

## Service Delivery Plans – Housing Options

### Quarters 1 & 2 2015

#### Service area- Housing Options

##### **Brief overview of service area-**

*The Housing Options team comprises 1 Housing Options Manager, 3 full time Options Officers, 1 full time Income and Recovery Officer, 1 full time Private Landlord Liaison Officer and 1 full time Tenancy Support Officer.*

*The service is responsible for fulfilling the Council's legal obligation to assist homeless persons, investigate the individual reasons for homelessness and advise the client accordingly and provide temporary accommodation where applicable.*

*In addition to the above, the team is responsible for ensuring illegal evictions and harassment within the district are eradicated, providing a Landlord Resolution Service and Landlord Forum, liaising with partner housing providers, referring clients to the homeless hostels. They are also the conduit for the Rent Deposit Scheme, Young Persons Project, Young Parents Project, 16/17yr Crash Beds, Private Sector Leasing Scheme, Choice Based Lettings Scheme, Housing Register and Allocations of social housing.*

*We are regulated by Government and have to have regard of numerous Housing Acts as well as the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018 and the Council's Corporate Priorities of:*

- Maintaining sound finances by investing wisely, maximising income and providing effective and efficient services, and
- When delivering our services our customers are at the heart of everything we do.

## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner- Housing Options Team- Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis & Sam Vaughan**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes	Variance
Maximise income via the re charging policy and reduce the use of temporary accommodation		To avoid the use of B&B accommodation where possible unless in an absolute emergency and there is no other accommodation available to the client  100%-(i.e. no families in bed and breakfast accommodation)	100% - no families in B&B accommodation	*None
		To ensure that Homeless decisions are made within 33 working days. (Statutory guidance). 100% of decisions to be made within 33 days	100% completed within 33 days	**None

	To ensure that Homeless decisions are made within 10 working days. 50%	63%	+13% (28 were completed in 10 working days). N.B. This is a new target but important to note.
	To prioritise emergency homeless presentations and where possible deal with the situation on the day of presentation to the Council. 100%	100%	***None
	To ensure that every effort is made by the Income and Recovery Officer (IRO) to recoup monies loaned to clients for deposits, storage and removals and full recharge for any time spent in B&B. 100%	86.21%  (£12,752 was collected)	****-13.79%

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)**

\*No families have been in B&B accommodation since August 2013

\*\*Out of 44 homeless applications taken, 28 had decisions made within 10 working days. We had 5 intentional decisions and 11 not homeless decisions which take longer as more extensive investigations are needed. It should also be noted that whilst the department may take a homeless application (this is a statutory duty if the client is homeless or threatened with homelessness in 28 days or less), officers will continue to source a solution to the housing problem hence a not homeless decision being made.

\*\*\*All officers deal with clients who present as homeless on the day. We have had 17 clients present as homeless in reception, and officers have dealt with each of them as and when presented.

\*\*\*\* Collection rate for Quarter 1 & 2 was 86.21% which is a big increase on last year. This is due to the hard work and new procedures put in place by our IRO who has a much more hands on approach with the customer. The repayments are then recycled into helping new customers meaning there is less draw on the homelessness prevention budget.

## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner-Housing Options Team - Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis & Sam Vaughan**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes	Variance
Ensure that people feel safe in their homes and neighbourhood-management of gypsy and traveller sites		To allow certain domestic abuse applicants to remain in their current property and to be safe in the knowledge that their property is secure. 5 working days	No target hardening done in Q1 & Q2	*
		To ensure 5% more rents collected than in 2014. 5% above the 2014 baseline of £84,396 (i.e. for Gypsy and traveller sites) Target £44,307.90 (equating to 5% increase at the six month stage)	£50,981.64 for Q1 and Q2 combined	**+£6.673.74 +15%

		To attend meetings and conferences for MARAC, MAPPA and ASB, make sure housing team are aware of any impending homelessness relating to domestic violence/abuse, crime and disorder or ASB. 100%	100%	***

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)**

\*Prevention is the key to keeping people in their homes and safe. We hold monthly domestic violence drop-ins with Fenland Refuge and have strong multi agency links with Women’s Aid, Independent DV Advisors and Refuge. To date we have found alternative solutions and have therefore not needed to draw on this resource.

\*\* The team have worked very hard to ensure that rents from G&T sites are collected and where appropriate travellers are given budgetary support to ensure that their rent is their priority. This has seen a dramatic rise in collection rates.

\*\*\* All meetings are attended, minutes and notes are distributed to the team and discussed as standing items at monthly team meetings. Ensuring that the team have full knowledge of partner agencies priorities.

## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner- Housing Options Team- Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis & Sam Vaughan**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes/outputs achieved to date	Variance
Proactively work with partners to provide a co-ordinated approach to tackling and preventing homelessness		To produce new SLA's protocols to coincide with developments within the Housing Service and to include new services and contacts.  100%	100%	*0

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)**

\*Quarterly Performance Reports are produced and distributed to the team, Chief Executive, Director (Regulatory Services), Leader and Service Delivery Champion.

The Council has introduced and implemented Unauthorised G&T Encampment Procedure, Homelessness Strategy, Sub-letting of hostel void contracts, Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS) Protocol and the Learning Disability Partnership (LDP) SLA's.

## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner- Housing Options Team - Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis & Sam Vaughan**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes/outputs achieved to date	Variance
Provide an holistic Housing Options Service with the emphasis on preventing homelessness.		To ensure Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) take up by 100% <i>50% at the six month stage (100% p.a.)</i>	56%	*+6%
		To effectively engage with landlords by undertaking 2 landlord forums per year.	1	**none
		To prevent 350 households from becoming homeless per year <i>175 (350 pa)</i>	157	***-18
		To undertake a rough sleeper estimate. Yearly	Achieved 1 undertaken	****None

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)**

\*As you can see the team have over achieved this target by 6% in the first half of the year. The team works with ARP to ensure the DHP pot

is utilised to house households who need it the most.

\*\* We have successfully held one landlord forum and are currently planning a second. Links with landlords have improved immensely since our Private Landlord Liaison Officer started. For example, she has successfully secured 4 houses for use as shared properties which have considerably reduced the number of single homeless people.

\*\*\* We know that homelessness comes in peaks and troughs. Christmas is always a quiet period which gathers monumental pace in January. The team are constantly preventing homelessness and will achieve their target by the end of the reporting period.

\*\*\*\* The Council is responsible for conducting a rough sleeper count annually. To achieve this we work with a number of voluntary and statutory agencies including the police, county council, fire service, internal Council departments and the churches.

The last rough sleeper count took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Partners were asked to complete a spreadsheet on the number of rough sleepers seen during the hours of 10pm to 6am. The Council amalgamates the information and sends a Rough Sleeper Count to DCLG who verify the authenticity of the count and sign it off.



## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner- Housing Options Manager - Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis, Sam Vaughan & Cllr Mike Rouse**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes/outputs achieved to date	Variance
Trained staff and comprehensive understanding of Service by Service Delivery Champion		Ensure all officers attend all mandatory council training courses in policy and procedures, child safeguarding, quality and diversity and health and safety etc 100%	100% attendance	*None
		100% appraisals completed on time	100% completed on time	None
		Service awareness briefings for Service Delivery Champion	100% completed on time	None
		All officers to be up to date with changes to benefits/Universal Credit. 100% of officers	100%	**None

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)\***All members of team attend internal and external training. Actions are discussed at monthly 1-1's and team meetings.

**\*\*** Internal and external training has been available for all staff, ongoing updates are fed down to the team.

## Performance measures linked to the Five Strategic Outcomes

**Owner- Housing Options Team - Angela Parmenter, Louise Duffield, Amy Towell, Neil Weeding, Sarah Burton, Joanne Davis & Sam Vaughan**

Performance Measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Outcomes/outputs achieved to date	Variance
Adapting the Service to meet the needs of the customer		Update websites and ensure plethora of leaflets distributed across the district. Reviewed annually. 100% reviewed.	100% reviewed	*None
		Conduct customer service satisfaction surveys. 50%	50% - ongoing	**None
		Carry out home visits to those who need them. 100% attended.	100%	***None
		Undertake on-going demands analysis to show service is fully meeting needs of customers.	100%	****None

**Notes (if there is any variance then please detail this below)**

\*We have recently updated our website and added a meet the team page. We are constantly reviewing the information on our websites and leaflets to ensure that they are up to date and relevant.

\*\*Customer service satisfaction surveys are sent out to 50% of the customers seen by the team. This is done both online and a reminder sent by email. Regretfully few people respond. The HOM is currently reviewing this process which may include conducting the survey via the phone, written letter, survey monkey on the housing webpage. This sits well with the current ICT review.

\*\*\* Officers are now doing more home visits to clients that cannot come to the offices. The IRO is conducting visits for customers who are experiencing difficulties in repaying their debts to the Council.

\*\*\*\* The drop-in service will soon be expanded to 5 days a week, making housing advice available every day for our clients.

**Source of data- please list below where the data was gathered**

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**Additional Performance measures  
Please detail any new performance measures**

Performance measure	Link to Strategic Outcomes (colour code accordingly)	Target	Any additional resources needed? (please list below)
		To ensure that Homeless decisions are made within 10 working days. 50%	

**Equality Impact Assessments**

**Are there any Performance measures which require the council to devise an Equality Impact Assessment?**

**Please list any below;**

Performance measure	Equality Impact Assessment (Please attach them underneath against each Performance measure)

**Forward plan dates for Member Champions linked to Performance measures**

Date	Activity	Member Champion