

Appendix A - Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2017- 20

Priority one: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to effectively prevent and reduce homelessness

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
1.1	Review the Homelessness Strategy action plan annually and be responsive to emerging needs.	Annual review and update of action plan. Update of action plan in response to Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	All	Meets a Gold Standard challenge. Review of progress made to deliver the Homelessness Strategy. Up to date effective Homelessness Strategy action plan	Within existing resources.	Annually	Head of Housing Solutions
1.2	Undertake a comprehensive review of delivery arrangements in preparation for the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Research best practice Understand customer demand and customer journey Set out implementation plan and identify resources required Restructure Housing Solutions Service to ensure effective delivery interface with Intensive Property Management team and Independent Living team	1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.2, 5.1, 5.4	Service complies with statutory requirements from April 2018	Additional officer resources required in particular front line needs assessment/ho using options officers to meet Act requirements	October 2017	Head of Housing Solutions

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1.3	In conjunction with facilities management, identify sufficient and suitable interview facilities to meet increased demand for assessment and management of personalised housing plans.	Identify potential interview facilities. Additional interview facilities agreed.	1.1	Additional interview facilities agreed and in use by 1 st April 2018 latest.	Development of additional interview facilities	February 2018	Head of Housing Solutions
1.4	Review the first point of contact for customers alongside mapping the customer journey.	Map customer journey. Understand access points into the service, including through partner agencies. Develop customer pathway. Monitor use of phone through Storm	1.1, 5.4	Develop clear customer pathways to ensure statutory assessments and personalised housing plans are effectively delivered.	Additional officer resources required to ensure personal housing plans meet Act requirements	January 2018	Locality Managers & Independent Living Manager
1.5	Develop new personalised housing plans and statutory notices to comply with requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act	Test draft housing plans with clients through a focus group	1.1, 1.2, 1.5	Provision of correct template documentation		Dec 2017	Locality Managers & Independent Living Manager
1.6	Identify and procure a suitable case work management IT solution which will assist with managing the new duties and which will produce the Government's new statistical	Review potential systems through demonstrations Liaise with corporate procurement team concerning procurement processes	1.1	Participation in NPSS case management trial Recommended case management option procured		Sept 2017 January 2018	Locality Managers & Independent Living Manager

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
	reporting requirements	If accepted, participate in NPSS case management trial system					
1.7	Provide training to all staff required to implement the HRA	<p>Knowledge-based training on the Homelessness Reduction Act and its impact on homelessness legislation; landlord and tenant law including court advocacy procedures, housing benefit, income maximisation, debt advice, jobcentre plus services and recent case law; and</p> <p>Skills-based training on interview skills and customer service</p>	1.1, 1.2	To ensure the Council is fully compliant with the law and statutory guidance in relation to administering homelessness duties and preventing homelessness	Training budget.	December 2017	Head of Housing Solutions & Team Managers
1.8	Sanctuary Scheme	Review of current scheme to consider effectiveness as a homelessness prevention tool where appropriate	2.4	A fit for purpose sanctuary scheme within the context of the Act requirements as agreed with Police service.	Financial contribution towards scheme operating costs.	February 2018	Locality Managers
1.9	Develop a strategic approach with Children's Services to meet the housing needs of Care Leavers.	<p>Attend Care Leavers Accommodation working group.</p> <p>Develop a range of housing options to meet the needs of Care Leavers.</p>	1.3, 1.2, 1.3, 2.4	Prevent care leavers homelessness.		April 2018	<p>Locality Managers</p> <p>Leaving Care Team</p>

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
1.10	Arrange and monitor child protection training and training on the Leaving Care Protocol for relevant Housing Staff	<p>Undertake training audit.</p> <p>Identify staff required to receive training</p> <p>Arrange cyclical training for all staff.</p> <p>Add training to induction for new staff.</p> <p>Monitor % staff attending training</p>	1.3	<p>Prevent youth homelessness.</p> <p>Safeguard children and young people.</p> <p>100% staff complete training every 2 years.</p>	Within existing resources.	April 2018	Locality Managers
1.11	Contribute to the Rough Sleeping Partnership across the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) area	<p>Nominate housing representative for Rough Sleeping Partnership</p> <p>Review partnership outcomes of scheme in Central Bedfordshire area</p>	1.4	Housing representative regularly attends Rough Sleeping Partnership meetings.	Potential use of Let's Rent scheme funding	August 2017	Head of Housing Solutions
1.12	Implement the Rough Sleeper (STP) outreach service (RSOS) across Central Bedfordshire and deliver the operation of the Severe Weather Protocol (SWEP)	<p>Establish a local task group or similar approach to implement the RSOS across Central Bedfordshire and to oversee the operation of the SWEP</p> <p>Implement the RSOS</p> <p>Continue to deliver SWEP</p>	1.4	Rough sleeping prevented.	Potential use of Let's Rent scheme funding	August 2017	Senior Prevention and Targeted Intervention Officer

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
1.13	Investigate the viability of implementing the "Housing First" model	<p>Research viability of Housing First for Central Bedfordshire</p> <p>Present findings to the Head of Housing Solutions</p>	1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 2.5	Review of Housing First model completed and recommendations developed	Unknown	March 2020	Head of Housing Solutions
1.14	Achieve the Government's Gold Standard by meeting the 10 pledges.	<p>HSMT Commit to achieving the Gold Standard and meeting the ten challenges.</p> <p>Develop an action plan to meet the ten challenges.</p> <p>Deliver and monitor action plan with reporting to Homelessness Forum</p>	1.5	Improve frontline housing services for homeless families and single people.	Within existing resources.	March 2020	Head of Housing Solutions

Priority two: Increase housing supply to meet the accommodation and support needs of homeless people

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
2.1	Review and implement improvements to the Let's Rent offer	<p>Revised policy approved by Executive</p> <p>Deposits and loans tracked to maximise returns</p> <p>Protocol with Housing Benefit to maximise use of Discretionary Housing Payments.</p> <p>Support to vulnerable tenants included as an incentive to Landlords</p>	2.1	<p>Improve the offer to private sector landlords through the "Lets Rent" scheme.</p> <p>Maximise access to the private sector for households threatened with homelessness</p>	Homelessness prevention funding	September 2017	<p>Head of Housing Solutions</p> <p>Independent Living Team</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits</p>
2.2	Investigate the feasibility of a Social Lettings Agency	<p>Develop Social Lettings Agency business case and report to Executive for approval.</p> <p>Development of an agency service within the approved format</p>	2.1	<p>Business case approved by CMT and Members</p> <p>Development of a lettings agency team/service</p>	Resource implications will be included within the developing business case	October 2017	Head of Housing Solutions and Business Development Officer
2.3	Develop and promote a shared tenancy model to meet the needs of single people.	<p>Research best practice and learn from pilot schemes.</p> <p>Consider feasibility of new HMO Officer post within service structure</p> <p>Develop and seek approval for a local model based on best practice and local need</p>	2.1, 2.2	<p>Clients sustain their tenancies.</p> <p>Improved availability of information.</p> <p>Increase shared tenancy schemes subject to appropriate accommodation being provided</p>	Investment in this model may be required.	March 2018	Head of Housing Operations

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		Subject to approval develop an action plan to deliver the model agreed					
2.4	Review and implement a revised Allocation Scheme to ensure it complies with the law and assists with meeting the new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act	<p>Review Allocation Scheme, take to Overview and Scrutiny in Dec 2017</p> <p>Seek approval from Executive</p> <p>Implement revised scheme, this will include the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-tender/review contract to provide an IT platform to operate choice based lettings. - Review information offer including the YouTube video, online information, leaflets, guidance and forms. - Develop monitoring arrangements to understand the impact the new policy has on customer demand. 	2.2, 5.1	<p>Allocation Scheme is compliant with the duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act</p> <p>Enable pro-active approach to potential adverse impact of the policy.</p>	IT development costs, significant Officer resource	April 2018	Head of Housing Solutions
2.5	Produce an Annual Lettings Plan	<p>Determine annual quotas from letting streams</p> <p>Identify adequate quotas</p>	2.2, 5.1	Annual Lettings Plan is fair and responsive to the needs of transferring tenants;		Normally June/July of each year	Locality Manager

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		for supported housing providers to ensure an adequate flow of move-on accommodation.		households with housing needs including those threatened with homelessness.			
2.6	Ensure Registered Providers enter into nominations agreements on new schemes through collaboration and communication with Planning services, who progress Planning agreements	New scheme nominations agreement process is implemented through Planning Agreements Monitor and regularly report on the effectiveness of the agreements i.e. ensure best use of stock	2.3	Registered Providers comply with nominations agreements on new schemes to maximise housing supply to housing register applicants	Unknown – the monitoring process requires Officer resource	April 2018	Strategic Housing (Planning) team
2.7	Shared ownership/ Housing Strategy	Develop strategy Seek approval Deliver action plan	2.2, 2.3	Development of a shared ownership strategy	Unknown – Officer resources	March 2020	To be determined
2.8	Work with the Planning service to ensure the Housing Technical Guidance Document meets specific Housing Needs for Central Bedfordshire.	Research best practice. Provide detailed evidence base. Regular meetings with planning.	2.3	Increase the number of appropriate and affordable properties available to prevent homelessness.	Within existing resources	August 2018	Head of Housing Solutions
2.9	Develop positive cross-department relationship with Planning and Housing Strategy through regular contact and information sharing.	Identify better ways of working with Planning and Housing Strategy to build a positive relationship. Implement joint working and information sharing	2.3	Shared understanding of the housing need and development proposals to meet those needs.	Within existing resources.	ongoing	Head of Housing Solutions

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		opportunities.					
2.10	Publish new Empty Homes Strategy to continue to maximise the use of empty properties to address housing need.	Develop strategy Seek approval at Executive Deliver action plan Monitor activity and outcomes.	2.1, 2.3	Empty homes brought back in to use to increase the availability of housing.	Empty property budget. Dedicated Empty Homes Officer	November 2017	Head of Housing Solutions
2.11	Monitor the effectiveness of floating support services.	Monitor the outcomes of floating support interventions	2.4	Floating support services meet the needs of clients. Clients sustain their tenancies.	Within existing resources.	April 2018	Independent living team
2.12	Improve move on from supported accommodation	Improve referral pathways to support service providers. Agree and monitor performance measures and outcomes framework	2.4	Ensure effective move on from supported accommodation. A revised allocation scheme to facilitate move on. Improved collaboration with supported housing providers	Within existing resources.	April 2018	Locality Managers and appropriate agencies
2.13	Improve awareness of the health needs of homeless people at a strategic/partnership level.	Continue to support the JSNA with a robust evidence base that will inform decisions across strategic groups including the Health and Wellbeing	2.5, 5.1, 5.4	Improve access to health services for homeless people. Improve strategic commitment to tackle	Where significant research is required, resources will need to be	Unknown timescales – subject to consultation with Public Health	To be determined

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		<p>Board.</p> <p>Explore housing representation on board or through delivery groups.</p> <p>Develop reports on key issues to take to the Health and Wellbeing Board to inform future decisions.</p>		homeless health issues.	identified		
2.14	Extend the operation of the hospital discharge protocol to other hospitals	<p>Extend the discharge policy to Bedford and other hospitals following agreement with L & D.</p> <p>Review policy as and when changes are required.</p> <p>Monitor the number of Delayed Transfers of Care to check the effectiveness of the policy through improved links to Adult Social Care hospital specialist.</p>	2.5	People are not discharged from hospital as homeless.	Within existing resources.	May 2019	Housing Policy Advisor
2.15	Complete the Best Use of Stock project to map the supply and demand for affordable housing in Central Bedfordshire.	<p>Complete analysis</p> <p>Engage with colleagues to draw conclusions</p> <p>Present findings</p>	2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Officers have a clear understanding of demand and supply picture to inform future development and services	Within existing resources	November 2017	Policy and Performance Officers

Priority three: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation and bed & breakfast

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
3.1	Develop the Intensive Property Management (IPM) team to provide a comprehensive temporary accommodation demand management system.	<p>Implement recommendations from the TA review within the development of the IPM team.</p> <p>Monitor current and future demand for temporary accommodation through the IPM team.</p>	3.1, 3.2	<p>Deliver a service that meets the Council's statutory duties to provide temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Vulnerable people are housed in appropriate temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Reduce the use of B&B, and the associated costs.</p>	Within existing resources, although additional investment may be required, but this needs to be offset against the cost of B&B placements.	April 2018	Housing Estates Manager
3.2	Ensure that appropriate accommodation is available for 16 and 17 year olds so that they are not placed in B&B. Review the protocol between Children's services and Housing Solutions.	In partnership with children's services consider the development of Nightstop or supported accommodation to provide alternative emergency accommodation provision.	3.2, 1.3	No 16 & 17 year olds are placed in B&B.	Possible budget implications, although children's services may fund new services.	May 2019	Locality Managers
3.3	Ensure that appropriate accommodation is available for families so that they are not placed in B&B unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.	<p>Implement recommendations from TA review.</p> <p>Monitor extent to which appropriate TA provision or PRS provision is available for families.</p>	3.2	No families spend longer than 6 weeks in B&B.	Within existing resources.	Ongoing as previously implemented into operations	Locality Managers
3.4	Review temporary accommodation in light of the ongoing and	Establish which dwellings will be affected by social	3.3	To provide for the significant reforms being made by the	Within existing resources.	Oct 2017	Locality Managers

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
	forthcoming reforms made by the DWP and establish which properties will be affected.	housing size criteria. Agree actions to recover rental charges once Benefit Cap and Universal Credit has been rolled-out.		Department for Work and Pensions to the Temporary Accommodation Subsidy regime.			

Priority four: Minimise the impact of welfare reform while assisting homeless people to access opportunities for employment, education, training and support them to raise and meet their aspirations.

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
4.1	Develop an approach to manage the impact of Universal Credit on CBC tenants.	Work with key partners to develop a project plan. Learn from pilot areas. Roll out plan, ensuring changes publicised, and effective support available for impacted households.	4.1	CBC tenants adjust well to the new benefit arrangements. Vulnerable tenants are assisted to manage their income.	Within existing resources	May 2019	Locality managers
4.2	Continue delivery of the Housing Landlord's Tenants Incentive Scheme to free up under-occupied homes and create shared houses.	Continue to provide a range of incentives. Publicise incentives. Identify suitable model and roll out.	4.2	Assistance to those affected by the under-occupancy penalty to downsize. Make best use of stock. Increase provision of accommodation for single people.	Resource implications.	Ongoing following implementation	Head of Housing Management
4.3	Monitor the impact of welfare reform through the Council's Welfare Reform Board to identify initiatives to alleviate hardship.	Provide performance data to Welfare Reform Board to help understand the impact of welfare reform Implement mitigating actions.	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5	Alleviate hardship of those impacted by welfare reform.	Within existing resources.	Ongoing	Head of Housing Solutions and Independent Living Manager
4.4	Work with DWP to provide debt advice to vulnerable clients and to identify those who need to have rent paid directly to their landlord.	Establish an effective partnership with DWP. Identify vulnerable clients.	4.4, 4.4, 5.4	Reduce the risk of homelessness as a result of welfare reform.	Within existing resources.	May 2019	Locality Managers

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		Ensure a procedure in place for direct payment requests.					
4.5	Deliver the Housing Solutions service offer to help customers access employment, education and training.	<p>Commence Jobcentre Plus 'surgeries' at housing options service centres.</p> <p>Frontline staff to spend a day at a local Jobcentre Plus, Inspira and PEC. (iii)</p> <p>Provide through partners free internet access to search job vacancies.</p> <p>Consider the co-location of housing and Jobcentre Plus services.</p> <p>All housing options to include analysis of impact on worklessness and encouragement into training and employment.</p> <p>Identify opportunities for the Council's Housing Service to employ former service users.</p>	4.4	Support Housing Solutions customers to access employment, education and training.	Within existing resources.	October 2018	Locality Managers and Housing Estates Manager
4.6	In partnership with the Work Programme and the Job Centre identify how to overcome the barriers to employment faced by homeless people.	<p>Develop a partnership with Job Centre and Work Programme.</p> <p>Research good practice.</p> <p>Develop an action plan.</p>	4.4	Support Housing Solutions customers to access employment, education and training.	Within existing resources.	October 2018	Locality Managers and Housing Estates Manager

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
4.7	Employment Support Officer to facilitate access to education, employment and training opportunities through the delivery of a range of targeted initiatives.	<p>Ensure effective referral arrangements in place for Housing Solutions to refer to ES Officer.</p> <p>Raise awareness of initiatives with customers and partners.</p>	4.4	Increased awareness of education, employment and training opportunities available.	Within existing resources.	October 2018	Housing Estates Manager
4.8	Explore opportunities to create employment opportunities within Housing Services to employ apprentices	<p>Identify potential job roles appropriate for apprentices.</p> <p>Employment of apprentices.</p>	4.4	5 service users/tenants employed by the Council where possible	Within existing resources.	April 2018	Locality managers

Priority five: Develop an integrated partnership approach to tackling homelessness

	Action	Milestones	Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
5.1	Maintain homelessness forum to meet at least 3 times per year.	<p>Agree membership of the Forum.</p> <p>Keep under review Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Set meeting dates for the year.</p>	5.3	To ensure a partnership approach to tackling homelessness, to share developments, consult on new arrangements and share and learn from best practice.	Within existing resources.	Ongoing	Head of Housing Solutions
5.2	Develop referral pathways with all statutory services who have a duty to refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Include DWP Universal Credit where claims suspended and rent not paid	5.4	<p>Referrals lead to an outcome for the client.</p> <p>Lack of engagement can be followed up.</p>	Within existing resources.	March 2018	Locality Managers
5.3	Maintain Mental Health & Vulnerable Adults Housing Forum	<p>Review attendance and purpose of the forum meetings.</p> <p>Continuation of regular forum meetings</p>	5.4	<p>Partners have an efficient and effective forum to share information.</p> <p>Better informed clients.</p>	Within existing resources.	Ongoing	Locality Managers
5.4	Promote simple access points for the provision of information about housing options and homelessness services.	New information access channels are developed alongside development of the Housing Options service response to Homelessness Reduction Act	5.4	Good and clear point of access for information	Unknown – likely marketing costs dependent upon access point	April 2018	Locality Managers
5.6	Identify further improvements to the web-based and paper information available to clients and partners	<p>Housing Options Calculator</p> <p>Youtube video</p> <p>Develop range of leaflets</p>	5.4			April 2018	Locality managers

	Action	Milestones	Strategic Objective	Targets	Resource Implications	Timescales	Lead Officer
		and factsheets. Update Website.					

