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Ms X

Our Ref: IC2770999

31 October 2016

Dear Ms X

Re: Your complaint about the Housing Needs Service's and Brent Housing Partnership's (BHP's) handling of your concerns about violence from your ex-partner

I am writing to you following the outcome of the investigation conducted by the The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO), resulting in the report issued against the Council on 8 August 2016. As Head of the Housing Needs Service, I would like to apologise to you for the way the Council and BHP has treated you, and for any additional distress and anxiety that we may have caused.

To ensure that other households who approach us in fear of violence do not experience the same oversights and delays, which you experienced, there has been a review of the liaison and joint working arrangements between BHP and the Housing Options service. Following this review all front line officers have been instructed on how to deal with BHP tenants fleeing domestic violence and/or in fear of violence. This issue will also be added as an agenda item for discussion at relevant upcoming team meetings, as a form of training to embed the joint working arrangements.

A review of the West London Domestic Violence reciprocal scheme has also been arranged, and once completed, full refresher training on the revised scheme will be provided for front-line staff in the Housing Options service and BHP.

Whilst I appreciate that these reviews are too late to have improved your experience of seeking assistance from the council, I am determined that we learn the lessons from errors made in your case, and improve our services to all of our customers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Coaker".

Laurence Coaker
Head of Housing Needs Service