

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 07 June 2016

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Title: Homelessness Update

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Summary

1. This report is to brief members on:-
 - The homelessness figures for the year 2015/16

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes this report

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

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

Situation

Homelessness Figures

6. The table below shows the comparative homelessness statistics for 2015/16 and 2014/15.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Homelessness Presentations	97	112	116
Homelessness Acceptances	57	60	53
Homelessness Preventions	80	45	48
Number of Temporary Accommodation placements made in the year	76	81	87
Average time spent in Bed and Breakfast by accepted homeless families	3.71 weeks	1.73 weeks	2.4 weeks
Customers receiving in-depth housing advice	433	859	770

7. As can be seen the significant increase in the levels of homelessness that were seen in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14 have remained at this increased level in 2015/16.
8. The main reasons for homelessness last year were parental/friend evictions, relationship breakdowns and the ending of private rented tenancies.
9. There was an increased need to accommodate clients in temporary accommodation which made it more difficult to manage the through flow from bed and breakfast into our own self-contained accommodation. This led to a slight increase in the length of time on average that families have had to spend in bed and breakfast. Bed and breakfast continues to be used only as a last resort in emergencies.
10. The number of clients the housing options team saw for in-depth housing advice fell slightly in the 2015/16 but within these figures there has been an increase in clients with complex needs.

11. Although the team have continued to prevent homelessness, the figures show that it remains difficult. Where possible the housing options team negotiate with current landlords and families but realistically the only option available to many of the people they see facing homelessness is social housing, as it is the only option that is affordable for them. It is still difficult to identify private landlords willing to consider applicants on benefits and who have properties with rents within the Local Housing Allowance rates.
12. The picture for this coming year is that the situation is likely to remain difficult, with further welfare reform changes having an increased effect on people's incomes and relationships and the continued lack of affordable properties within the private rented sector.

Risk Analysis

13.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
2.Cost of dealing with homelessness increases	2. The PI's show that homelessness still is on an upward trend	2. There will continue to be a need to have the funds available to meet the council's statutory homelessness duties	Careful monitoring of the homelessness budget allows for early notification if an overspend is likely 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
2 Lack of temporary accommodation	2 There has been an increase in use of temporary accommodation over the past year due to increase in homelessness	3 If there is no other suitable temporary accommodation available then the use of bed and breakfast might increase. Legislation says that bed	Continue to monitor the availability of temporary accommodation and if necessary make provision from council stock for the use of existing properties as temporary accommodation

		and breakfast should not be used for families, there is a risk of legal challenge if placements run over 6 weeks	
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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.