
Executive

25 January 2018

Report of the Assistant Director, Housing and Community Safety

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods

Homelessness in York

Purpose of the report

1. Updating the Homelessness Council motion, and update the Executive on the preparation for Homeless Reduction Act.
2. At Full Council in October 2017, Council resolved that officers consider the motion proposed by Cllr Craghill, seconded by Cllr Kramm.

“Council is appalled by the growing homeless crisis nationally and here in York and notes with regret the following:

- The recent sudden death on the streets of York of one of our long term rough sleepers;
 - A report published in August this year by ‘Crisis’, the national charity for homeless people, which shows that almost a quarter of a million people are experiencing the worst forms of homelessness across Britain, with rough sleeping set to rise by 76% in the next 10 years unless policies are changed;
 - The fact that the official number of street homeless in York rose from 2 in Nov 2011 to 18 in 2015 and has stayed at that level for the last two years;
 - The lack of sufficient temporary accommodation in York and the lack of sufficient affordable one bedroom homes for people to move into.
3. Council acknowledges the achievement of the Council’s Housing Options team in being awarded a ‘Gold Award’ for their work and the

large number of people inside and outside the Council in the voluntary and community sector striving to support people who are homeless.

4. However, Council recognises that more always needs to be done and therefore asks for a report to the Executive following up on its Homeless Review 16/17 which was reported to the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods in July 2017 and the Homelessness Strategy set out in the multi-agency 'A City Partnership to Prevent Homelessness 2013-2018' regarding any further measures which could further assist homeless individuals in York."
5. Motion asks for
 - Immediate measures to provide additional temporary accommodation and avoid if at all possible any further deaths on our streets this winter;
 - Any further measures that can be actioned in a short/medium timescale to prevent this crisis from spiralling out of control in York. These might include an extension of the Housing First model; the provision of daytime facilities in the city centre to improve the health of people who find themselves on the streets; and the options for closer working with partners across the region to improve outcomes for homeless people.
 - Plans for engagement with people living on the streets, in temporary accommodation and other homeless people to learn from their views and ideas."

Recommendations

6. The Executive meeting is asked to
 - Note the progress made in response to this motion and agree the recommendations in Option 1. In particular note the recommendation to offer a continuous severe weather provision until Feb 28th 2018 which will address the immediate issue and reduce the number of rough sleepers in York and additional actions that are not already being considered as part of Homeless Strategy action plan.
 - **Reason** – To look at further ways to tackle the challenge of rough sleeping in York, recognising that there is not an immediate

solution due to the chaotic lifestyle of some of the customers and the potential implications of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.

Work ethics

7. Agencies in York have a committed and dedicated employees working with people that are experiencing homelessness.
8. There is extensive multi-agency working to tackle homelessness and agencies are continually looking at ways to improve services.
9. The current homeless strategy and action plan 2013-18 has resulted in significant improvements to services and to quality of accommodation and the development of the Homeless Strategy and action plan 2018-23 is currently in progress
10. Agencies are working together to tackle the future demands of homeless reduction act and new statutory duties
11. The position regarding rough sleepers needs to be seen in the context that, despite all efforts, some individuals choose not to engage with services opting to remain on the streets. It is important to have a better understanding why people would choose this option, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) needs assessment that is currently in progress is looking to provide some insight into this question. The results will be available in spring and the results will be reported to The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) and will also inform the new homeless strategy that will be published in July.

Background

12. Rough sleepers are the most prominent customer group and can access the services delivered by City of York Council and partner agencies. Services are divided into 2 specific areas (statutory homeless and single homeless - resettlement).
13. Historically rough sleeping, statutory homelessness and use of temporary accommodation and B&B was high in York (early 2000's) but with concerted effort has reduced significantly over the years, although rough sleeping has increased in recent years.
14. The Local Authority has had a statutory duty to assist people that are homeless under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act

2002. There is new legislation due to come into force on 3/4/18 – Homeless Reduction Act 2017.

15. The service provided under the Housing Act 1996 is dependent upon meeting specific criteria. If an applicant is homeless, eligible and believed to be in priority need, the Local Authority would have a duty to provide temporary accommodation while investigations under the Housing Act 1996 are completed.
16. Only if someone meets all 5 criteria homeless, eligible, in priority, unintentionally homeless and has a local connection is there a duty to offer permanent accommodation.
17. This statutory duty will be extended to prevention and relief of homelessness under the new Homeless Reduction Act 2017 but does not remove the current duties.
18. Temporary accommodation is currently provided at Ordnance Lane, Howe Hill family block, Crombie House and Holgate Road (50 units available) plus occasional use of B&B, respite rooms and dispersed accommodation. As of 30/9/17 there were 58 households in temporary accommodation. It is the intention to amalgamate all temporary accommodation into 57 units at James House. This is currently at planning stage and if agreed should be available from the end of 2018 / early 2019.
19. Single Homeless - Resettlement Services are a specialist service for single people that generally do not meet the criteria of the homeless legislation (not priority need or are intentionally homeless). Individuals can access housing advice via the Housing Options Team, Youth Homeless Workers, Specialist Housing Adviser (frail older and vulnerable) or the contracted Early Intervention and Prevention Team (current contract holders are Salvation Army).
20. Resettlement accommodation is accessed via the Single Access Point (SAP). For those with no local connection, and for who it is safe to return a limited service is offered while arrangements are made to help someone return to the local area (reconnection).
21. The resettlement model offers single homeless and rough sleepers access to supported hostel accommodation. For the more complex this is tier 1 (24/7 staffed hostels). Individuals are expected to adhere to basic hostel rules, pay their rent and amenity charges, plus engage with support and education services. When ready, individuals will move onto tier 2 shared housing, with more

independence before ultimately moving into self contained accommodation. For those with no issues they will be helped into independent accommodation (private rented sector).

22. Accommodation is predominately provided by City of York Council and Changing Lives (who were awarded the Adult Community Wellbeing contract in February 2017). York has a range of front line tier 1 accommodation for single people that are homeless and have vulnerability.

- Union Terrace Hostel 39 beds (Changing Lives)
- Peasholme Centre 22 beds (CYC).
- Howe Hill for Young People 23 beds (CYC).
- Robinson Court women's hostel 13 beds (Changing Lives)
- Robinson Court young peoples service 4 beds (Changing Lives)

All referrals are via Single Access Point

https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20094/homelessness/816/hostels_and_emergency_accommodation

23. There are currently approximately 90 units of tier 2 accommodation (shared housing with visiting / on site staff not 24/7), supported lodgings and move on flats.

24. Additional services for rough sleepers include:

- Salvation Army Early Intervention and Prevention Team carry out regular street walks and constantly monitor and offer advice to rough sleepers. This service is commissioned by CYC
- MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) engages people with complex needs. MEAM customers must be homeless, have mental health issues, offending issues and substance issues. This service is commissioned by CYC
- No Second Night Out (NSNO). Where a person is new to rough sleeping, York has adopted the NSNO approach. This means that someone who has slept out for 1 night will be offered an emergency bed and asked to engage with Salvation Army to secure longer term accommodation.
https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/8527/no_second_night_out_nsno_and_emergency_bed_protocolpdf. York has extended NSNO to include new rough sleepers and entrenched rough

sleepers offering emergency beds and provides up to 11 NSNO spaces.

- Severe Weather Provision operates between over 1st Nov and 28th February every year, opening only when the temperatures is freeezing or below. This provides an additional 5 emergency placements to the NSNO beds.

Despite being aware of severe weather provision some entrenched rough sleepers do not utilise this service.

- Housing First <http://hfe.homeless.org.uk/principles-housing-first>

Housing First provides self contained accommodation with intensive, flexible and person-centred support to individuals with complex needs.

CYC has adopted the Housing First model and uses existing CYC stock to house a small number of complex rough sleepers who are engaging with MEAM and for whom this is the most suitable housing option. All MEAM customers are homeless and have mental health, offending, substance misuse issues and they require intensive, often daily visits for long term support for many years. Housing First is not an appropriate option for everyone. Some people benefit from living in supported housing before moving onto independent accommodation.

We have significant success with those people that engage and move through resettlement services. Last year we resettled 70 people into permanent tenancies, plus a small number of individuals with complex individuals using the Housing First model.

- That the Street Link rough sleeper reporting line operates 24/7 co-ordinated via Salvation Army. Close working between homeless services, NY Police, BID and Community Safety to concerns and respond to complaints about rough sleepers.

Recent statistics and update of annual homeless review

25. Homeless acceptances (duty under Housing Act 1996)

Date	Unintentional & in priority need	Intentional	Not Priority Need	Not Homeless	ineligible	Total decisions
2012/13	146	43	22	7	0	218
2013/14	109	44	17	9	1	180

2014/15	102	31	24	30	0	188
2015/16	91	23	16	33	0	163
2016/17	97	37	18	34	0	186
Q1 and Q2 2017	43	15	8	21	0	87

26. Temporary accommodation (end of quarter)

Date	Bed & Breakfast Hotels	Hostels/ Women's Refuges	LA/HA Stock	Total No of Households
31-Mar-12	6	24	63	93
31-Mar-13	5	17	77	99
31-Mar-14	2	14	49	65
31-Mar-15	2	18	45	65
31-Mar-16	1	17	38	56
31-Mar-17	2	17	43	62
30-Sep-17	1	20	37	58

27. Prevention

No of Successful Preventions (Prevented/Relieved)	
Period	No of Cases
2012/13	746
2013/14	683
2014/15	664
2015/16	630
2016/17	752
Q1 and 2 2017	324

28. Rough sleepers (official count). The annual Street Count evaluation is based on a typical night and is submitted to central government. It is determined by a strict methodology, used nationally and is not a simple street walk head count. Since 2010 this figure has increased year on year and a count of 29 was reported in November 2017. Rough sleeping has increased by 132% nationally since 2010. The charity Crisis predicts there will be a 76% rise in rough sleeping nationally over the next decade.

	2003	2006	2008	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
York	14	2	0	2	8	9	13	18	18	29
England						2414	2744	3569	4134	TBC

29. Reducing rough sleeping by using additional emergency beds 365 days per year under NSNO and an additional 5 units during severe weather (Nov - Feb) and Nightstop.
30. A further 3 beds per night are provided at Arc Light via Bed-a-Head (hospital discharge).
31. These provisions benefit individuals who are at risk of homelessness or recently homeless and engage with services, who can be helped into accommodation quickly but there may not be accommodation available for more complex / entrenched because of their behaviour or their lack of engagement. These are the most visible rough sleepers.
32. Wherever possible agencies make contact with all known rough sleepers and are aware of their individual circumstances, all rough sleepers have been offered support and help to access accommodation, although for those with no local connection to York it may not be in the district. It should be noted that a significant number of current rough sleepers have previously used the services available but have been excluded because of their behaviour. Before anyone is excluded services confer and manage individuals to avoid the need for exclusion if at all possible. A number of rough sleepers are entrenched and refuse any form of help including support from MEAM.

	Howe Hill	Peasholme	Arc Light	Robinson Court	Nightstop	Bed-a head	Total
2016/17 NSNO and Severe weather	747	1511	202	197	169	108	2934
1/4/17 – 1/12/17 NSNO and Severe weather	209	878	40	104	75		1306

<http://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/policy-and-lobbying-priorities/no-second-night-out-campaign>

33. As of 1/1/18 there were 29 people on the waiting list for tier 1 accommodation of whom 13 did not currently need accommodation (in prison, respite care, in tenancy awaiting eviction), 6 were accommodated in emergency beds, 14 were either sofa surfing or in emergency beds and 2 were rough sleeping. As of 3/1/18 there were 9 rough sleepers in York.

Recent changes

34. There have been a series of changes since 2008 which have impacted on homeless services
- In 2008 the Government set Local Authorities a target to reduce temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010. On 31st March 2008, there were 209 statutory homeless households in temporary accommodation. The target was 120 in temporary accommodation by 31/3/10. This was achieved (79) and has remained low (September 2017 – 58)
 - Homeless Prevention Grant – loss of ring fencing / loss of services, including 1 post at Salvation Army (Early Intervention and Prevention Team 2007/8) after which rough sleeping began to rise again
 - A national change to the substance misuse policy and funding has meant less options for the engagement of clients within the criminal justice system and those presenting with anti social behaviour. In addition reduced funding has impacted on the resources available to assertively respond to complex cases where they are choosing not to engage with support services for drug or alcohol related issues. Services are nationally focused on outcomes and customers working towards abstinence as a life long goal which is a difficult aim for those individuals who are homeless and don't have the personal resources to contemplate this as an aim.
 - Supporting People funding, loss of ring fencing March 2012, the report presented to the Executive on 28th April 2016 indicated that the budget for the (all) housing related support services was £2.5m of which £750K efficiencies was identified through re-modelling of provision. This saving covered all contracts not just Community Wellbeing contract.
 - Adult Wellbeing Contract –changes in strategic direction for partner landlords, properties no longer identified as fit for purpose and loss of support contracts for providers that were also property owners resulted in the loss of accommodation units – 5 beds at Feversham Crescent, 5 beds at Southlands Road, 5 beds at East Mount Road, 5 beds at Heslington Road and 4 beds at Vine Street. The maximum numbers of move on properties (CYC

properties leased to ACW contract holder) that can be used is 12 and this is being utilised more fully than previous contract holder.

- Mental Health – recent loss of 6 beds New Lane, and future decisions required about long term mental health accommodation. There is no specialist accommodation for people with complex needs / dual diagnosis.
 - Universal Credit and welfare benefit reforms has had a significant impact on single homeless, many rough sleepers choosing not to ‘sign on’ but this restricts access to accommodation. York full roll out started in July 2017.
35. Close working between homeless services, NY Police, BID and Community Safety to respond to complaints about rough sleepers. Any enforcement action is linked to anti-social behaviour and not to ‘rough sleeping’ per say. That all enforcement action takes place in conjunction with other services to assist someone into accommodation.
36. York is a lucrative city with a vibrant night time economy which attracts begging. Not all beggars are rough sleepers. Of 11 prolific beggars 4 are in accommodation, 1 has never been seen rough sleeping and 6 are homeless. There is no longer a requirement for a busking permit in York and as such a number of rough sleepers will busk / beg.
37. That the changes to sentencing and post sentencing has resulted in shorter sentences, increased offender homelessness. That there are targets for Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) to secure accommodation for offenders leaving prison placing additional demands on services. National Probation Service aim to secure accommodation for people leaving prison if they are homeless.

Consultation

38. There has been significant consultation in recent months with stakeholders, staff and customers around the homeless consultation and Homeless Health Needs Assessment. Findings will inform the Homeless Strategy 2018-23.

Existing action in progress

39. Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) was introduced in York in 2014 with funding from Arc Light and North Yorkshire Probation. This funding ended in 2016 and has been supported on a temporary basis by CYC homelessness prevention grant. Securing long term funding for MEAM was an action in the 2013-18 homeless strategy action plan and has now been achieved. Funding is now in place for 2 MEAM posts through mainstreaming within the Adult Community Wellbeing Support contract.
40. To provide additional 3 hostel bed spaces at Peasholme and Howe Hill for Young People. Refurbishment work currently in progress.
41. To implement Homeless Reduction Act 2017. This new legislation places new duties on the Local Authority which provides an opportunity to improve / develop services but there is concern that the demand for advice and accommodation will increase. New burdens funding (£68,367 over 3 years) is unlikely to meet the anticipated need (100% increase in workload). Intention to appoint an additional Housing Options Worker and a Housing Options Support Worker and to use existing resources. The full implications of the changes are difficult to gauge and will be subject to review. Initial findings will be reported in the annual review that will be presented to the executive member for housing and safer communities in the summer of 2018.
42. A recent funding application by Peasholme Charity has been shortlisted for final consideration. The application is for £50,000 grant would fund the delivery of 'Next Steps' an intensive support and tenancy coaching service for homeless people or those at risk of homelessness; the project will focus on the delivery of support to people with multiple complex needs but not MEAM customers who are facing barriers within existing housing pathways. A specialist lead worker, the Tenancy Coach, will support clients to move an individual from a point of rough sleeping or insecure accommodation, to hostel accommodation or independent living.
43. To expand day services. Carecent is currently looking to expand facilities (WC and shower) and hours. Provisional start date for building works is April 18.
44. Early Intervention and Prevention contract is going out to tender early 2018. Contract start date is 1/8/18.

45. We have a comprehensive Homeless Strategy 2013-18 and a new one is currently being written / consulted on for 2018-23, including a Health and Homelessness assessment which will be reported to Health and Wellbeing Board to be included in JSNA. In light of new Homeless Reduction Act 2017, the action points will focus on prevention, provision of accommodation and support and partnership working.
46. Mental health housing review – ongoing piece of work to address housing needs of around 15-20 individuals with very complex needs who find themselves in a ‘revolving door’ – between homelessness, hospital, prison, and supported housing – because York does not currently have the right type of accommodation and support available to properly meet their needs.
47. Affordable housing programme. In 2017/18 there are 98 affordable homes due to complete (this is housing association and CYC). In 2018/19 it is estimate delivery of 61 general needs affordable homes (again CYC and HA).
48. Development of James House (temporary accommodation). Completion date autumn 2018.
49. That re-classification of Howe Hill family block (6 units) to resettlement when the move to James House is complete.
50. Agreement to set up a Housing Development Company with the aim of building a range of housing including social rented. The intention is to maximize the use of the council’s land asset and increase the housing supply in the city.
51. To work with Changing Lives (current AWC holders) to manage additional shared housing properties. To work with CYC and Registered Social landlords to identify suitable replacement shared housing or to purchase suitable shared housing. The purchase of properties would be possible through Housing Revenue Account. Revenue costs would be met by existing Adult Community Wellbeing contract.
52. Work with NY Police to prioritise city centre enforcement / begging / Anti social behaviour.
53. Work with Tees, Esk, Wear Valley NHS Trust, CCG and mental health services to provide relevant supported accommodation (ongoing via mental health review). A report went to the HWBB on

24th January 2018 there will be a further report in the summer that will provide more detail on setting up a resettlement pathway.

54. Work with individuals to help and support them to access welfare benefits in conjunction with DWP, CYC and partner agencies

Options

55. **Option 1.** To agree the proposed changes developed in response to the Council motion
56. To operate severe weather continuously throughout winter period, until 28/2/18 rather than only on cold nights. This was agreed by accommodation providers on 12/12/17.
57. That there is agreement in Housing Revenue Account business plan to use £20m to build a significant number of new council properties to rent (affordable social rent). We intend to work with Housing Development Team to advocate for some affordable one bedroom homes, including exploring the opportunity to look to innovative ideas to build more 1 bedroom properties – maybe consider ‘off the shelf’ properties (circa £30,000 plus VAT) or modular build, plus land purchase. This would need support from local Councillors, CYC planning department.
58. That consideration is given to expanding the number of emergency beds in the city. There is £125,000 available over a 3 year period to pilot an innovative scheme to meet the needs of the city.
59. To consider employing a Private Rented Officer to work with existing services to assist individuals to access the private rented sector. To offer support and contact for landlords
60. **Option 2.** To reject proposed changes

Analysis

61. To operate severe weather will maximise access to emergency beds during the winter period. Total of 16 plus 3 Bed-a-Head.
62. The investment in new council housing and the creation of a development company will increase housing stock and widen the availability of housing the different tenures

63. The expansion of emergency beds would reduce rough sleeping but those individuals unwilling to engage or those that have been excluded from services due to their behaviour may still rough sleep
64. A private rented officer will assist rough sleepers and single homeless to access PRS accommodation, in particular complex customers.

Council Plan

65. The proposals and actions to tackle rough sleeping in York contribute to the three
 - **a prosperous city for all** - where local businesses can thrive and residents have good quality jobs, housing and opportunities
 - **a focus on frontline services** - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities
 - **a council that listens to residents** - to ensure it delivers the services they want and works in partnership with local communities.

Implications

66. **Financial:** The provision of the current severe weather facility is predominantly met by accommodation services, but the small cost for food and laundry will be met from current budget.
67. An additional £35k re-occurring budget has been identified and will meet the costs of increasing the numbers of emergency beds. Procurement has advised that the additional Housing funding made available could be commissioned through a pilot project. We could advertise a tender opportunity for interested providers to deliver an innovative service on behalf of the council for an initial 1 year with an option to extend for up to a further two years with an estimated total contract value of £125k. This would provide a suitable timeframe for the council to assess the impact of the pilot on reducing rough sleeping and meeting the outcomes of our customers.
68. A further £75k non re-occurring budget has been identified to meet cost of expanding Housing First and PRS officer.
69. **Human Resources (HR):** Appointment of PRS officer

- 70. **Equalities**– Community Impact Assessment has been completed.
- 71. **Legal**- None other than procurement (discussed in finance)
- 72. **Crime and Disorder** – Reducing rough sleeping and begging in York would contribute to reducing crime and disorder
- 73. **Information Technology (IT)** – None.
- 74. **Property** – None
- 75. **Risks**- any additional services will reduce rough sleeping and the associated risks
- 76. **Other**- None

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



**Date
3/1/18**

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes – none

Background papers:

Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee -
Provision for homeless people over the winter period 12/12/17

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=671&MId=9947&Ver=4>
(Agenda reports pack page 59 onwards)

Homeless Strategy and action plan 2013-18

https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/1948/homelessness_strategy_2013pdf

https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/7874/homelessness_action_plan

Homeless review 2016-17 and appendix

https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/11323/homeless_review_201617

https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/11324/homelessness_performance_201617