

February 2024 - Housing Team

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Report or Presentation	Committee Resolution	Committee Comments	Accepted (Y/N)	Action taken
20-Feb-24	Accommodation Strategy for Homelessness	Presentation	1. Noted the increasing issue of homelessness and the associated issues raised.	1. Clarification was sought regarding the potential for sharing responsibilities to alleviate the burden on the proposed additional staff member and to increase the resilience of the service.	Y	A Review of all council temporary accommodation (TA) provision and work on supporting housing pathways, will be presented to Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024. This report will outline how the council can continue to work in partnership to deliver homelessness services and consider any additional internal staffing resources.
				2. Understanding the typical occupancy rates of temporary accommodation facilities and how these aligned with demand and availability.	Y	A full review of the past supply and demand of temporary accommodation has been carried out and how it aligns with the current and predicted demand. This will be presented to Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024
				3. Evaluating the potential impacts of the proposed options on the council's ability to effectively address homelessness, considering the balance between available resources, and increasing needs for accommodation and support services.	Y	A full review of the potential growing issues of homelessness and the impacts on available housing options has been carried out alongside what additional support resources are required. Consultation has been undertaken to include housing register applicants, council sheltered tenants, partnering social landlords, voluntary and statutory partners, internal staff. The review findings will all be presented to Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024
				4. Understanding the contributions of partner charities and other organisations in expanding accommodation and support services for homeless individuals and families, and whether additional collaborations could enhance the district's capacity.	Y	Housing pathways with partner organisations have been developed to assist the council with its duties to prevent and relieve homelessness. The housing pathways will be presented to Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024. The paper will also present how partners are expanding their own provision of accommodation to assist the council with the increased demand of homelessness.
				5. Questions were raised to understand more about the comprehensive support services ("wrap-around services") necessary beyond just providing accommodation, which aimed to support individuals on their journey towards sustaining tenancies.	Y	Wrap around support services to enable individuals to sustain tenancies forms part of the housing pathway options as stated in point 4. A private rented sector officer has been employed to support households living in the private rented sector. A mental health worker has been recruited in partnership with Southern Health to further support the housing pathway work housing options work.
				6. Clarification regarding the financial implications of the proposed strategies, specifically about anticipated funding reductions and the potential necessity of utilising reserves to bridge gaps in service provision.	Y	A full financial appraisal has been undertaken on the implications of a reduction or withdrawal of funding for homeless provision. This has indicated that from 2025/26 the council will need to spend between 20-30% of the homelessness budget reserve fund to continue to run the current level of successful preventive homelessness services. The reserve fund will continue to deplete until 2028/29 as the central government homelessness grants will no longer be sufficient to cover the cost of the councils housing options service. The full financial appraisal will be presented to Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024.
				7. The committee sought an understanding of managing expectations and communications with residents currently on the waiting list for accommodation, in the context of potential policy changes affecting their queue positions.	Y	Housing register waiting times are clearly advertised on Hampshire Homechoice and applicants can see via the system the waiting times aligned to their individual housing need. All applicants on the housing register have been consulted on the council's lettings policy change. The consultation feedback is captured within the Temporary Accommodation Plan and Pathways committee paper to be presented at Cabinet Committee: Housing on 5 November 2024
				8. Understanding the sustainability of funding for homelessness services through grants and reserves, with a particular interest in how these resources would support the proposed options and initiatives amidst financial uncertainties.	Y	As question 6
				2. Thanked Trinity, the Winchester Beacon and Emmaus for their contributions to addressing homelessness in Winchester.	Y	Noted
3. Thanked the officer team for their work in this area and anticipated further reports to be brought back for discussion.	Y	Noted				

			4. Asked that the cabinet member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.		Y	Noted
20-Feb-24	Scoping Document For The Older Persons Accommodation Strategy - Initial Thoughts.	Presentation	1. Acknowledged the comprehensive nature of the work required to address the accommodation needs of the older population, noting the necessity to consider a wide range of accommodation types across the district.	1. Confirmation was sought on whether the consultation process would encompass the entire district, reflecting the detailed demographic split outlined in the report.	Y	When the consultation is carried out the aim will be to reach as many residents as possible.
				2. There was a request for a comprehensive dataset to support the strategy, highlighting a need for insight into the district's demographic profiles and the specific needs of different age groups.	Y	This will be part of the work carried out in the development of the Older Person's Strategy
				3. The necessity for more information about other accommodation providers, such as St. John's, was raised to ensure a holistic view of available options and their integration into the strategy.	Y	The Older Persons Strategy will cover as many housing options as possible focusing not only Winchester City's housing stock but also registered providers, private rented and privately owned. The Service Lead for Strategic Housing as already met with St Johns along with the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet member for housing.
				4. Questions were raised about the evolution of older persons' care, including what constitutes good practice for future care provision and how Hampshire County Council's vision aligns with these standards.	Y	This will be part of the work carried out in the development of the Older Person's Strategy
				5. Interest was expressed in exploring models of care and accommodation that promote independence and reduce social isolation, using examples like the Brendoncare model in Chandlers Ford.	Y	When the older person's strategy commences, officers will consider independent living in many forms such as accommodation , Disabled Facilities Grant .
				6. Concerns about the progression of needs related to social isolation and the ability of current housing solutions to adapt to changing circumstances were discussed.	Y	This will be captured in the older person's strategy working in partnership with the County and wider partners
				7. Whether the projected increase in the population of older age groups within the district was due to natural ageing or other factors, such as migration.	Y	This may become evident once the work on the older persons strategy commences and data sets are analysed. The council have commissioned a piece of work incorporating much of this and this will be instrumental to informing the older person strategy.
				8. The importance of aligning planning policies to meet the specific needs of older residents was emphasised, suggesting a proactive approach in the local plan development to ensure suitable accommodation solutions.	Y	Officers will have discussions with planning and new homes colleagues when the olde person strategy work commences.
				2. Asks that the cabinet member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.	Y	Noted