

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 13 November 2014

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Title: Homelessness Update

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Item for Information

Summary

1. This report is to brief members on the homelessness figures for the first two quarters of 2014/15

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes this report

Financial Implications

3. The council has a Hardship Fund of £100,000 and Homelessness Fund of £101,000 which are available to meet the increasing costs and/or invest in homelessness-reducing measures

Background Papers

4. None

Published papers

5. Housing Performance Indicator Reports 2013/14 and 2014/15

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	N/A
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A

Workforce/Workplace	N/A
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Situation

	Qrt 1 2013/14	Qrt 2 2013/14	Qrt 3 2013/14	Qrt 4 2013/14	Qrt 1 2014/15	Qrt 2 2014/15
Homelessness Presentations	24	29	30	14	30	30
Homelessness Acceptances	15	17	18	7	14	19
Homelessness Preventions	13	23	26	18	14	9
Numbers in Temporary Accommodation	14	19	32	15	26	13
Priority accepted homeless families time spent in Bed and Breakfast	0.8 weeks	4.5 weeks	5.7 weeks	1.7 weeks	0 weeks	0.9 weeks
Customers received in-depth housing advice	2013/14 = 433				2014/15 First 6 months = 427	

7. The above table gives the homelessness statistics for 2013/14 and the first two quarters of 2014/15.
8. As can be seen the levels of homelessness presentations, although they dipped at the end of the last financial year they have risen again in first two quarters of this year.
9. The effect of the recession continues to put individuals and families under pressure that in some instances has led to homelessness.
10. We have managed to reduce the numbers in temporary accommodation which means there has been far less use of Bed and Breakfast in the last quarter for any household types.

11. We now have use of another council house converted into two furnished temporary units. The new replacement temporary units at Mead Court are on schedule to be handed over before the end of the year.
12. Officers continue to look for other sites/properties to develop for further temporary accommodation and are currently using 4 other properties within the housing stock. The cost of any necessary furnishings and equipment needed can be met from the Hardship/Homelessness fund.
13. The housing options team have seen a total of 427 clients for in-depth housing advice in the first 6 months of 2014/15 compared to 433 for the whole of the last financial year.
14. The prevention of homelessness is still challenging particularly with the difficulty in finding people suitable alternative housing options within the private sector. Many private landlords remain unwilling to consider applicants on benefits and Local Housing Allowance rates remain well below market rents in this area.
15. The Council is promoting the new in house Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme but to date this has not generated an increase in clients being able to access the private rented sector.

Risk Analysis

16.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Cost of dealing with homelessness increases	2. The PI's show that homelessness remains on an upward trend	2. There may be a need to increase the amount of money available to spend on homelessness	Careful monitoring of the homelessness budget allows for early notification of any potential overspend. The Housing Options team continue to try to prevent homelessness where ever possible and keep the time that clients have to spend in nightly let accommodation to a minimum

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.