

---

**Decision Session - Executive Leader  
(incorporating Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods)**

**18 July 2016**

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing & Community Safety

**Homeless Review 2015/16**

**Summary**

1. This report looks at the activity governed by the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002 and the City of York Council's Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 in respect of the financial year 2015/16. The primary focus is to report on prevention work, the trends of statutory homelessness and rough sleeper.
2. The report identifies targets and priorities for 2016/17.
3. The report incorporates the work and contribution of partner agencies to deliver a comprehensive service to homeless households across York, many of whom are the most socially excluded people in society. Each agency contributes to this success and is a vital part of the jigsaw.

**Recommendations**

4. The Executive Leader (incorporating Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods is asked to:
  - a. Note the contents of the report;
  - b. Agree the priorities and targets for 2016/17 as set out in paragraph 16.

**Reason** – To ensure the council continues to meet its statutory responsibilities and supports the most vulnerable in society.

**Background and overview of service**

5. There is a duty on all Local Authorities to provide an advice service to all homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. In addition the Local Authority has a duty to provide temporary accommodation for certain households in accordance with Housing Act 1996.

6. The remit of the work carried out by the Homeless Service (which incorporates Housing Options, Housing Registrations, Resettlement and Temporary Accommodation) is set out in legislation and in the City's Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 '*A City Partnership to prevent homelessness*'. The current action plan identifies actions to tackle homelessness and develop services.
7. **Statutory homelessness** refers to those people who have made a homeless application to their local authority and have met the necessary criteria set out in legislation to be accepted as eligible for assistance (according to immigration status), homeless, in priority need, unintentionally homeless and have a local connection. This group may include families, pregnant women and vulnerable single people.
8. **Non-statutory / non-priority homeless** tend to be single people or childless couples who are not assessed as being in priority need and are only entitled to 'advice and assistance' including support to access private rented accommodation, housing via North Yorkshire Home Choice ('waiting list') or supported housing.
9. **Rough sleepers** are people who are roofless / street homeless. This is a relatively small number of people when considering the wider population of York.
10. In York, homeless prevention services and statutory homelessness assessments are carried out by the council's Housing Options Team, based at West Offices. The Salvation Army, Early Intervention and Prevention Team provide specialist advice to single homeless (18+), the Youth Homeless Workers provide specialist advice to young people aged 16 and 17 that are homeless and the Older Persons Specialist provides housing advice for 60+ age group.
11. The Homeless Strategy 2013-18 sets out 5 strategic aims which have been amended in the Housing Options and Homeless Strategy Action Plan to:
  - a. **Strategic aim 1.** Ensure people who are at risk of homelessness are aware of and have access to the services they may need to prevent it.
  - b. **Strategic aim 2.** Ensure the provision of, and fair access to, accommodation sufficient to meet the identified housing needs
  - c. **Strategic aim 3.** Ensure that people with housing related support needs have these fully assessed and have access to service required to sustain successful independent living and prevent homelessness

- d. **Strategic aim 4.** Ensure the effective multi-agency and partnership working occurs across all services to prevent homelessness and provide appropriate accommodation and support to meet the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- e. **Strategic Aim 5.** Deliver and develop early intervention strategies to tackle predicted trends in homelessness.

## Targets

12. The council's targets for the service are based upon The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) priorities and out local priorities as set out in the Homeless Strategy.

### Performance Targets - 2015/16

- Target for reducing number of households placed in temporary accommodation for 2015/16 was 62, the actual outturn was 53. This was a significant success given the pressures placed on the service as a result of the Boxing Day Floods. **Target achieved**
- That B&B for families should only be used in emergencies and then for no more than 6 weeks. As of 31/3/16 there was only 1 households in B&B and this was not a family). **Target achieved**
- To maintain rough sleepers at 0 but has not been met as in November 2015 the official submission was 18. This is a significant concern. **Target missed**
- Achieve housing performance targets within departmental service plan around voids and rent arrears. **Target achieved**
- Deliver actions points set out within Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 'A City Partnership to prevent homelessness' action plan within identified time scales; **Ongoing**
- (Gold Standard Challenge) Not to use B&B for 16 or 17 year olds. 1 placement in 2015/16. **Ongoing**
- (Gold Standard Challenge) Not to use B&B for families, other than in emergencies and then for no longer than 6 weeks. No placement for longer than 6 weeks in 2015/16 but **Ongoing**

## Priorities set in 2015/16

- To complete an interim review of the Homeless Strategy 2013-18 and action plan and prioritise any relevant actions. **Completed.**
- To continue to tackle rough sleeping, street drinking and begging (in conjunction with Community Safety Hub) and explore need for day facilities and night shelter in light of rising numbers of rough sleepers and associated street drinking and begging. **Ongoing**
- To increase the portfolio and review the business model of YorHome to ensure future sustainability of project. YorHome now manages Tees Valley Properties. **Completed**
- To revisit the option of using the private rented sector to discharge homeless duty to private rented sector as appropriate. Ongoing discussion with private landlords but need to continue this. **Ongoing**
- Re-provision of Ordnance Lane hostel. Currently tender completed, contractor appointed planning application in progress. **Ongoing**
- Work alongside partners to explore opportunities to develop additional specialist mental health accommodation. In discussion with new provider Tees, Esk, Wear Valley NHS Trust (October 2015). **Ongoing.**
- Work towards achieving the 10 'Gold Standard challenges' as set out by DCLG. Achieved Bronze standard during 2015-16. **Ongoing.** Achievements as of 31/3/16

1 Corporate commitment	<b>PASS 15/16</b>
2 Partnership	<b>PASS 16/17</b>
3 Housing Options	<b>PASS 16/17</b>
4 No Second Night Out	<b>PASS 15/16</b>
5. Pathway to housing	<b>PASS 16/17</b>
6 PRS	<b>Submitted 16/17</b>
7 Mortgage Repossessions	<b>PASS 15/16</b>
8 HL strategy	<b>PASS 16/17</b>
9 No YP in B&B	<b>Deferred until June 2016 as 1 young person in B&amp;B in June 2015</b>
10 No family in B&B	<b>Still to be submitted</b>

- Continue to adapt services in light of future legislative changes and welfare reforms. **Ongoing**
- To seek mainstream funding of Older Persons Housing Specialist if appropriate. Post extended until 30/9/16. **Ongoing**

- To work in conjunction with Adult Social Care Commissioners around the transformation of housing related support and ensure services including in house services are fit for purpose. Formal tender process timetabled for June – October 2016. **Ongoing.**
- To analyse and if appropriate work to extend MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) Project. Project **extended until 31/12/16. Ongoing**
- That YorHome will take over the management of the properties (owned by Thirteen Housing Group) let on intermediate rents (White Swan development). **Completed**
- YorHome will work towards becoming an accredited landlord through CYC Housing Standards and Adaptations. **Completed**

### **Key Points 2015/16**

13. The details of the activity and performance of the service are contained in appendix 1. In light of the current economic situation and changes to services the key points of this report are:

- Homeless prevention (630 homeless prevention cases in 2015/16) remains a vital part of the work and contributes to the reduction in statutory homelessness.
- Statutory homeless continues to reduce, 91 in 2015/16 (11.6% decrease) in contrast to national increase 5.8%
- Housing Options remains busy with 3438 (contacts) of which 1327 are in depth interviews/cases. This is a slight reduction which may be because of improved joint working with Housing Registrations, supported housing providers, tenancy support and ongoing training with external agencies.
- The complexity of immigration law, homeless applications and supported housing referrals via SAP result in staff requiring more detailed knowledge, skills and time to deal with individual cases
- The number of households in temporary accommodation has reduced, the number of homeless acceptances has reduced, however there is still a considerable number of homeless prevention cases and successful resettlement cases. This is an excellent achievement, especially in light of winter floods.

- The Older Persons Housing Specialist exceeded targets and has been extended for further 6 months.

	general contacts / enquiries	level 2 advice and information	level 3 casework
2015/16 (Target) Actual	(1000) <b>1092</b>	(250) <b>296</b>	(150) <b>208</b>

- Despite ongoing work, commitment of agencies, continued resources and new flexible methods of working the number of rough sleepers in York has again increased to 18 (Nov 2015) an increase of 36%. National trends show an increase of 30%.
- National changes bring new challenges into social housing which could lead to the reduction in available affordable housing for rent which is likely to place additional pressures on the service. Ongoing work is taking place to mitigate the impact of this on services and customers.

### **In Year Service Improvement**

14. Throughout 2015/16 significant work has continued both internally and with partner agencies to improve the direct service to customers and the overall provision.
15. A number of significant service improvements were achieved in 2015/16 (further details in appendix 1):
  - The Older Persons Housing Specialist has been extremely successful and funding has been identified until 30/9/16.
  - MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) pilot extended for a further 12 months until 31/12/16
  - CAN's retained Customer Excellence award
  - CYC Homeless Services achieved 71% in Gold Standard Diagnostic peer review and to date have achieved Bronze Standard (National Practitioner Support Service 'Gold Standard' challenge) completing 8 challenges and passing 4 during 2015/16 (1 deferred, 3 outstanding decisions)
  - Successful tender bid and appointment of contractor to replace Ordnance Lane hostel (statutory homeless hostel) as it no longer fit for purpose

- Successful Salvation Army pilot project private lettings scheme
- White Swan development 18 flats was let as intermediate (affordable 80% market ) and managed by YorHome
- Information for customers: developed and publish a Mental Health Guide to Housing, update the Older Persons Housing Guide, update, develop homeless leaflets and website
- Establish 'drop in' sessions for people with Learning difficulties / housing issues or concerns
- Provide housing advice in mosque
- Refocus of elderly persons housing: new Sheltered with Extra Care policy, development of 24 hour provision at Glen Lodge and Auden House, the development of dementia friendly housing at Glen Lodge, respite bed at Marjorie Waite court for elderly to decant, hospital discharge and homeless
- Agreement to employ 3 hostel mental health workers (1 in post as of 31/3/16)
- Extension of Former Arrears Incentive Scheme to all in homeless / resettlement hostels or rough sleepers engaging with Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)
- Introduction of Housing First model to house complex rough sleepers with support into accommodation
- New temporary accommodation agreement
- New Gypsy and Traveller allocation policy
- Housing Registrations service review – to streamline services and minimise waste
- IDAS – DCLG grant to provide 24 hour staffing an helpline
- CYC new tenancy agreement
- 77 new build properties for social rent

## **Forthcoming projects and priorities – 2016/17**

16. The following work is identified in the Homelessness Strategy Action plan 2013-18 and will be given priority during 2016-17:

- To continue to work to achieve the 10 'Gold Standard challenges' as set out by DCLG
- To develop services / processes to mitigate effects of welfare benefit reforms on homeless
- Review the effectiveness of the information sharing / transfer of complex homeless and resettlement cases into social housing
- In light of Housing and Planning Act, review the use of alternative tenancies e.g. Family Intervention Tenancies and Fixed Term Tenancies (CYC).
- Review the use and consider investment /re-design opportunities of existing social housing stock to meet needs of complex / vulnerable customers in particular to mitigate medium and long term impact of welfare benefit reform.
- Review Nightstop services in lieu of reduced demand
- To continued to explore / work with TEWV to provide appropriate housing / housing support / hospital discharge process for people with mental health issues
- Ordnance Lane re-provision
- To complete review of Housing Registrations Service and implement proposed changes to service and policy
- To prioritise reduction of rough sleeping, street drinking and begging (in conjunction with Community Safety Hub) and explore need for day facilities and night shelter in light of rising numbers of rough sleepers and associated street drinking and begging
- To work with Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) to improve prison release system if housing is required
- To work with new provider of Housing Related Support contract (following retender by Adult Social Care)
- To work with Adult Social Care on review of mental health housing



- Work with CYC Housing in relation to restructure and new operating model
- To work in conjunction with CYC Childrens Social Care new operating model
- To support the extension of MEAM Project (Arc Light lead agency)
- To secure funding for Older Persons Specialist
- To secure funding for mental health hostel workers if pilot successful
- To review IDAS 24 hour helpline and support IDAS in any funding applications
- Agree targets for 2016/17

	<b>2015/16 target</b>	<b>2015/16 actual</b>	<b>2016/17 target</b>	<b>Reason</b>
No of households in temp accom	62	56	56	Retained at this level as we acknowledge in current financial climate / welfare benefit reforms that vulnerable people will continue to be affected by homelessness but the services will strive to work in a planned / preventative approach
No of households with dependent children in temp accom	45	28	40	Level equivalent to % change in numbers of households in temporary accommodation (above). Service will consider an alterative monitoring criteria to look at outcome not output.

No of households accepted as priority need	105	91	100	
No of rough sleepers	2	18	12	While there is an aspiration to reduce rough sleeping in York to 0, a realistic target based on current situation where some rough sleepers current refuse offers of assistance is 12. Ongoing work will take place with Community Safety Hub to tackle this ongoing issue
Not to use B&B for 16 or 17 year olds	0	1	0	
Not to use B&B for families, other than in emergencies and then for no longer than 6 weeks	0	0	0	

## Consultation

17. Consultation has taken place regarding design of Ordnance Lane, Homeless Strategy Action Plan review, Housing First, Former Arrears Incentive Scheme, Peasholme re-provision (staff only), Adult Social Care housing related support, Housing Registration Service Review (staff only)

## Options

18. Option 1.

Note the contents of the report and agreed the priorities and targets for 2016/17 as set out in paragraph 16.

19. Option 2 to note the contents of the report but recommend alternative priorities and targets for 2016/17

## **Analysis**

20. The report and appendix identifies current strategic aims (documented in the homeless strategy ' A City Partnership to prevent homelessness' 2013-18) and provides detailed statistics and analysis of the information, to determine the priorities for the forthcoming year

## **Council Plan**

21. The Homeless strategy is closely link to priorities within the Council Plan 2015-19:
  - 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 services and community facilities

## **Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

22. There are no direct financial implications to this report, although there is evidence that by not investing in preventative measures there is a greater cost to the city in the long-term through failure to met targets and potential for an increase in homelessness.

### **Equalities Implications**

23. A community impact assessment (CIA)has been completed for the housing options and homeless strategy. Individual CIAs will be completed for major pieces of work outlined in this report.

### **Legal Implications**

24. The provision of a homeless service is a statutory requirement under Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002.

25. That services adhere to national Guidance on “Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who maybe homeless and/or require accommodation”.
26. National good practice states that no young person 16 or 17 should be in B&B, that no family should be placed in B&B unless in an emergency and then for no more than 6 weeks
27. There are financial risks via judicial challenge if the service does not meet its statutory duty and as a result of Ombudsmen complaints if CYC fails to act within its statutory duties regarding homelessness.

### **Risk Management**

28. There is a continued risk that due to current economic climate and changes at a national level, unless mitigation can be put in place to support the most vulnerable, we will see an increase in homelessness within the city. York has seen an increase in rough sleeping despite the commitment of agencies. It is only through the ongoing concerted effort of staff and the resources channelled into homeless that we are able to maintain the current levels.
29. Changes to funding formulas and allocations may impact on the council’s ability to deliver critical services in the future.
30. The risk/s associated with the recommendation of this report are assessed at a net level below 16. The risks have been assessed as moderate at 14, the strategy will be regularly monitored at the Homeless Strategy Steering Group

## Contact Details

**Author:**

**Becky Ward**

Service Manager, Housing  
Options and Homelessness  
Dept Name CAN  
Tel No. 01904 554040

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

**Steve Waddington**

Assistant Director Housing and Community  
Safety

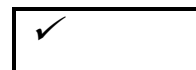
**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 4<sup>th</sup> July 2016

**Wards Affected:**

**All**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

## Appendix 1

Homeless Review 2015-16 Appendix 1

**Background Papers:**(provided upon request):

[2013-18 Homelessness Strategy](#)

## Glossary:

B&B Bed and Breakfast  
BGS Bond Guarantee Scheme  
CAB Citizens Advice Bureau  
CAN Communities and Neighbourhoods (Directorate)  
CBL Choice Based Lettings (North Yorkshire Home Choice)  
CIA Community Impact Assessment  
CRC Community Rehabilitation Company  
CYC City of York Council  
DCLG Department Communities and Local Government  
IDAS Independent Domestic Abuse Service  
MEAM Making Every Adult Matter  
NYHC North Yorkshire Home Choice  
RSL Registered Social Landlord  
SAP Single Access Point  
TEWV Tees, Esk, Wear Valleys NHS Trust  
YOT Youth Offending Team  
YACRO is a supported housing scheme for offenders.