

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------|
| Committee: | Housing Board | Date: | 5 July 2018 |
| Title: | Homelessness Update | | |
| Report Author: | Judith Snares, Housing Strategy and Operations Manager, 01799 510671 | Item for decision: | No |

Summary

1. This report is to brief members on:-
 - The homelessness figures for the year 2017/18
 - An update on the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes this report

Financial Implications

3. None – information only item

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

6. The table below shows the comparative homelessness statistics for 2015/16 and 2017/18.

| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Homelessness Presentations | 116 | 98 | 106 |
| Homelessness Acceptances | 53 | 52 | 49 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|----|----|
| Homelessness Preventions | 48 | 55 | 60 |
|-----------------------------|----|----|----|

7. As can be seen the levels of homelessness have stabilised over the past 3 years partially helped by the increase in the homelessness prevention work of the Housing Options Team.
8. The main reasons for homelessness last year were the ending of private rented tenancies, parental/friend evictions and relationship breakdowns.
9. The increase in supply of affordable housing in 17/18 helped to increase the through flow from temporary accommodation and to see more people being housed before they needed to access temporary accommodation.
10. The number of clients with complex needs continues to increase, particularly clients with mental health problems and alcohol and drug addictions.
11. The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act has gone smoothly and the new module on the council's Choice Based Lettings system is working well. Potentially homeless clients can now access their personalised housing plan that the team creates with them, from an online portal. The plan details the actions that the council will take and actions that people can take to try to prevent or relieve their homelessness.
12. Although people can now present to the council within 56 days of potentially being homeless we are finding that people are still leaving it later than this before they approach us for advice.
13. The Act has resulted in a culture change for staff as well as clients. The emphasis is much greater now on working alongside the client to prevent homelessness and find a housing solution without the need, initially at least, to decide whether the person is in priority need or intentionally homeless. It is early days but the Housing Options Team have been well trained and are enjoying the challenges that this new way of working brings.
14. The situation remains difficult as far as finding alternative housing for people is concerned, as the private rented sector continues to be unaffordable within this area for most of the people being seen. It is therefore essential that the supply of affordable housing is maintained.

Risk Analysis

15.

| Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigating actions |
|--|------------|--------|---|
| Lack of affordable housing within the district | 2 | 3 | Ensuring that 40% affordable housing target is met on all Section 106 sites |

- 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.