leaving prison. It gives an overview of factors to be aware of when commissioning or delivering services to women in the criminal justice system. It explains why a distinct gender-specific, trauma-informed approach is needed, sets out agency roles and responsibilities, and provides examples of good practice and governance. It is primarily aimed at commissioners, prison governors, prison resettlement leads, local authority housing teams, housing providers, police, probation practitioners, Third Sector women's specialist service providers and government departments.

On 6 December 2022, my officers convened a meeting of the Blueprint Accommodation and Housing Task Group which finalised the Practice Briefing. To answer your specific points, members of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance were invited to the meeting, some of whom had directly inputted into the Practice Briefing's development. I agree that the G15 group of Housing Associations should play a key role in this work. Its Chair, Geeta Nanda OBE, has been invited to participate in the Blueprint Accommodation and Housing Task Group and we await a response from her.

As you identify, an important part of this Practice Briefing will be how this is communicated to stakeholders and senior leaders across London, including local authorities and London Councils. A Communications Plan is being drafted to inform stakeholders and practitioners about the comprehensive Prison Release Practice Briefing. Work has commenced on producing an adapted

MAYOR OF LONDON

shortened, schematic version of the Practice Briefing for prison staff use. The Task Group will also explore how the Practice Briefing remains 'live' and becomes embedded in agency processes for addressing women's housing needs from point of arrest to post release.

I will happily keep you updated on this work.

Thank you again for contacting me on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London