

5 September 2016

## HOMELESSNESS SCRUTINY SUB-GROUP – 12 OCTOBER 2016

The first meeting of the Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 12 October 2016 in Committee Room 2 at the Town Hall, Rugby.

Adam Norburn  
Executive Director

### A G E N D A

#### PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Apologies – to receive apologies for absence from the meeting.
2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of:

- (a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- (b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors; and
- (c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

***Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a pecuniary interest the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.***

***Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.***

3. Briefing paper
4. Dates of future meetings – please bring your diaries to the meeting

## **PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION**

There is no business involving exempt information.

### **Membership of the Task Group:**

Councillors Mrs Garcia, Claire Edwards, Mrs New, Roodhouse and Sandison

*If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Veronika Beckova, Democratic Services Officer (01788 533591 or e-mail [veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk)). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.*

*If you wish to attend the meeting and have any special requirements for access please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.*

# Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group

12 October 2016

## Briefing Paper

### Subject Area:

Increase in homelessness and how this can be addressed

### Background:

The council has seen significant increases in homelessness over the last couple of years. Homeless acceptances were 106 in 2013/14, this increased to 171 in 2014/15 and 179 in 2015/16. The figure is likely to be similar for 2016/17.

Preventing homelessness is key for the council and this is reflected in the Rugby Homelessness Strategy developed with the Homelessness Forum. Priorities are:

1. Understand housing need
2. Sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
3. Provide more options in the private sector for people in housing need

### Homelessness Duties

- Housing Act 1997 – Part 7 – councils have a duty to provide suitable housing for priority need groups such as families with children, disabled households. If settled accommodation isn't available then accommodation must be made available in the short-term. This only applies to priority groups.
- Homelessness Act 2002 – extended priority need groups to include care leavers, 16 and 17 year olds, care leavers, vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces, prison or custody and people fleeing violence.

### Main Issues

- The Housing Options Team is seeing more single people with multiple issues including mental health and substance misuse
- Large numbers of households losing private sector accommodation – served with NTQs
- Street homelessness – last count in November 2015 was 19. Significant number non priority, non-eligible households. 8 still sleeping rough. Rest housed or moved out of area. Next count November 2016.
- Cost of private sector accommodation – 1 bed flat £550pcm, 2 bed terrace £650 pcm, 3 bed terrace £750pcm
- Salaries relatively low – logistics, warehousing, service industry work

- Limited supply of affordable housing
- Numbers of homelessness in band 1 has increased to around 100 from around 30 a couple of years ago
- Numbers in B&B at its peak was 26 in August 2016, now down to 10 (due to the PSLS)

### **What we are currently doing**

- Introduced a 2-year funded scheme called the ASH Project – floating support for young people and those with mental health issues
- Tenancy Ready training – trained 22 young people so far in 2016
- Employed a Housing Officer in the Estates Team to support people in their tenancies looking at debt management, accessing employment, etc so vulnerable people can sustain tenancies.
- Introduced a Private Sector Leasing Scheme (PSLS) – which includes Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). We have 15 units of accommodation at present – more due in October and November.
- Using capital receipts (RTB) to consider purchasing properties for using as temporary accommodation in private sector
- Working with partners such as the CAB who provide us with a prevention service that compliments ours as part of their SLA with the council
- Hope 4 – drop in service we work with the users of the service to try and re-house them. Not always possible if ineligible for housing, history of arrears ASB, criminality.
- New Housing Related Support Providers Home Group, Chapter 1, St Basils and P3 – support for vulnerable groups at risk of homelessness
- Now analysing approaches to understand why they are approaching the service. A 6-week analysis is underway until end of October – working with Warwickshire CC and the other districts and boroughs on this.

### **Other options going forward**

- More strategic approach with Hope 4 (Hope Centre and Winter Night Shelter provider) involving Housing Related Support providers to help people become independent; enabling them to access housing, specialist services, benefits, training and employment.
- Extending partnership approach with voluntary, charity and statutory organisations
- Understanding the availability of mental health services across Warwickshire and partner organisations priorities such as the NHS

- Considering whether we should extend the ASH partnership
- Developing employment and training opportunities
- Property purchases in the private sector – more options and will help to alleviate press on RBC stock
- Attracting more private landlords – incentives
- Consider other options to help households sustain tenancies – welfare packages, continue with tenancy ready training and support in tenancies