

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**HWB – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**TITLE: COVID RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS AND HEALTH**

**REPORT OF LIZ NOAKES - DIRECTOR HEALTH, WELLBEING & COMMISSIONING  
AND KATHERINE KYNASTON - DIRECTOR HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT &  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBERS – CLLR ANDY BURFORD AND CLLR DAVID WRIGHT**

**PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

1.1 This report updates the Health & Wellbeing Board on the COVID response to those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping in Telford & Wrekin.

Key points:

- The coronavirus pandemic poses significant risks for those experiencing or threatened with homelessness and rough sleeping. To address this the Council and partners have put in place specific measures to support and provide accommodation for this group. 'Everyone In' was first launched in March 2020 and the Council has since committed to 'No Return to Rough Sleeping'.
  - A multi-agency approach has underpinned the Borough's response ensuring partners are jointly responding to clients and data is shared in order to provide emergency accommodation and develop a plan for clients to be accommodated and supported on a longer term basis.
  - The Rough Sleeping Task Force established by the Council in March 2020 meets daily and includes Telford & Wrekin Council (housing and adult mental health teams), Maninplace, Kip@Maninplace, STAY, STaRS, MPFT (Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust) and the Police. Through the Task Force to date:
    - Over 360 clients have been supported from sleeping rough in Telford & Wrekin through providing emergency accommodation.
    - Over 320 clients have been re-housed into their own accommodation.
  - All clients have been supported to register with a GP to ensure they get the treatment they need.
  - A Covid-19 vaccination programme has been arranged to offer vaccinations to those within emergency accommodation.
- 1.2 The Council has successfully accessed in excess of £1.5m of external funding matched by Council investment to develop a Telford Housing First programme. An initial phase of 13 properties have been acquired to provide 'move on' accommodation with tailored wrap around support for clients referred through the Task Force. This is part of the Council and partners commitment to 'no return to rough sleeping'.

1.3 Further funding from partners including the NHS has enabled the development of key support services particularly around mental health. Much of this funding however is fixed term and there is a continued need to develop the partnership working and to seek more sustainable funding.

The Council has submitted the T&W Rough Sleeper Task Force model for an APSE 2021 Award for collaborative working across the public and third sectors.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Health & Wellbeing Board is asked to recognise the specific impact of the pandemic on those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping and the innovative arrangements put in place to address this and the success this has achieved to date.

The Board are asked to note the need to maintain this focus and to support the continued development of support services and identification of ongoing investment to improve resilience and address health inequalities faced by all those threatened with homelessness.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective (s)?	
	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and support our most vulnerable Adults</li> </ul>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	N/A	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	Yes	<p>A number of initiatives referred in this report are possible because of fixed term Government grant and partner funding. The Council have been successful in securing external funding from MHCLG, and funding from partners, i.e. CCG, to provide accommodation and support for mental health and substance misuse to this vulnerable group.</p> <p>At this early stage of the financial year, it is anticipated that the costs associated with Rough sleepers and Homelessness will be met from within the allocated grant and partner identified funding and existing budgeted resources. Consideration of budgetary impacts including future ongoing resource</p>

		will be considered as part of the Council's service and financial planning governance structure. AEM/RP 03/06/2021 (Telford & Wrekin Council)
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	In addition, it has duties to provide advice and assistance to those who are homeless or facing homelessness. The details contained within this report set out how the Council is discharging its duties in this respect.  AL – 9/06/2021
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>		
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	Yes	Borough-wide but particularly wards with the highest levels of socioeconomic deprivation and health inequalities.

#### **4. PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 4.1 People who are homeless have some of the worst health outcomes and are more likely to experience and die from preventable and treatable medical conditions and to have multiple and complex health needs. Many people who sleep rough experience a combination of physical and mental ill health and drug or alcohol dependency.
- 4.2 Alongside these needs, people who sleep rough face barriers to accessing health and care services due to complex administration processes and previous negative experiences. This means continuity of care is a challenge and health issues may not be picked up until they become acute.
- 4.3 COVID-19 Response**
- 4.3.1 The government's advice on social distancing and self-isolation during the coronavirus pandemic is challenging for people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping with people often experiencing multiple disadvantages. This led to the national 'Everyone In' scheme with local authorities required to provide accommodation for this vulnerable group.
- 4.3.2 Telford & Wrekin response in March 2020 was to set up a multi-agency Rough Sleeping Task Force to place, monitor and identify emergency accommodation and support for those facing rough sleeping. The Task Force meets daily and discusses in-depth individual clients and identifies actions to move clients into their own home. The Rough Sleeper Task Force includes: Telford & Wrekin Council (housing and adult mental health team), Maninplace, Kip@Maninplace, STAY, STaRS, MPFT (Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust) and police.

- 4.3.3 Since March 2020, the task force has provided emergency accommodation to over 350 clients and has supported over 320 of these clients into their own accommodation. The approach taken to working intensively with these clients and understanding their needs has illustrated the multiple complex needs including general poor health, varying degrees of mental health and substance misuse.
- 4.3.4 Critical to addressing these complexities is a joined up response in order to support them to thrive long term. Additional support has been provided through the appointment of a dual diagnosis nurse who provides support wherever the client is located.
- 4.3.5 In addition, the Task Force has ensured all client are either registered with a GP or has supported them to access a GP. This has included setting up a Covid-19 vaccination offer to those within emergency accommodation.
- 4.3.6 Homelessness and rough sleeping has been a particular focus at both the Council's internal gold command COVID-19 response group and the multi-agency Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Tactical Coordinating Group.

#### **4.4 Telford & Wrekin Homeless Network**

4.4.1 To further strengthen the multi-agency response and future proof and provide resilience in the light of continued public health risks a Telford & Wrekin Homeless Network has been established with representatives from the Task Force, Voluntary Sector partners, MPFT (Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust), and CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group). The regular meetings and discussions among partners have enhanced local partnership working and delivered a step-change in support between voluntary sector organisations and service providers including;

- Strengthened existing pathways into specialist services such as drug and alcohol and mental health services
- Initiated the establishment of a peer mentor led model of support for people who are homeless in the Borough in partnership with Telford Mind.
- Provided specialist training on alcohol misuse, mental health and complex needs to circa of 25 housing staff from a range of agencies to support learning and development

The Network will continue to take forward and embed the learning, good practice and positive partnership working with a focus on prevention.

#### **4.5 Sustaining Services**

4.5.1 The Council and partners have successfully accessed a range of external funding programmes to maintain and embed the work initiated over the last 18 months.

In late 2020 the Council was awarded over £1.3m from the MHCLG Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) to support delivery of support and move on accommodation options for rough sleepers and develop the Telford Housing First model- ;

- £174,784 to fund emergency accommodation placements and move on funds,
  - £1,076,653 to acquire 13 properties to accommodate those who have experienced rough sleeping or multiple episodes of homelessness with wrap around intensive support.
- 4.5.2 The Council has also invested directly matching this investment to increase emergency accommodation provision and to create new provision to continue to work intensively with some of the most complex clients preparing them for independence.
- 4.5.3 Telford & Wrekin Council were also successful in a recent bid for funding through MHCLG Rough Sleeping Initiative of £508,929 to provide additional support worker capacity based with the Council and partners up to March 2022 including:
- Tenancy Sustainment Officers – helping clients maintain their tenancies
  - Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator – supporting those presenting as rough sleeping
  - Outreach worker – the first point of contact and identifying those rough sleeping
  - Urban Kip Worker – providing support where the client is to help find accommodation.
  - Mental Health Support Worker –
  - Substance Misuse Worker –
  - Dual Diagnosis Nurse – providing clinical support where the client is located
- 4.5.4 As a result of an independent review of the harm caused by drugs by Professor Dame Carol Black, the Government announced an extra £80m as part of the government’s efforts to cut crime. Telford & Wrekin Council was eligible to bid for additional funding up to the value of £291,000. This funding will support a number of initiatives including enhanced harm reduction for those people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 4.5.5 Additional funding secured via the NHS Winter Funds is targeting mental health discharge. This will provide:
- Wrap Around Support Service – a 3 month project provided by Maninplace and Branches (£17,000) offering mental health support to those discharged from Redwoods to B&B / other temporary accommodation.
  - Mental Health nurse and support worker – fixed term roles based within the Rough Sleeping Task Force to improve connections with the mental health NHS services, and to provide support and guidance to the Task Force. £40,000 for an initial 3 month term.
  - Support workers and Peer support workers based within a couple of voluntary sector providers (Telford Mind and Stay) to support people being discharged or who are in the community and are at risk of admission without additional support.
- 4.5.6 Alongside these new services, the development of a Telford & Wrekin Mental Health Alliance enables key voluntary sector providers of mental health support plus statutory services to work together to better plan and allocate joint support plans, improve information sharing around risk and strategies of support, as well as identifying where there is possible duplication between partners all supporting the same individual.

#### **4.6 Non clinical crisis interventions**

4.6.1 Additional bids have been submitted by the Council to the CCG to provide non clinical crisis interventions for people who are in mental health crisis and also use substances. Building on the success of the Calm Café, funding is being sought for additional social work support, a support worker to run the café, and peer support workers to support and encourage engagement. We know there is a high level of unmet substance misuse and mental health needs amongst people who sleep rough so targeted support using a local model could have a positive impact.

#### **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

None

#### **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

#### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

#### **Report prepared by**

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