

Housing Services Position Statement and Work Plan 2016/17

Purpose

To provide a report on the work of the Housing Service, to review performance and endorse the work programme of the Team.

Portfolio

Date Portfolio Holder signed off report

Wards Affected All

1. Resource Implications

- 1.1 The Council has legal duties to provide accommodation for certain homeless households and this incurs a cost, even after a charge is passed onto the household assisted.
- 1.2 In 2015/16 two Surrey authorities each had in excess of 100 households in bed and breakfast, with a third getting as high as 68 households. This had led to reported expenditure of over £1 million in one authority on bed and breakfast. Net cost in Surrey Heath has remained under £60,000 in each of the last two years.
- 1.3 The Council has received a grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) over a number of years specifically for use in activities to prevent homelessness. The use of this grant has demonstrated that investing in services and activities that prevent homelessness offers both a better outcome for individual residents and families while also providing a saving to the Council.
- 1.4 The Council has also received a share of £372,000 of grant funding across 7 local authorities in west Surrey to work with single homeless residents and rough sleepers.
- 1.5 The Council has received additional funding for Disabled Facilities Grants in 2016/17 from Government. At the same time, however, the revenue funding from Surrey County Council for the delivery of a Home Improvement Agency and the Handyman Service is under review due to the County's budget settlement.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Nationally and regionally there has been an increase in the number of households becoming homeless, the number of households in temporary accommodation and the number of people sleeping rough.
- 2.2 Welfare reform has had an impact on families in the Borough and the further reform due to be implemented will continue to impact on residents' ability to access and maintain accommodation.

- 2.3 Locally there has been limited delivery of affordable rented homes which places a reliance on re-lets in the existing social housing stock to meet the housing need of residents.
- 2.4 Other issues will impact on housing in the Borough including new policies such as the extended right to buy, cuts in support services due to the Surrey County Council budget settlement and housing association rents decreasing and possibly for there to be no new affordable rented homes built as policies supporting homeownership are prioritised.

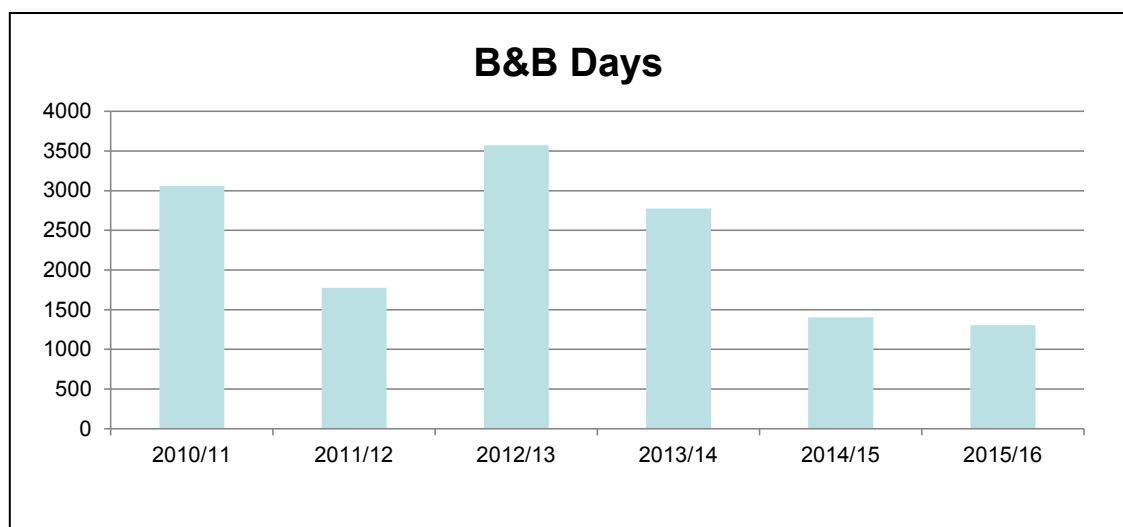
3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee can note and endorse the work of the Housing Services Team and make recommendations for further work.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Bed and breakfast accommodation is used to provide accommodation to homeless households, a good measure of use is to take the total number of days where a household was in placement during a year (e.g. 10 households in B&B for 10 days each = 100 B&B days). Chart 1 shows B&B use over the last 6 years.

Chart 1



- 4.2 The cost of a bed and breakfast placement is greater than the charge that can be passed onto the homeless household leading to a net cost to the Council. Costs over the last six years are detailed in Table 1.

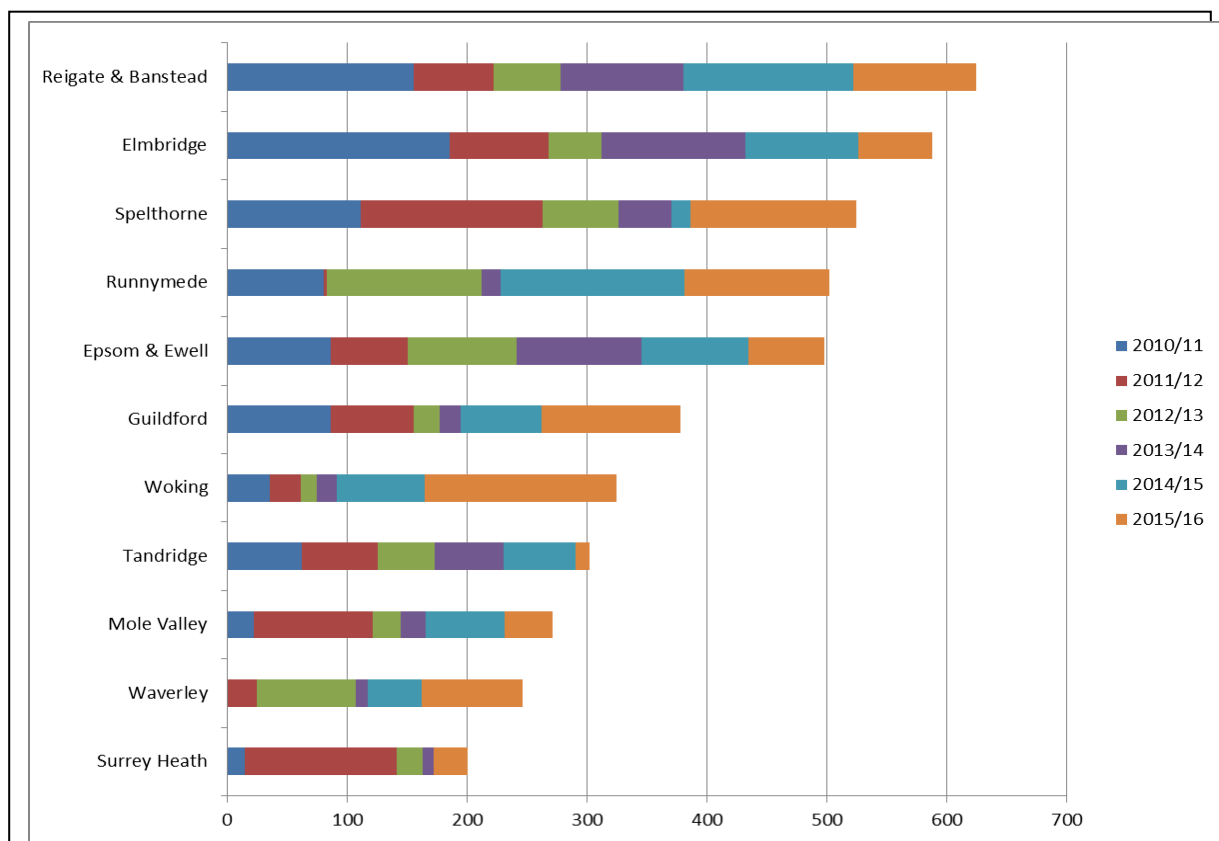
Table 1

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Full cost	£188,642	£87,285	£176,689	£171,760	£79,654	£92,550
Income	£101,123	£51,160	£72,231	£62,676	£35,952	£37,485
Actual cost	£87,519	£36,125	£104,458	£109,084	£43,702	£55,065

- 4.3 There are two ways of mitigating a rise in homelessness: firstly by taking action to prevent homelessness in the first place and when this is not possible to move residents at risk of homelessness into alternative accommodation. The success of this preventative work is detailed in Chart 2 which shows the number of households who had their homelessness prevented.



- 4.4 *The other way of preventing homeless is to ensure a regular supply of affordable rented housing that meets housing need in a planned way. The delivery of affordable housing across Surrey by Borough and District is detailed in Chart 3.*



- 4.5 There are 121 Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Surrey Heath, of which 17 require licenses, and on average the Environmental Health Officer's within Housing Services deal with 180 complaints about housing conditions every year.

5. Corporate Objectives And Key Priorities

- 5.1 Tackling homelessness and the causes of homelessness and working to improve housing conditions is an important part of protecting the general health and wellbeing of the community through our services, part of Objective 3 of the Corporate Plan: We will build and encourage communities where people can live happily and healthily.

6. Policy Framework

- 6.1 In order to deliver and develop responses to residents housing and housing support needs the Housing Service has developed a set of objectives and performance indicators to support the work (see Annex A).

7. Legal Issues

- 7.1 The Council has fulfilled its statutory duty in producing the Homelessness Strategy 2013-18, in adopting a Tenancy Strategy and in the provision of enforcement and housing advice services.

8. Equalities Impact

- 8.1 Equality impact assessments have been completed on the Council's Housing Strategy and Tenancy Strategy.

Annexes	Annex A Housing Services Work Plan 2016/17
Background Papers	
Author/Contact Details	Clive Jinman
Head Of Service	Jenny Rickard

Annex A Housing Services Work Programme 2016/17

Housing Services Objectives

To develop and deliver a range of housing and housing services that promotes the health and well-being of residents and the wider community through:

1. Providing effective, customer focused housing advice that offers a range of options and prevents homelessness;
2. Working with owners, landlords and tenants to maintain, adapt and improve their homes to meet current and future needs;
3. Joint working with statutory, voluntary and private sector partners to offer residents the right housing and support at the right time to meet their needs;
4. Developing joint strategies designed to promote independence and re-enablement, supporting effective service delivery across a range of partners and reducing pressure on health and social services; and,
5. Promoting and providing evidence to support the delivery of new homes and investment in the current housing stock to meet the Borough's current and future housing requirements.

Key indicators:

- Increasing the number of households who have their homelessness prevented through advice and assistance year on year;
- Limiting the use of bed and breakfast by not placing households unless in an emergency and with no accepted household being placed in shared facility B&B for longer than 6 weeks;
- Delivering new affordable homes;
- Increasing the number of homes where category 1 and 2 hazards are eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level;
- Ensuring all Housing related complaints are investigated and resolved, using enforcement powers where necessary;
- Delivering a Home Improvement Agency that is responsive, cost effective and maximises the benefit of available grant;
- Increasing the number of households assisted into the private rented sector;

- Meeting the Silver Standard in the delivery of homelessness in 2017; and,
- Achieving 70% positive outcomes for Team Around the Person clients.

Key Projects

Service area	Action	Lead	Outcome	Target date	Review
Housing Services	Develop a Healthy Homes Strategy	CJ	Adopted Healthy Homes Strategy with costed action plan	March 2017	
Home Improvement Agency (HIA)	Integrate the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) into Housing Services	JR/CJ/TW	HIA Team co-located within Housing Services without service disruption and a one team approach adopted across Housing Services	December 2016	
	Scope funding options for a sustainable HIA service, considering both in-house and outsourced options and including delivery of Handyman services, liaising with Surrey County Council and Surrey Heath CCG	CJ/TW	Sustainable HIA service covering Surrey Heath that meets and is responsive to local needs	March 2017 (interim review at September 2016).	
Housing Options	Work towards the NPSS Gold Standard in Homelessness	CJ/LL	Achieve Silver Standard	March 2017	
	Support development and delivery of day services for single homeless households in Surrey Heath	CJ	Local partnership of statutory and voluntary services enabled to deliver access to day services for single homeless residents and those at risk of homelessness	March 2017	

	Develop an on-line application form and housing advice wizard	LL/CJ/ICT	Channel shift housing applications online to allow Housing Options Officers more time for case work that prevents homelessness	March 2017	
	Mitigate continuing impacts of welfare reform	CJ/LL/HB	Partnership approach to target and support residents through welfare reform, notably introduction of Universal Credit and the benefit cap	Ongoing	
	Agree a Service Level Agreement with Accent Group covering the management of temporary accommodation and associated costs	CJ	SLA agreed	July 2016	
	Annual review of Homelessness Strategy 2016-18	CJ/LL	Homelessness Strategy updated to meet current challenges and review published	June 2017	
	Annual review of Tenancy Strategy	CJ	Tenancy Strategy updated to meet current challenges	June 2017	
	Increase access to the Private Rented Sector and reduce homelessness from the sector including looking at options for Private Sector Leasing, HMO development/management, promoting landlord accreditation and updating web resources for landlords	CJ/LL/TW/SG	Improved relationships with landlords, costed options for intervention in market to improve access and standards.	March 2017	

	Support frontline staff by introducing clinical supervision and setting up alternative out of hours arrangements	LL/HR	Clinical supervision introduced into working practice and effectiveness reviewed, and a SLA agreed with Mole Valley Telecare Service to field out of hours calls	July 2016	
	Review Joint Allocation Policy to ensure that it is compliant and meeting local need	CJ/LL/ Accent	Any amendments adopted and implemented	February 2017	
Housing Strategy and Enabling	Deliver an affordable housing training event for members and senior management, and design a regular 'housing update' bulletin for this audience	CJ	Raise profile of affordable housing need and benefits of delivery with Members	December 2016	
Team Around the Person Project (TAPP)	Explore funding to continue TAPP, if possible with a dedicated service for Surrey Heath	CJ	Sustainable TAP service in Surrey Heath	December 2016	
Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS)	Set up the infrastructure and networks to successfully received two households, with a further aim of receiving eight households up to 2010.	CJ	A cohesive partnership receives, supports and successfully resettles two households	March 2017	

Other work 2016/17

- Continue to maintain a register of all HMOs and to ensure each are maintained at least to the minimum standards of compliance;
- Develop an Harassment and Illegal Eviction Policy with Legal;
- Investigate the benefits of holding a Landlords Forum;
- Lead on housing work in the Surrey Community Integration Task Force as part of our Armed Forces Covenant commitment;
- Continue to migrate light touch housing contact to the Customer Contact Centre to allow Housing Options Officers to focus on case work
- Contribute to discussions on delivering the right mix of affordable housing on PRB Deepcut and other sites
- Contribute to discussion on setting up an Investment/Housing delivery vehicle to deliver investment and new housing.

Ongoing multiagency work

- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) – joint management of high risk offenders in the community (CJ);
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC) – joint management of cases of domestic abuse where there is a high risk of serious injury or death (LL);
- Single Homeless Alliance West Surrey (SHAWS) – delivery of grant funded single homeless project in West Surrey (CJ);
- Prevention Panels – joint work on finding housing and support options for homeless 16/17 year olds and care leavers (LL);
- Community Incident Action Group (CIAG) – joint management of ASB in the community (LL)

Other group membership

- Surrey Chief Housing Officers

- Surrey Housing Needs Managers
- Surrey Enabling Officers
- Environmental Health Housing Study Group
- Surrey HIA Group