

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee**  
**07 September 2023**

**Report Title:** Homelessness Review of New Arrangements

**Submitted by:** Services Director – Regulatory Services

**Portfolios:** Community Safety and Wellbeing

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Purpose of the Report**

To advise the committee on the development of roles and activities to support individuals who are or have been homeless and rough sleeping.

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee**

- 1. Receive the report on Homelessness Review of New arrangements**
- 2. Provide views on the roles and activities included in the review**

**Reasons**

To ensure the Committee is kept updated on the ongoing work to ensure rough sleeping is prevented where possible or otherwise is rare, brief and non-reoccurring.

**1. Background**

1.1 Ending rough sleeping for good is an ambition of a Government Strategy launched in 2022. It focuses on putting structures in place to protect people from the traumas of rough sleeping and that when it does happen there is a rapid and tailored response, putting a roof over the person's head, supporting their recovery and helping to move away from life on the street for good.

1.2 A number of initiatives and funding has been made available to support local authorities in these activities.

**2. Issues**

2.1 Two are key support services responding to homelessness need within the borough, rough sleeper services and Newcastle Housing Advice.

2.2 **Rough Sleeper Services** – this service has developed significantly over the last year in response to the Government strategy, funding options and an increase in complex situations leading to rough sleeping. These new arrangements are reviewed in the accompanying documents in Appendix 1.

2.3 The roles and services identified in the review have been created to develop a pathway of support;

- Reactive – responding to incidence of rough sleeping with outreach activities, hub facilities, access to health care and support to find accommodation.
- Preventative – accommodation programmes and support to main tenancies.
- Recovery – supporting people to maintain a new life and not have reoccurring rough sleeping.

2.4 The review also identifies the accommodation options that are available and ones that are being developed.

2.5 **Newcastle Housing Advice** - The service supports families and individuals who become or are threatened with homelessness for multiple reasons including following loss of tenancies, relationship or family breakdowns, discharges from hospitals and prison and care leavers. This is the work to ensure the council adheres to its homelessness duties. Advice and support is provided to secure alternative accommodation or join the choice based letting waiting list. In certain circumstances temporary accommodation is provided to prevent homelessness or to allow further investigations to be made. Figures for this area of work are also included in the review in appendix 1.

2.6 The service is also responsible for managing the choice based waiting list through a joint allocations policy with Aspire. This is the mechanism for the fair and consistent allocation of social housing.

### 3. **Proposal**

#### **That the Committee**

3.1 Receive the Homelessness Review of New arrangements.

3.2 Provide views on the roles and activities included in the review

### 4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 To ensure the Committee is kept updated on the ongoing work to ensure rough sleeping is prevented where possible or otherwise is rare, brief and non-reoccurring

### 5. **Options Considered**

5.1 The roles and activities outlined in the Review of New Arrangements in appendix 1 are the result of analysing the local situation and needs and how this aligns with funding opportunities. The options with the Review of New Arrangements are to provide a view on the ongoing work and activities and to suggest any further enhancements and funding.

### 6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Housing Act 1996, Part VII (as amended) sets out the circumstances when a local authority is required to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households. The expectations for this temporary accommodation are then set out in the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012.

6.2 Other relevant statutory guidance includes:

- Homelessness Act 2002
- Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006
- Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996
- Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003
- Localism Act 2011 (Commencement No 2 and Transitional Provisions) (England) Order 2012
- Supplementary Guidance on Changes in Localism Act 2011
- Supplementary Guidance on Domestic Abuse and Homelessness 2014
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

6.3 Not having a fit for purpose service will leave the Council open to a legal challenge.

## 7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 The activities reviewed in this report do not adversely affect any protected groups.

7.2 The activities are designed to have a positive impact on vulnerable individuals or families who become homeless.

## 8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this review and report. There are financial implications arising out of temporary accommodation and supported accommodation use. A Temporary Accommodation Policy update is scheduled to be presented to Cabinet in November 2023 which will review budgets and spend.

## 9. **Major Risks**

9.1 There is a risk that despite all the activities and support available the rough sleeping figures do not reduce or continue to increase. This mitigation to this is in developing the right expertise and knowledge within our team, continually developing our support and accommodation offers so that any increases can be managed within these services. Additionally, accurately collating statistics on numbers, activities and outcomes so that we are in a position to continue to bid for all available funding sources.

9.2 There is a risk that at the end of the RSI funding round in March 2025 that we are not successful in obtaining further ongoing funding and services have to cease. We work closely with our Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Advisor for the Rough Sleeping Initiative and through this we will be kept informed of future funding rounds in order to be ready to maximise funding opportunities.

9.3 Due to the funding insecurity there is a risk that we lose skilled, experienced staff due to their posts being fixed term and them seeking permanent posts and security.

## 10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 The activities contribute towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals below:



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This report does not contain a key decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 [Temporary Accommodation Policy](#) – Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

12.2 [Future Provision of Temporary Accommodation](#) – Cabinet 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – Review of New Homelessness Arrangements

13.2 Appendix 2 – Confidential: Additional data from DLUHC not cleared for publication

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/ending-rough-sleeping-for-good](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ending-rough-sleeping-for-good)