

**Report by the Local Government and Social Care
Ombudsman**

**Investigation into a complaint about
London Borough of Croydon
(reference number: 23 015 996)**

27 June 2025

The Ombudsman's role

We independently and impartially investigate complaints about councils and other organisations in our jurisdiction. If we decide to investigate, we look at whether organisations have made decisions the right way. Where we find fault has caused injustice, we can recommend actions to put things right, which are proportionate, appropriate and reasonable based on all the facts of the complaint. We can also identify service improvements so similar problems don't happen again. Our service is free.

We cannot force organisations to follow our recommendations, but they almost always do. Some of the things we might ask an organisation to do are:

- > apologise
- > pay a financial remedy
- > improve its procedures so similar problems don't happen again.

We publish public interest reports to raise awareness of significant issues, encourage scrutiny of local services and hold organisations to account.

Section 30 of the 1974 Local Government Act says that a report should not normally name or identify any person. The people involved in this complaint are referred to by a letter or job role.

Key to names used

Mr Y	The complainant
Ms X	Mr Y's sister and representative
Ms Z	Mr Y's other sister

Report summary

Housing-homelessness

Ms X complained about how the Council responded to her brother Mr Y's homelessness applications in 2023. We found several faults. There were months of delays by the Council and basic administrative errors. The Council repeatedly failed to respond correctly to Mr Y's attempts to access support from its housing service. This meant that instead of being housed by the Council, Mr Y had to live with another of his sisters, Ms Z, despite her being seriously unwell and despite the impact of his mental health needs on their wellbeing. The faults caused Mr Y, Ms X and Ms Z significant stress and upset.

Finding

Fault found causing injustice and recommendations made.

Recommendations

The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)

Ms X complained on behalf of Mr Y. Ms Z was not party to the complaint. However, we have the power to make recommendations to remedy the injustice experienced by complainants and members of the public affected by fault we identify. (Local Government Act 1974 section 31(2B)). We have set out below the actions the Council has agreed to take to remedy the injustice to Mr Y and Ms X, as well as Ms Z. This is in addition to the requirement set out above. The Council will carry out the following actions within three months of the date of this report.

- Apologise to Mr Y for the impact of its failure to provide him with interim accommodation between July 2023 and March 2024 and for the upset, uncertainty and frustration the Council's fault caused him.
- Apologise to Ms X for the upset, uncertainty and frustration she felt and the time and trouble she had to go to because of the Council's failings.
- Apologise to Ms Z for the upset she experienced because the Council failed to house Mr Y when it should have.
- Pay Mr Y £2,000, Ms X £300 and Ms Z £400 to recognise their injustice.
- Reimburse Mr Y the cost of the bed and breakfast accommodation he paid for between the date of his first homelessness application to the Council in July 2023 and the date it accommodated him in March 2024. This should be reduced by the amount Mr Y would have been required to pay if the Council had arranged accommodation when it should have. Before any reduction, this amounts to around £6,400.
- Backdate Mr Y's priority date on the housing register to 13 January 2024.

Within three months of the date of this report, the Council will also take the following actions to improve its services in future.

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- Review what records it has of Ms X's contact after the November interview date and after its December 2023 complaint response to identify why it repeatedly failed to respond to her until March 2024. The Council should then consider what action it needs to take to ensure it identifies and responds to communications from homeless applicants or their representatives without delay. It should send us details of what that action will be, and when it will be completed by.
 - Remind staff they must contact a homelessness applicant or their representative to confirm when they have decided to close an application for homelessness assistance.
 - In light of this investigation's findings, reconsider what it should do to ensure it issues completed, accurate Personalised Housing Plans to applicants in a timely way and acts to relieve an applicant's homelessness during the relief duty timescale.
 - Consider this report at the relevant scrutiny and oversight committee to decide what further actions the Council should take to prevent similar faults occurring in future.

The Council will provide us with evidence it has complied with the above recommendations.

The complaint

1. Ms X complained about how the Council responded to Mr Y's homelessness applications. Ms X said this meant Mr Y experienced significant stress and upset, and meant he remained homeless for longer than he should have.

Legal and administrative background

The Ombudsman's role and powers

2. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this report, we have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. We refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an injustice, we may suggest a remedy. (Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended)
3. When considering complaints we make findings based on the balance of probabilities. This means that we look at the available relevant evidence and decide what was more likely to have happened.
4. We provide a free service, but must use public money carefully. We do not start or continue an investigation if we decide it would be reasonable for the person to ask for a council review or appeal, or if it was reasonable for them to have asked for a review when a review right was available at an earlier date. (Local Government Act 1974, section 24A(6), as amended, section 34(B))
5. We may investigate matters coming to our attention during an investigation, if we consider that a member of the public who has not complained may have suffered an injustice as a result. (Local Government Act 1974, section 26D and 34E, as amended)

Relevant law and guidance

Homelessness

6. Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities set out councils' powers and duties to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
7. Someone is homeless if they have no accommodation or if they have accommodation, but it is not reasonable for them to continue to live there. (Housing Act 1996, section 175)
8. If someone contacts a council seeking accommodation or help to obtain accommodation and gives 'reason to believe' they 'may be' homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the council has a duty to make inquiries into what, if any, further housing duty it owes them. The threshold for triggering the duty to make inquiries is low. (Housing Act 1996, section 184 and Homelessness Code of Guidance paragraphs 6.2 and 18.5)
9. Councils must complete an assessment if they are satisfied an applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness. Councils should work with applicants to identify practical and reasonable steps for the council and the applicant to take to help the applicant keep or secure suitable accommodation. These steps should be tailored to the household, and follow from the findings of the assessment, and must be provided to the applicant in writing as their Personalised Housing Plan (PHP). (Housing Act 1996, section 189A and Homelessness Code of Guidance paragraphs 11.6 and 11.18)

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10. Councils must take reasonable steps to help to secure suitable accommodation for any eligible homeless person. This is the relief duty. When a council decides this duty has come to an end, it must notify the applicant in writing (Housing Act 1996, section 189B). The relief duty ends 56 days after the council accepted it owed the duty, providing the council accepts the person is in priority need and not intentionally homeless.

Homelessness accommodation

11. There are two types of accommodation councils provide to certain homeless applicants: interim accommodation and temporary accommodation.
12. A council must secure accommodation for applicants and their household if it has reason to believe they may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need. This is interim accommodation. (Housing Act 1996, section 188)
13. Examples of applicants in priority need are:
- people with dependent children;
 - pregnant women;
 - people who are vulnerable due to serious health problems, disability or old age;
 - care leavers; and
 - victims of domestic abuse.
14. If, having made inquiries, the council is not satisfied an applicant is homeless, eligible, and in priority need, it will have no further accommodation duty.
15. If a council is satisfied an applicant is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance, and has a priority need the council has a duty to secure that accommodation is available for their occupation. This is the main housing duty. The accommodation a council provides until it can end this duty is called temporary accommodation. (Housing Act 1996, section 193)
16. Homeless applicants may request a review within 21 days of being notified of several council decisions, including a decision that accommodation offered to the applicant after the council accepted the main housing duty was suitable.

Housing allocations

17. Every local housing authority must publish an allocations scheme that sets out how it prioritises applicants, and its procedures for allocating housing. All allocations must be made in strict accordance with the published scheme. (Housing Act 1996, section 166A(1) & (14))
18. The Council operates a choice-based lettings scheme which enables housing applicants to bid for available properties which it advertises through an online portal.
19. The scheme places applicants into one of three bands. Band one applicants have the highest priority, and band three applicants the lowest priority. Applicants in band three include people who are owed the main housing duty.
20. If applicants of the same band bid on the same property, the home will go to the applicant with the older priority date. The priority date is the date the applicant joined the housing register.

The Council's complaints procedure

21. The Council operates a two stage complaints procedure. Its policy says the Council will respond to housing complaints within 10 working days and stage two complaints within 20 working days.

How we considered this complaint

22. We have produced this report following the examination of relevant files and documents and speaking with Ms X.
23. We gave Ms X and the Council a confidential draft of this report and invited their comments. The comments received were taken into account before the report was finalised.

What happened

July 2023 homelessness application

24. Mr Y has a history of anxiety and has taken medications for it for several years. He applied to the Council as homeless in mid-July 2023.
25. At some point after Mr Y made his application, the Council issued a draft Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) for him. Ms X had access to it for a short period on the Council's online system before it and Mr Y's application were no longer visible.
26. The Council does not have a record of Mr Y's application or the PHP. It only has a copy of the confirmation email Mr Y received after he submitted his application.
27. Mr Y's mental health worsened after he became homeless. He lost contact with Ms X and the rest of his family.

October 2023 homelessness application

28. Several months later, Mr Y contacted his family again. Ms X spoke to the Council in early October. The Council said it could not find Mr Y's July application. As a result, Ms X made a new homelessness application on his behalf in mid-October.
29. In late October, Ms Z found Mr Y sleeping outside her house, in the rain. Ms Z said Mr Y could stay with her temporarily, but he could not stay long term because she was seriously unwell and his mental health needs made living with him challenging.
30. During the time between Mr Y's first application in mid-July and when Ms Z housed him in late October, Mr Y used his savings to stay in a bed and breakfast (B&B) 76 times. This cost him almost £6,000. He slept rough 26 times.
31. The Council arranged to speak to Mr Y in mid-November to interview him. It was unable to reach Mr Y on Ms X's phone and when it emailed Ms X the same day about the appointment, its email was returned undelivered. The Council closed Mr Y's case. It did not tell Ms X this, either by phone or email or by writing to her address, which it had on record.
32. Ms X says she waited by her phone with Mr Y for the appointment. We have seen a copy of an email she sent to a mental health charity about Mr Y's case four days after the interview date which noted she had called the Council three times on the interview day as she was concerned it had not called.
33. Ms X emailed the Council a few days later and said she was still waiting for a call after she did not receive one on the interview date. The Council did not respond.

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34. Ms X complained to the Council in early December about how it had responded to Mr Y's July and October 2023 homelessness applications. She said "I feel [the Council has shown] a total lack of empathy as [Mr Y] has simply been ignored."
 35. The Council responded to Ms X's complaint at stage one of its complaints procedure a few days later. It said it would ask someone from its temporary accommodation team to contact her within 10 working days. It said it was closing her complaint, but it would still like to speak to Ms X on the phone.
 36. Ms X contacted the Council twice with suggested times she could take a call but did not receive a response. Ms X chased the Council again in late February 2024. She said she had not heard from the Council's temporary accommodation team and Mr Y's health was getting worse.
 37. An internal Council email shows that in early March 2024, the temporary accommodation team passed the responsibility for responding to Ms X to an officer who completed homelessness assessments.
 38. After Ms X complained to us, we asked the Council to respond to her complaint at stage two of its procedure in early March 2024. It agreed to do so.

Events after March 2024

39. A homelessness assessment officer called Ms X in early March 2024 and reopened Mr Y's October 2023 application. The Council decided it had reason to believe Mr Y may be homeless, eligible and in priority need. This meant it owed him the duty to arrange interim accommodation.
40. The Council placed Mr Y in interim accommodation 12 days later. In the time Mr Y waited for the interim accommodation, he paid for a B&B for seven nights as living with Ms Z was no longer feasible. This cost Mr Y just over £400.
41. In May, the Council added Mr Y to its housing register.
42. In early June, the Council sent Mr Y a letter setting out its decision it owed him the relief duty. This was because its assessment had concluded he was homeless and eligible for support. The letter said it enclosed his PHP and a copy of its homelessness assessment. The Council did not include Mr Y's PHP or assessment outcome.
43. In mid-July, we accepted Ms X's complaint because the Council had still not issued its stage two response to her complaint.
44. The Council sent Mr Y a letter in mid-September 2024 to say it accepted it owed him the main housing duty and was ending the relief duty as a result. This means it accepted he was homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need. The letter set out this meant Mr Y's interim accommodation became temporary accommodation, and he had a statutory right to ask for a review of its suitability. The Council decided it owed Mr Y the main housing duty based on its assessment of Mr Y's individual circumstances, including his medical needs.
45. Ms X told us the accommodation is not suitable for Mr Y because the Council had suggested he would be eligible for supported living, which the housing was not. She also said that because it was out of the Council's area, the Croydon mental health service that was supporting him closed his case. Mr Y did not ask for a review of his temporary accommodation's suitability.
46. In late September, the Council sent Mr Y his PHP. It included actions for Mr Y which were not relevant to his circumstances. Under the section titled 'reasonable steps you have agreed to take to prevent your homelessness' it said:

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- “Provide Partner’s passport and proof [of] income”;
 - “Applicant to view accommodation sent to her”; and
 - “Inform the Council after the child has been born”.
47. Mr Y was a sole applicant, is a man and was not pregnant.
48. In January 2025, the Council gave Mr Y the login to its online housing register portal, so he could bid on available properties. Mr Y is able to bid on one-bedroom properties with band three priority, because the Council owes him the main housing duty.
49. The Council told us that Mr Y had not bid on any properties by March. It has placed him on the priority list for rehousing support to help him move into a suitable property without delay.
50. Ms X says Ms Z’s relationship with Mr Y deteriorated significantly, and remains damaged, because of the impact of allowing him to stay with her between October 2023 and March 2024. Ms X told us that Mr Y had a mental health crisis during the time he went missing and that since then, he is withdrawn and isolated. She noted she was still working to regain his trust.

Our previous investigations

51. In the past two years, we investigated eight complaints about the Council’s homelessness service. We upheld all eight complaints. In response to those investigations, the Council agreed recommendations to improve its practices. These included that the Council would create an action plan that sets out what it would do to reduce delays in processing homeless applications.
52. The Council sent us an action plan in April 2024 which said it would carry out quality control of homelessness cases through case supervisions, to ensure PHPs were issued to applicants and that it acts on cases where it owes the person the relief duty within the 56-day period.

Conclusions

July 2023 homelessness application

53. If a council has reason to believe a person may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, it must make inquiries to decide if the person is eligible for help and what other duties it owes. If a council concludes a person is homeless or threatened with homelessness, it must prepare a PHP for that person.
54. At the same time, the council must decide if it has reason to believe a person may be homeless, eligible for support and in priority need. If that is the case, the council must arrange interim accommodation for the person.
55. After Mr Y first applied to the Council as homeless in July 2023, the Council evidently decided he was homeless and eligible for support because it drafted a PHP for him. However, the Council then lost Mr Y’s application. This was fault and meant the Council missed a vital opportunity to address Mr Y’s homelessness, by preparing and acting on a suitable PHP.
56. The Council also failed to consider if it should arrange interim accommodation for Mr Y. The threshold for interim accommodation is low. Mr Y was already homeless and has a history of mental health difficulties. On balance of probabilities, had the Council acted properly on Mr Y’s application, it would have

concluded it had reason to believe he may be in priority need, and would have arranged interim accommodation for him.

October 2023 homelessness application

57. When Mr Y contacted his family again in October 2023, Ms X made another homelessness application. There were several faults in how the Council responded to that application, which meant it repeatedly failed to help Mr X access the support he was entitled to.
- There is no evidence the Council made inquiries into Mr Y's circumstances or considered if it needed to arrange interim accommodation for him while it carried out an assessment of his housing needs. It is important councils do this so they can ensure they house eligible people without delay.
 - On the date of the interview in mid-November 2023, the Council called Ms X and emailed her to speak to Mr Y but when it could not do so, it closed his case. However, Ms X has provided evidence which satisfies us that she called the Council several times on the day of the interview. She also contacted the Council a few days later and in early December, she made a complaint. Ms X's contacts should have prompted the Council to reopen Mr Y's assessment.
 - When the Council closed Mr Y's case, it did not tell Ms X despite having her address on file and despite her repeated attempts to speak to it. We recently completed an investigation where the Council failed to tell another vulnerable applicant's representative that it was closing their case. It is concerning to note similar issues occurred in Mr Y's case.
 - In December 2023, after Ms X complained, the Council said it would like to speak to her about her concerns and that its temporary accommodation team would contact her within 10 working days. Despite Ms X sharing suitable dates and times for a phone call and chasing for contact from the temporary accommodation team, she did not hear from the Council until March 2024, six weeks later.
 - It is likely some of that delay was because the Council's complaints response said its temporary accommodation team would contact Ms X. That team is responsible for housing where the Council has decided it owes a person the main housing duty. By December 2023, the Council had not yet completed an assessment of Mr Y's housing circumstances, let alone decided it owed him the main housing duty. The temporary accommodation team did not refer Mr Y's case to an officer responsible for homelessness assessments until March 2024, shortly after which Ms X was able to speak to someone.
58. Once Ms X was able to speak to the Council, it reopened Mr Y's homelessness application. The result was that the Council accepted it had reason to believe Mr Y may be homeless, eligible for support and in priority need in March 2024. This meant it needed to arrange interim accommodation for him. On balance of probabilities, had the Council acted without fault in considering the October 2023 application when Ms X made it, it would likely have come to the same conclusion then.
59. The Council then delayed arranging interim accommodation for Mr Y. It took 12 days to house him, which was fault. Councils should provide accommodation the same day they accept the interim housing duty.

Injustice

60. The faults meant Mr Y was not provided with support he was entitled to, at an already vulnerable time in his life. He had to pay almost £6,000 from his savings for B&Bs and slept rough for 26 days unnecessarily between July and October 2023. He lost contact with his family, and when he made contact again, his mental health needs had increased in seriousness, likely because of his homelessness. The faults also caused Ms X avoidable upset and frustration.
61. The faults also meant Mr Y had to continue living with Ms Z between November 2023 and March 2024 unnecessarily. This was despite the fact Ms Z had said he could not stay long term due to her own ill-health and the impact of his mental health on their wellbeing. This caused both Mr Y and Ms Z significant upset and, as Ms X noted, had a serious long-term impact on their relationship. It also meant Mr Y had to pay for a further seven days in a B&B in March 2024, when living with Ms Z any longer became impossible. This cost him around a further £400. The Council's failings also caused Ms X avoidable upset.

Events after March 2024

62. The Council took three months, until June 2024, to issue its decision that it owed Mr Y the relief duty. This was an unreasonable delay and was fault. The Council also failed to include Mr Y's PHP and assessment outcome with its decision letter. This was further fault. This meant Mr Y did not have any information on what he should do, and what the Council would do, to relieve his homelessness.
63. The Council then took until mid-September 2024 to issue its decision that it owed Mr Y the main housing duty. This was 101 days later. The Council should have issued its decision on or around 57 days after it accepted the relief duty. The delay was fault.
64. Having told Mr Y it owed him the main housing duty and was ending the relief duty, the Council sent Mr Y the PHP it should have sent with the relief duty decision letter it sent in June. By that time, the PHP was no longer necessary. The delay was fault.
65. The PHP was inadequate, which was fault. It included actions which Mr Y had not agreed to, and which related to another housing applicant, in very different circumstances. This is a further example of the lack of care the Council gave to Mr Y's case.

Injustice

66. The faults meant Mr Y and Ms X rarely had a clear picture of what duties the Council owed Mr Y and therefore, what it was doing to help him. This caused them uncertainty, frustration and upset. The impact on Mr Y was greater because he was already vulnerable and had already experienced failings by the Council.
67. The Council's delay in issuing its decision that it owed Mr Y the relief duty, the failure to issue Mr Y's PHP along with its relief duty decision letter and the poor quality of that PHP meant it again missed an opportunity to relieve Mr Y of his homelessness sooner. This caused Mr Y and Ms X additional upset, frustration and uncertainty.
68. The scale of the Council's failings in how it dealt with Mr Y when he was homeless is concerning and indicates systemic issues which likely affect other people. It also appears the action plan the Council drew up in April 2024, in response to one of our previous investigations, did not have the intended effect; to ensure it issues PHPs and progressive relief cases appropriately. We have

therefore made recommendations to ensure the Council improves its practice in future.

69. Ms X has concerns about the suitability of Mr Y's temporary accommodation. The law sets out people can request a council review of the suitability of their temporary accommodation within 21 days of receiving the council's decision that it owes the person the main housing duty. Mr Y did not use that right of review, and it was reasonable for him to do so with the support of Ms X if needed. Therefore, we have not investigated the suitability of Mr Y's temporary accommodation. The Council must keep suitability under review so Mr Y and Ms X could ask it to make a new decision about the suitability of the accommodation.

Housing register

70. Once the Council reopened Mr Y's homelessness application in March 2024, it added him to its housing register in May. He has band three priority because the Council owes him the main housing duty. The Council accepted it owes Mr Y the main housing duty because of his individual circumstances, including his mental health needs.
71. After Mr Y's first homelessness application in July 2023, he lost contact with his family and experienced an increase in his mental health needs. That increased need was evident in March 2024 and would likely have been apparent had the Council responded to the October 2023 application properly. The Council did not receive any significant new information on Mr Y's needs or other circumstances by the time it decided it owed Mr Y the main housing duty.
72. Given this, we are satisfied on balance that if the Council had acted appropriately in response to Mr Y's October 2023 application, it would have decided it owed him the main housing duty by 13 January 2024 at the latest. This takes into account the time it would take the Council to come to a decision on the relief duty and then the main housing duty. This means Mr Y would have had a January 2024 priority date, instead of May. The May priority date reduces his chances of successfully bidding on a property.
73. Mr Y's chances of a successful bid were further diminished by the Council's failure to provide him with login details to allow him to see available properties and place bids until January 2025. This delay was fault. However, we cannot say, even on balance, that if Mr Y had a January priority date and his login details at the right time, he would have been able to move into suitable housing sooner. That is because since being on the housing register, Mr Y has not bid on any properties. The Council is now prioritising Mr Y for support to find a new home; this is appropriate.

Complaints handling

74. Good complaints handling reassures residents that their council will listen to their concerns, take ownership of its failings and will act to improve its services where appropriate. Conversely, poor complaints handling sends the message that the council does not value the opinions of its residents and that it is unwilling or incapable of improving its services.
75. The Council's complaints handling was inadequate, which was fault. Its stage one response did not involve any investigation of Ms X's concerns about how the Council handled either Mr Y's July 2023 or October 2023 homelessness applications. The Council then failed to issue a stage two response to Ms X's

complaint within its timescales. By the time we accepted Ms X's complaint in July 2024, she had been waiting four months for a response.

76. The Council's poor complaints handling caused Ms X frustration and meant she had to go to avoidable time and trouble pursuing her complaint.

Recommendations

77. The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)
78. Ms X complained on behalf of Mr Y. Ms Z was not party to the complaint. However, we have the power to make recommendations to remedy the injustice experienced by complainants and members of the public affected by fault we identify. (Local Government Act 1974 section 31(2B)). We have set out below the actions the Council has agreed to take to remedy the injustice to Mr Y and Ms X, as well as Ms Z. This is in addition to the requirement set out above. The Council will carry out the following actions within three months of the date of this report.
- Apologise to Mr Y for the impact of its failure to provide him with interim accommodation between July 2023 and March 2024 and for the upset, uncertainty and frustration the Council's fault caused him.
 - Apologise to Ms X for the upset, uncertainty and frustration she felt and the time and trouble she had to go to because of the Council's failings.
 - Apologise to Ms Z for the upset she experienced because the Council failed to house Mr Y when it should have.
 - Pay Mr Y £2,000, Ms X £300 and Ms Z £400 to recognise their injustice.
 - Reimburse Mr Y the cost of the bed and breakfast accommodation he paid for between the date of his first homelessness application to the Council in July 2023 and the date it accommodated him in March 2024. This should be reduced by the amount Mr Y would have been required to pay if the Council had arranged accommodation when it should have. Before any reduction, this amounts to around £6,400.
 - Backdate Mr Y's priority date on the housing register to 13 January 2024.
79. Within three months of the date of this report, the Council will also take the following actions to improve its services in future.
- Review what records it has of Ms X's contact after the November interview date and after its December 2023 complaint response to identify why it repeatedly failed to respond to her until March 2024. The Council should then consider what action it needs to take to ensure it identifies and responds to communications from homeless applicants or their representatives without delay. It should send us details of what that action will be, and when it will be completed by.
 - Remind staff they must contact a homelessness applicant or their representative to confirm when they have decided to close an application for homelessness assistance.
 - In light of this investigation's findings, reconsider what it should do to ensure it issues completed, accurate Personalised Housing Plans to applicants in a

timely way and acts to relieve an applicant's homelessness during the relief duty timescale.

- Consider this report at the relevant scrutiny and oversight committee to decide what further actions the Council should take to prevent similar faults occurring in future.

80. The Council will provide us with evidence it has complied with the above recommendations.

Decision

81. We have completed our investigation. We have found fault leading to personal injustice. We have recommended action to remedy that injustice and prevent reoccurrence of the fault.