

Housing Committee

Date: **17 June 2020**

Time: **4.00pm**

Venue **Skype Meeting**

Note: in response to current Government Regulations this meeting is being held as a virtual meeting for councillors and accessible via Skype. Public speaking and engagement opportunities will be made available.

The meeting will also be webcast live to the internet.

Members: **Councillors:** Williams (Chair), Fowler (Deputy Chair), Gibson (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Hugh-Jones, Knight, Osborne and Phillips

Contact: **Shaun Hughes**
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AGENDA

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declaration of Substitutes: Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

(b) Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public - To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

***NOTE:** Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.*

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

7 - 24

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2020 (copy attached).

3 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

4 CALL OVER

(a) All agenda items will be read out at the meeting and Members

invited to reserve the items for consideration.

- (b) Those items not reserved will be taken as having been received and the reports' recommendations agreed.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions presented to the full council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to receive any questions submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 11 June 2020;
- (c) **Deputations:** to receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 11 June 2020.

6 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

To consider the following matters raised by councillors:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to consider any written questions;
- (c) **Letters:** to consider any letters;
- (d) **Notices of Motion:** to consider any Notices of Motion referred from Council or submitted directly to the Committee.

7 NOTION OF MOTION - NEXT STEPS FOR HOMELESS FOLLOWING COVID-19 RESPONSE 25 - 32

Contact Officer: Sylvia Peckham Tel: 01273 293318
Ward Affected: All Wards

8 SOLAR PV PROGRAMME FOR HRA HOUSING STOCK 33 - 54

Contact Officer: Miles Davidson Tel: 01273 293150
Ward Affected: All Wards

9 INTERIM PLANNED WORKS AND MAJOR PROJECTS 2020 55 - 60

Contact Officer: Miles Davidson Tel: 01273 293150
Ward Affected: All Wards

10 HOMELESS & ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY 61 - 90

Contact Officer: Justine Harris Tel: 01273 293772
Ward Affected: All Wards

11 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

To consider items to be submitted to the 23 July 2020 Council meeting for information.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 24.3a, the Committee may determine that any item is to be included in its report to Council. In addition, any Group may specify one further item to be included by notifying the Chief Executive no later than 10am on the eighth working day before the Council meeting at which the report is to be made, or if the Committee meeting take place after this deadline, immediately at the conclusion of the Committee meeting

PART TWO

12 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

To consider whether the items listed in Part Two of the agenda and decisions thereon should remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fourth working day before the meeting.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Shaun Hughes, (01273 290569, email shaun.hughes@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 29 APRIL 2020

SKYPE MEETING

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Williams (Chair), Gibson (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Brennan, Fowler, Heley, Hugh-Jones and Osborne

Other Councillors Present: Knight (Substitute) and Wares (Substitute).

PART ONE

70 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

a) Declaration of Substitutes:

1. Councillor Wares substituted for Councillor Barnett
2. Councillor Knight substituted for Councillor Brennan

b) Declarations of Interest:

1. Councillor Williams stated that they knew the presenter of the Brighton Students Union deputation.
2. Councillor Mears stated that they had previously been involved in the Victoria Road scheme, but they approached the debate with an open mind.

c) Exclusion of Press and Public

1. The press and public were not excluded from the meeting as there was no Part Two items.

71 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 71.1 The minutes of the Housing Committee meeting held on 11 March 2020 were accepted as a record of the meeting.

72 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

- 72.1 The Chair made the following statement:

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

Over the past few weeks, we've secured a number of buildings in the city to provide safe, self-contained accommodation. We have procured 379 units of accommodation to provide for:

- Rough sleepers;
- People who are in supported accommodation who become symptomatic or need to shield, and;
- Those who are becoming homeless where we wouldn't otherwise have an accommodation so as to avoid the need to sleep rough.

We've helped around 190 people who had been sleeping rough move off the streets. We've also provided rooms for new homeless cases and people in shared accommodation.

The level of support we've set up for to keep people sleeping rough safe over the Covid-19 crisis is among the very highest in the country.

We have enough safe accommodation for everyone and there is no need for anyone to be sleeping rough or begging in the city at the moment.

We've worked with health and voluntary sector partners to set up a 'Care & Protect' model which, after assessing a person's medical and support needs, directs the accommodation and support package provided.

We've set up different types of accommodation to make sure we can care for people with symptoms and provide the greatest level of protection for those at the highest risk.

Medical assessments are being carried out by Arch Healthcare, with St Mungo's providing support across the accommodation.

All accommodation is staffed 24 hours a day and supported accommodation staff are working hard to make sure everyone can access the support they need.

We are currently providing food to 270 people a day including people who were rough sleeping, at risk of rough sleeping, accommodated in night shelters and clients of the Social Impact Brighton, and Navigator teams.

This is three meals a day and is being provided by local businesses and a community kitchen hub.

Volunteers are helping deliver food and toiletries to everyone in the accommodation, as well as delivering donated items helping to keep people entertained in their rooms.

The support has relied on working closely with our partners and it's been inspiring to see so many organisations pull together to get where we are.

It's been a huge effort to get here and is a huge effort to keep going – staff and volunteers across many services are working tirelessly to keep people safe.

I'd like to thank everyone involved in this incredible response - it is making a real difference to people's lives.

In addition to officers in Housing, Adult Social Care Commissioning & Public Health I would like to thank our partners in: SCFT Homeless Nursing Team, Archhealth CIC, St Mungo's and volunteers across Brighton & Hove.

Housing Repairs & maintenance

On the 1st April we welcomed 132 new colleagues, as our Repairs and Maintenance service was TUPE transferred from Mears into the council.

Bringing this service in-house marks the end of a long process which has involved many different people from across the organisation.

I would like to thank all of the officers who have worked to make this possible, including our Housing services, our new colleagues in repairs and maintenance, and all of those supporting in our corporate teams.

The service to our residents has been maintained throughout this period, even during the challenging circumstances we find ourselves in with Covid-19.

I am pleased to say that we have been able to provide the transferring staff with the same special leave sick pay arrangements for Covid-19 related absence, and we are looking at a wider harmonisation plan over the coming months and will fully consult with staff and trade unions.

Supporting vulnerable households

We have re-focussed the work of our Housing Teams to enable us to reach out to as many vulnerable households as possible.

We have Co-ordinated our work to enable us to contact vulnerable households in council stock and temporary accommodation. Scheme managers are contacting all residents in seniors housing daily. This is ensuring basic needs are being met.

This has highlighted some of the issue's residents are facing in regards to social isolation, safeguarding and mental health

To date over 3500 households have been contacted.

This work runs alongside and feeds into that of the Community Hub. A place any resident can self-refer. Types of support available regardless of which route they come in include:

- Finding help with shopping and collecting prescriptions
- Emergency foodbank referrals and finding sustainable solutions
- Support to keep active and well and to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness

Further to this, rough sleepers, recently accommodated and those still sleeping out are receiving three meals a day, this is being provided by local businesses and a community kitchen hub.

73 CALL OVER

73.1 All agenda items were called for discussion by the Committee.

74 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions - None

(b) Written Questions – None

(c) Deputations – One deputation was received from Brighton Students Union:

74.1 Dear Council

We hope you and your loved ones are doing well during these worrying times. We write to you regarding an urgent matter detailed in the open letter below. On the second page you will find the letter we sent to MPs and Councillors and on the third page we have provided an update on the campaign.

Dear Non-University Purpose-Built Student Accommodation Providers and Houses of Multiple Occupancy

As lead representatives of Brighton Students' Union, we believe, as always, it is our duty to protect the over 20,000 students we serve during this unsettling time in relation to the developing COVID-19 situation and its impact on accommodation rent payments. Up and down the country, students have been returning home in increasing numbers due to guidance issued by the Government and their University. In doing so they have rightly prioritised their personal safety and protected the national interest, yet they now find themselves facing great uncertainty with their rent payments. It is wholly unjust for them to be financially penalised for carrying out their civic duty and therefore save lives. The relationship we have with the wider community is one we take very seriously, and we value these ties. You undoubtedly play a critical role in the area's residential ecosystem and we ask you to join us in supporting our students by showing flexibility in residential contracts for those in privately run Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). We firmly believe students should not harbour the financial burden as the responsibility to do so rests with yourselves. Unite and Liberty Living's recent announcement makes it clear it is within your power as providers, owing to your complex mitigation plans, and we sincerely hope you would undertake these measures voluntarily for the sake of our students. For landlords who experience a financial impact as a result of this, you have access to a three-month mortgage holiday. We join the National Union of Students in lobbying Government to further support you in doing the right thing by students. Officers from both Unions have come together to propose 8 measures we strongly urge you to undertake:

1. Offer students a no-penalty release from their tenancy contracts, both for the current and upcoming academic year.
2. Refund those students who have paid rent and a deposit for the upcoming period.
3. Effectively reduce, subsidize or waive rent for tenants who have experienced a detrimental financial impact as a result of the Coronavirus.
4. Operate a holistic ban on evictions for all renters during this pandemic.
5. Stop all rent increases planned for the current and upcoming academic year.
6. Allow students with health conditions that increase their risk to the Coronavirus and thus wish to relocate to a more isolated part of their PBSA to do so at no extra cost.
7. In line with Liberty Living's stance, offer free of charge support beyond their current tenancy to those needing to extend their stay. This is crucial for international students who are unable to leave due to travel restrictions and for students who do not wish to return home to avoid placing a vulnerable member of their household at increased risk.

8. Implement and offer student tenants access to best practice public health advice, in addition to providing them with material and pastoral support.

The values you enact going forward in addressing the measures outlined above will shape our student community and society as a whole for years to come. There is no doubt this is the right thing to do. The business model, which is the very foundation of student accommodation, is singlehandedly dependent on the physical occurrence of university and the fact it has now moved to a virtual environment means the risk should be absorbed by providers and not by students. They are counting on your support and we hope you will provide it.

Yours Sincerely
Ramy Badrie
Brighton Students' Union

In summary, following the closure of the Universities of Brighton and Sussex due to COVID-19, the vast majority of students decided to return to their family home for various reasons, including needing to support relatives, taking up caring responsibilities, wanting to self-isolate with their family and no longer being able to access critical campus services. They have embraced their civic duty and have remained home during this period, adhering to Government Guidance, and in turn helped save lives. Yet, they are being financially penalised by the private accommodation sector. Students who have vacated their properties are still being forced to pay rent. While the University of Brighton has released students from their third term fees for those who reside in its accommodation, the vast majority of private providers and landlords are refusing to do so. Our students rely on part-time and vocational jobs alongside their maintenance loans to pay rent. Many of these jobs are zero-hour contracts that now cease to exist. Without the means to pay rent and the property having been vacated, it seems only fair and just to release them from their housing contracts early. Whilst students will still receive their student loans for the final term of the academic year, for the majority this amount will not be enough to pay their rent, bills and food. Many do not have parents or family that can afford to help them financially, some have dependants and others many not even have access to loans, relying solely on zero hours contract that no longer exists. Many students will be forced to find alternative funding such as further debt and credit borrowing to support their families as well as themselves during this time. In addition, many students have opted to volunteer for the NHS, some even working on the front line to fight this pandemic. The University of Brighton has announced that students will not be coming back to campus to study for the final term this year.

We have now contacted 97 different, landlords, letting agents and purpose-built student accommodation providers about the issue. And we have had several positive responses, yet many have refused to do right by students or have not at all replied:

- IQ Student Accommodation agreed that students could break their contracts and be refunded for term 3 rents.
- Abodus Student Living who run Hollingbury House has also agreed to allow students to break their contracts fee-free and will refund their term 3 rents.
- Co-Apt have said they are willing to discuss individual requests with their tenants and work with students and landlords to come to an arrangement.

- Deborah Webb in Brighton has arranged with her tenants to pay 50% for the remaining period.
- G4 lets have responded saying that they will discuss individual cases with tenants and landlords and can arrange for payment deferrals where students cannot afford the fees but any deferred payments must be paid up to date by the end of the tenancy.
- Q Estate Agents have replied saying they are happy to negotiate with tenants and landlords individually to help find a solution where students are in financial hardship. They have already made arrangements for some students and are working with landlords to insert a clause allowing students out of upcoming tenancies.
- Ann and Ralph Thompson from Eastbourne have reduced rents for April, May and June by 50% and are waiving rents for July and August.

In addition, MPs Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Brighton Kemptown, who has written on our behalf), Caroline Lucas (Brighton Pavilion) and Peter Kyle (Hove) are all supporting our campaign and calls for action and have signed a letter to the Minister for Housing asking them to enable students to break their contracts without a fee. Paul Blomfield has written to the Minister of State for Universities regarding this matter. We are immensely grateful to Councillor Gill Williams for the support she has offered as well. It has been incredibly valuable, and it deeply appreciated by the thousands of students we represent. Students, who are the very heart of this campaign, have also been directly lobbying providers and landlord through resources we have developed for them to use. Our petition to the Minister for Housing and Minister for Universities has nearly 1,500 signatures. As you can see from the engagement with our social media updates on the campaign, this is an urgent priority for our students. They are counting on your support.

- 74.2 The Chair, Councillor Williams thanked the presenter - Rami Badrie for the deputation from Brighton Students Union and noted that local landlords have been written to requesting they support student residents. The Councillor applauded those landlords who have already shown helped students. It was noted that the Shadow Minister for Education and the Shadow Minister for Housing have been written to on this matter.
- 74.3 Councillor Osborne thanked the speaker and felt that more needed to be done for students and the Green Group were supporting the campaign for student housing. It was noted that some landlords were supportive, and others were not and this lead to worry for the students. Councillor Osborne supported the deputation.

75 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

- a) **Petitions** – None
- b) **Written Questions** – One written question was received from Councillor Osborne:

Dear Geoff Raw

I am submitting the following letter on the subject of AirBnB and short-term lets during COVID-19 under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for Housing Committee.

During the Coronavirus pandemic 'business as usual' has shut down - and like all others, the short-term holiday lets market has been one of the sectors affected, with an estimated drop in occupancy rates of between 70-90%. Many of these providers will be able to get through the shutdown by claiming through one of the government schemes; depending on their situation, they may be able to get small business grants and business rates relief, and others may be able to get a mortgage holiday, for example.

However, as we have previously discussed in this committee, the lack of a centralised database or official registration scheme detailing the existence and location of short-term holiday lets in the city means we are unable to clarify who all of the providers are, and what their specific situations might be. This lack of knowledge – and of regulation – of the short-term holiday lets market limits the help that the council can both receive and provide to the sector. Indeed, some weeks ago we heard media reports that some providers were seeking to advertise properties as 'retreats,' during lockdown – while in some cases this may have been an attempt to maintain business, this is a measure widely criticised as profiteering and that has since thankfully been prevented.

We have however become aware that several short-term holiday lets companies and landlords have responded to the global pandemic in more positive and proactive ways, by offering properties free of charge to NHS workers who need to self-isolate. In a city with a high number of houses in multiple occupation, NHS and care staff, and soaring rents, we recognise there will be many residents who require a safe self-isolation facility such as can be provided by short-term let accommodation providers, particularly when their normal place of residence is shared with others or if they are concerned for loved ones.

The Short-Term Accommodation Association (STAA) have launched a scheme titled 'NHS Homes', where providers offer their homes for use by NHS staff free of charge (a £10 fee service charge needs to be paid per day but no rental charge for the actual property is levied). We have also learned that AirBnB has its own similar scheme called Frontline Stays.

With NHS workers potentially having vulnerable family members or housemates, and a wider shortage of housing in the city, we recognise that such schemes have potential to offer a comfortable place to stay as well as reassurance for workers concerned about spreading the virus to family and friends. Given that in some cases, student doctors are also being sent to work early, we also note that there are many that will be on placement in a new location and unable to secure housing elsewhere in the private rented sector. We are also aware through resident correspondence that some NHS workers are struggling to find accommodation at this time, due to concerns about new people entering an existing household.

STAA have informed me that over 2500 providers have already signed up to the NHS Homes scheme and 14 properties in Brighton signed up on 15th April alone. There are likely to be additional providers and landlords in Brighton who may have vacant homes. While the council cannot advise on the best course of action for the sector, we call on committee to consider the accommodation needs of essential workers during this crisis. We would ask that housing respond to these suggestions of urgent action in the current crisis, and consider:

- What measures can be taken to engage with landlords and companies managing short-term holiday lets in the city, such as AirBnB, to ask how their properties can be rendered helpful during the crisis; and to inform them of the existence of registration and support bodies with NHS Homes schemes (such as STAA and others);
- to continue to lobby government for powers to enable us to better control and manage the short-term lets sector, to enable all stakeholders to respond quickly in times of need, such as the current crisis; in light of the city's housing shortage, that we also continue to lobby for more regulatory powers and caps on such properties in general;
- to use means available to reach existing landlords and short-term lets providers in the city, in order to ensure that offers of support with accommodation for workers looking to self-isolate can be found and promoted; and to liaise with relevant bodies in the NHS and CCG to promote available offers of accommodation support for NHS and other essential staff;
- to share with other committee chairs and council officers where relevant who can help to follow up on any of the above actions should they feel able to.

There are concerns that in a time of national crisis, many homes are lying vacant. Our city is also embroiled in a housing crisis more generally – and the rise of the short-term holiday lets market has in many cases resulted in the loss of permanent family homes. Given these factors, we welcome the potential to utilise any vacant homes or properties to support the needs of essential staff and our public health efforts and ask that committee consider how it can facilitate such actions.

Yours sincerely
Councillor Martin Osborne

Response from the Chair

Dear Councillor Osborne

Thank you for your letter.

We support the current efforts to house NHS, Care and other essential staff during this emergency and have been in liaison with Health and other colleagues to signpost essential workers to accommodation that may be of use in the City.

As Chair of Housing, I have also been in direct contact with AirBnB seeking their compliance with Government guidance on advertising short term accommodation during the Covid-19 crisis and their support concerning the beneficial use of short term lets advertised via their platform that may otherwise be empty at this time for NHS and other essential workers.

In terms of further action:

Many of the major companies may have links to a specific local authority through the scheme known as primary authority. This allows one local authority to advise those companies of their rights and obligations under specific legislation.

Officers propose to contact these primary authorities where they exist to request that the companies are made aware of the schemes mentioned in Cllr Osborne's letter.

Where those primary authority relationships do not exist, officers propose to contact the companies direct to advise them of the schemes.

Following both Tourism Economy & Culture Committee and Housing Committees in March the Chief Executive did as requested by members, write to the Secretary of State to request additional powers to deal with short term holiday lets.

We will also follow up with existing landlords and short-term lets providers in the city in order to ensure that offers of support with accommodation for the NHS and other essential staff looking to self-isolate can be found and promoted and share information with other committee chairs and council officers who may be able to assist with and / or promote this work.

Please let me know if any further information may be of use at this time.

Councillor Gill Williams
Chair Housing Committee

c) **Notices of Motion** – One Notice of Motion was received from the Green Group:

HOMELESSNESS AND THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Subject to available funding that Committee:

- declares its intention to consider how to provide appropriate move-on accommodation and support for all rough sleepers currently housed and supported in hotels/other accommodation in time to avoid them returning to rough-sleeping once current Covid 19 restrictions are lifted
- requests a report to its June meeting setting out needs assessments and an action plan, costings + timetable to provide suitable move-on accommodation and support that would avoid a return to the streets; such report also to consider how the current unconditional offer of accommodation to rough sleepers can continue once the hotel/other accommodation provided during the coronavirus outbreak is no longer available
- declares its commitment to explore ways of continuing the unconditional offer of shelter currently being offered to rough sleepers during the crisis. Committee requests that the Chief Executive write to Robert Jenrick (MHCLG) urging the Government to provide the additional resources needed to ensure that the needs of those currently temporarily housed in hotels/other accommodation can be adequately met (once their needs for accommodation and support have been established) following the removal of the current restrictions associated with the pandemic.

Committee notes that the unprecedented measures taken to alleviate hardship and avoid overwhelming the NHS with coronavirus patients demonstrate what can be achieved when there is a will to do so. Rough sleepers have been housed, there is a temporary halt to evictions and local housing allowance has been increased.

We commend the work of officers and the administration in providing accommodation for over 170 rough sleepers. We have an opportunity to advance the pledge* to “end the need for rough sleeping” and now need to apply the same degree of urgency to ensuring that ex rough-sleepers are given suitable move-on accommodation and are not forced back onto the streets when the immediate crisis ends.

Proposed by: Councillor Gibson. Seconded by: Councillor Heley

* See joint Housing and homeness programme 2019-2023

75(d).1 Councillor Gibson presented the Notice of Motion to the Committee stating that now is the time to end rough sleeping in the city. Non conditional entrance to shelters should continue after the crisis. The Green Group and Labour Party are committed to ending rough sleeping and an opportunity has arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the country support is needed on many levels and the National Government can do this. Home is the best place to give support with the costs being covered by rent support. It is noted that Housing First has been a great success. Rough sleeping is costly. The costs of 30 people per year could be as high as £60,000. If they were housed it would be half that cost.

An all-party commitment is needed to continue the work undertaken during COVID-19 after the crisis. Access should always be open for all. Returning to the ‘normal’ situation for rough sleepers is not acceptable.

Please support the motion to build on the success achieved during the crisis. A report for the 17 June 2020 Committee is requested to cover future accommodation after COVID-19 and to include costings to support a letter to the National Government. There is a limited window of opportunity, please support this community minded motion.

75(d).2 Councillor Heley seconded the motion and stated that the support for rough sleepers is greatly needed. Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) has shown the National Government during the current COVID-19 crisis that moving rough sleepers off the streets can be achieved. The motion is to reaffirm the movement forward. Housing is needed to end rough sleeping.

75(d).3 Councillor Atkinson thanked officers and staff and stated that they supported the motion and noted that 10 years ago homelessness was almost eradicated across the UK and the Country needs to return to that situation.

75(d).4 Councillor Fowler thanked all involved and stated that they supported the motion and felt that funding would be difficult.

75(d).5 Councillor Hugh-Jones stated they agreed with others and that people affected by domestic abuse and refugees are also a housing issues. The community

supportive attitude of the lockdown needs to be remembered when restrictions are lifted.

- 75(d).6 Councillor Williams stated that those affected by domestic abuse will be supported with accommodation if they step forward and make themselves known.
- 75(d).7 Councillor Mears stated that they supported the motion. They went onto note that bring a detailed report to the 17 June 2020 Committee may be difficult. If the report were possible it would be welcomed and should include detailed costings break down, how accommodation was appropriated and how the 5 year local connection policy will continue. It would not be right if those on the Housing waiting list were discriminated against in anyway. It was also noted that many local services could offer support.
- 75(d).8 Councillor Knight stated that they were proud of The Homeless Bill of Rights and the aspiration to live up to the commitment. The current situation is a unique opportunity to work through issues. It was noted that Housing First has been proven to work and a great deal has been achieved already. Thank you to all who are working so hard.
- 75(d).9 Councillor Gibson welcomed the debate and support from the Conservative Members and agreed that the costings needed to be understood and the report to the 17 June 2020 Committee should contain as much information as possible. Once the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted the council will need to move fast. The key point was that it was more cost effective to offer a home as opposed to rough sleeping.
- 75(d).10 The Assistant Director of Housing informed the committee that a report on rough sleeping would be possible for the 17 June 2020 meeting including information on costings and how to move forward.
- 75(d).11 Vote: The Chair invited the Committee to vote. The motion was agreed by a unanimous vote.

76 NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS VICTORIA ROAD SCHEME UPDATE

- 76.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities concerning the increase in costs for the construction of the Sports Pavilion and Housing Schemes above the original budget approved by Housing Committee on 14 November 2018 and by Policy, Resources & Growth Committee on 6 December 2018.
- 76.2 The report was introduced by the Project Manager.
- 76.3 Councillor Atkinson hoped that the committee would see this as a 'win-win' situation with energy efficient heat pumps giving the scheme high sustainability. Although costly at the construction stage, savings would be made later. Councillor Atkinson asked the committee to support the recommendations.

- 76.4 Councillor Hugh-Jones felt that savings would be made with the steel frame and construction time reductions. The project was considered inspiring. The Councillor has been assured that a clerk of works will be appointed to oversee the project with the BHCC architect. The Lead City Regeneration Programme Manager noted that the PV energy producing figures were not available but were likely to be similar to other comparable schemes.
- 76.5 Councillor Mears expressed concerns having noted that in the past other schemes had incurred extra costs later on following fault finding in under floor heating, lifts etc. The Councillor expressed concerns that the report on the Pankhurst Road fire has not been seen before committing to more community housing. The Assistant Housing Director stated that the report will be brought to the next meeting in June 2020. Councillor Mears noted that the light gauge steel frame superstructure will leading to possible savings however the amount of reduction in total scheme costs cannot be quantified and the committee should not be asked for more money if this is not known.
- 76.6 Councillor Wares was informed by the Estate Regeneration Project Manager that the Executive Urgency powers were used by the previous Executive Director to acquire the sports pavilion in November 2019.

Debate

- 76.7 Councillor Gibson commented that the scheme was fantastic and as building costs are on the rise it needs to be got on with. Councillor Gibson supported the scheme of 42 much needed housing units.
- 76.8 Councillor Wares applauded the approach to providing more homes but did not agree with the costings as the cost increases have not been quantified. The Councillor did not feel the committee should make decisions on unknowns. It was noted that 4 terrace homes will be lost to the scheme and they calculated that the costs of building were 50% more expensive than buying properties in Portslade. Councillor Wares felt the scheme was too expensive and did not support the item.
- 76.9 Councillor Hugh-Jones commented that height pump systems are 5 times more expensive to fit retrospectively to existing properties, therefore new homes were better.
- 76.10 Councillor Gibson noted that the costs of property were very important. Buying was cheaper to start with but building ensured properties were available for housing needs.
- 76.11 Councillor Wares declared he was a Chartered Building Surveyor and understood all the issues and noted that business cases can change along the way but did not approve of throwing more money at the scheme.
- 76.12 Councillor Gibson stated their support for the scheme and noted the Housing Members Supply Board support for the council homes and community buildings.
- 76.13 Councillor Hugh-Jones felt the landscaping would benefit residents and possibly reduce costs to health services in the future.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That the latest Order of Costs for the Housing and Sports Pavilion scheme is noted; and
- 2.2 That the additional budget of £2.600m is approved in principle (subject to confirmation from Policy & Resources Committee) to ensure the construction of the Sports Pavilion and Housing Scheme goes ahead as soon as practically possible.

77 FUTURE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK.

- 77.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities updating the committee on the commencement of the council in-house Repairs and Maintenance service following the TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) transfer of Mears staff into the council, which took place on the 01 April 2020.
- 77.2 The report was introduced by the Senior Programme Manager.
- 77.3 Councillor Hugh-Jones was informed by the Senior Programme Manager that the repairs call centre staff were working from home at this time. Once the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted or altered the re-organisation of the call centre will be look into. Emergency calls only are being dealt with, resulting in a reduction in the number of calls over all. The percentage of routine jobs delayed by COVID-19 restrictions is currently unknown. The Assistant Director of Housing stated that the Quarter 4 figures would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting in June 2020. It was noted that the Task and Finish Group were looking into how to hold virtual meetings in the light that some tenants did not have the appropriate technology.
- 77.4 Councillor Mears was informed by the Senior Programme Manager that out of the 167 staff identified only 132 transferred to the authority on 01 April. Some staff had already transferred whilst others had left. It was noted that the staff were fluid. The Councillor was also informed that a report will be presented to the June committee meeting regarding the affects of the COVID-19 restrictions.
- 77.5 Councillor Gibson was informed by the Senior Programme Manager that a detailed report will be submitted in June including the number of jobs this year against a 'normal' year.
- 77.6 Councillor Osborne was informed by the Senior Programme Manger that some repair staff were not working and were on Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) special leave with full pay. The return date for routine repairs was not known.
- 77.7 The Assistant Housing Director assured the committee that emergency repairs were being carried out and the Council were working closely with regulators such as Gas Safe to ensure the safety of tenants.
- 77.8 Councillor Fowler thanked the officers for the smooth transition on 01 April welcomed the staff from Mears to the council. Councillor Fowler also thanked all key workers across the city for there work during the COVID-19 restrictions.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress with the programme which is outlined in the body of this report.

78 MOULSECOOMB NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB & HOUSING SCHEMES

- 78.1 The Committee considered a joint report of the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Culture and the Interim Executive Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities concerning the release of land for development in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean. The intention being to enable the delivery of approximately 232 new council homes.
- 78.2 The report was introduced by the Lead City Regeneration Programme Manager.
- 78.3 Councillor Gibson raised concerns regarding the need for more office space as it appears that there are empty offices across the city and was informed that the need for offices will need to be accessed when COVID-19 restrictions are amended. The need may increase if social distancing remains in the work place. The whole portfolio for the city will need to be reviewed.
- 78.4 Councillor Mears raised concerns relating to costs of the project. The housing elements of the scheme were supported. The spending of Housing Rent Account (HRA) was a concern and it was felt that the report lacked detail. Concerns were also raised as to what the community will actually get at the end of the project. The project was supported, but as a critical friend.
- 78.5 It was noted by the Lead City Regeneration Programme Manager that strong feedback had been received that the community services were needed.
- 78.6 Councillor Gibson commented that although things felt uncertain at the moment, this would not be long-term. Home working may increase and relieve the need for more office space perhaps. Clarity would be needed in the future as to office need. Concerns were expressed regarding the conversion of Portslade 6th Form College into council offices and the need for this.
- 78.7 Councillor Hugh-Jones commented that community engagement was good and noted the lack of retail space in the area.
- 78.8 Councillor Knight noted the consultation with the community was good and that supporting services such as shops and a supermarket were in already existing in Portslade. It was also noted that the Secretary of State needed to agree the scheme.
- 78.9 Councillor Wares expressed concerns if the committee agreed to the recommendations and the houses were not built. Councillor Wares was informed that the by Councillor Williams that the Administration promised to build at least 800 homes. It was noted by the Property Programme & Business Manager, that office requirements throughout the city would be kept under review and that 6th Form College at Portslade had a significant amount of time built in to access need. Councillor Wares noted that he calculated that ¼ billion pounds would be borrowed eventually. This was refuted by Councillor Gibson.

78.10 It was noted by Lead City Regeneration Programme Manager that the external validation was being sought with regard to depreciation of land and how this would affect the scheme costs. It was also noted that each housing scheme in the item would be brought to the Housing Committee allowing all factors of the costs to be reviewed.

78.11 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote which were agreed unanimously.

78.12 The Chair noted that Councillors Mears, Wares and Hugh-Jones stated they had reservations but supported the recommendations.

Resolved:

2.1 That the appropriation of the following sites from existing purposes to Housing Act purposes:

- Hillview Contact Centre, Hodshrove Lane
- Moulsecoomb Hub North, Hodshrove Lane
- Moulsecoomb Hub South, Hodshrove Lane
- 67 Centre Youth Centre, Hodshrove Lane
- Multi Use Games Areas, Hodshrove Lane

2.2 That the General Fund should receive the value of £7.32m in consideration for land appropriated as defined at recommendation (1) above from the Housing Revenue Account, subject to validation of this amount from an external valuation;

2.3 That authorisation of the retention of the net capital receipt to be used for reinvestment to support the development of a new Neighbourhood Hub and Sports Facilities on land adjacent to Moulsecoomb Community Leisure Centre, as well as the refurbishment of the Former Portslade Sixth Form site be agreed;

2.4 That the development of a new Neighbourhood Hub and Sports Facilities on land adjacent to Moulsecoomb Community Leisure Centre, subject to planning permission be agreed;

2.5 That the refurbishment of the former Portslade Sixth Form site into council offices, subject to planning permission and Secretary of State consent for change of use be agreed;

2.6 That it be agreed in principle to the development of housing on the appropriated sites listed in recommendation (1) above, subject to planning permission and notes that the Housing Committee will be asked to approve schemes and give authority to procure capital works contracts at a later date;

2.7 That the appropriation of the Hillview Youth Centre and Multi Use Games Areas referred to at (1) above be approved and that it be noted the appropriation will take place when the Committee makes the decision to appropriate (assuming that the Committee approves the recommendation) and that the funds referred to at (2) above, will be transferred following that decision;

2.8 That the Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities and the Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture be granted delegated authority to appropriate

the Moulsecoomb Hub North and Moulsecoomb Hub South sites referred to at (1) above following the refurbishment of the Former Portslade Sixth Form site and transfer a proportion of the funds referred to at (2) above;

- 2.9 That the Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities and Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture be granted delegated authority to appropriate the 67 Youth Centre site referred to at (1) above following the completion of the new Neighbourhood Hub and transfer a proportion of the funds referred to at (2) above;
- 2.10 That a budget for borrowing within the HRA Capital Investment Programme to finance the cost of the appropriation of the sites listed in recommendation (1) above be approved;
- 2.11 That the Executive Director of Environment, Economy & Culture be granted delegated authority to procure the required capital works and enter into contracts in respect of the new Neighbourhood Hub and Sports Facilities and the refurbishment of the former Portslade Sixth Form College site;
- 2.12 That a budget for inclusion into the Council's Capital Investment Programme for the Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Hub works as detailed in paragraph 3.4.8 of the report be approved.

79 ADULT & COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 79.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning, concerning the proposals for the future delivery model of the council's Adult & Community Learning offer funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- 79.2 The report was introduced by the Assistant Director, Education & Skills.
- 79.3 Councillor Knight was informed by Assistant Director, Education & Skills that the National Government funding would be lost if the recommendations were not approved, along with the 'Good' Ofsted rating. The Councillor was informed that the staff within the authority have the skills and expertise to run the project inhouse with a good track record if high standards. It was noted that the staff from the Friends Centre will be utilised. The sum stated in the recommendations would be manageable within in The HRA it was noted.
- 79.4 Councillor Hugh-Jones was informed by Assistant Director, Education & Skills that the authority became aware of the lease on the Friends Centre becoming available at the beginning of 2020. It was noted that ESFA have recently consulted on the introduction of a cap on the percentage of the funding to procure services from third parties. If the recommendations are implemented the council would need to provide the service in house or return the grant. The possible costs of redundancy were not known at this time. It was noted that this matter would be looked into later. It was confirmed that the Friends Centre were entitled to agree a one year lease to the authority.
- 79.5 Councillor Atkinson noted that the Hangleton and Whitehawk consultations were good and was informed that the percentage of tenants consulted was not known, however this would be recorded in future.

- 79.6 Councillor Gibson noted that the money would be requested from the General Fund by the Policy & Resources Committee if the Housing Committee did not agree the recommendation to use the HRA.
- 79.7 Councillor Mears expressed concerns that the Children, Young People & Skills Committee had not discussed the item. It was also a concern that if the HRA was used, tenants would be paying twice, having already payed Council Tax.
- 79.8 Councillor Knight felt that the HRA funds should be put to good use and this would support the most disadvantaged in the community. Councillor Knight supported the scheme and the Green Group amendment.
- 79.9 Councillor Wares expressed concerns at dipping into the HRA but did not want to lose the service. The General Fund would be a better way of finding the money it was felt as the HRA was over used. Councillor Wares noted that tenants wanted repairs done to their homes and the HRA should be used for this. It was felt that the Housing Committee should refuse the recommendation and let the Policy & Resources Committee choose the option of using the General Fund. Councillor Wares did not support the recommendation to the Housing Committee.
- 79.10 Councillor Mears felt the HRA should not be used in this case and that tenant's views supported this. Councillor Mears did not support the recommendation to the Housing Committee.
- 79.11 The Green Group amendment was proposed Councillor Gibson who stated that the services were highly valued. Councillor Gibson was concerned that the initial funding would be based on inadequate information, however it was noted that the General Fund was very tightly squeezed at this time. The amendment would make it clear that the HRA could only be used for one year. The amendment was a compromise based on limited tenant consultation.
- 79.12 The Green Group amendment was seconded by Councillor Hugh-Jones who commented that they were disappointed by the level of consultation. It was noted that East Brighton were supportive and that it was vital to show the benefits to tenants.
- 79.13 Councillor Wares reiterated the concerns that there had been inadequate consultation and the HRA should not be raided now or in the future as this would push costs onto tenants. Policy & Resources should grant funds from the General Fund.
- 79.14 The Chair then put the Green Group amendment to the vote, which was carried by 8 votes to 2.
- 79.15 The Chair then put the recommendation as amended to the vote, which was carried by 8 votes to 2.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That a contribution of £40,000 from the HRA be set aside in the 2020/21 financial year only to support the funding requirements detailed in Option 1 in the report and subject to

recommendation 2.3 (i) below for the Policy & Resources Committee being approved, and that any future HRA contributions be conditional on tenants support evidenced by consultation and that should this consultation be favourable, the HRA contribution be proportionate to the established benefits derived by tenants from these services, as also described in 3.41.

80 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

80.1 There were none

81 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

81.1 There were no Part Two items.

The meeting concluded at 7.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

NOTICE OF MOTION**GREEN GROUP****HOMELESSNESS AND THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC****Notion of Motion**

On 29 April 2020 a notice of motion was presented at Housing Committee which stated the following:

“Subject to available funding that Committee:

- declares its intention to consider how to provide appropriate move-on accommodation and support for all rough sleepers currently housed and supported in hotels/other accommodation in time to avoid them returning to rough-sleeping.
- requests a report to its June meeting setting out needs assessments and an action plan, costings + timetable to provide suitable move-on accommodation and support that would avoid a return to the streets; such report also to consider how the current unconditional offer of accommodation to rough sleepers can continue once the hotel/other accommodation provided during the coronavirus outbreak is no longer available.
- declares its commitment to explore ways of continuing the unconditional offer of shelter currently being offered to rough sleepers during the crisis.

Committee requests that the Chief Executive write to Robert Jenrick (MHCLG) urging the Government to provide the additional resources needed to ensure that the needs of those currently temporarily housed in hotels/other accommodation can be adequately met (once their needs for accommodation and support have been established) following the removal of the current restrictions associated with the pandemic.”

Executive Summary Response

The Council is intending to provide appropriate move on support and accommodation for all rough sleepers currently accommodated. However, we currently do not have sufficient resources to meet all of the needs, and therefore have requested additional support from Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) if we are to avoid people returning to the streets.

The initial focus of work was to procure all the accommodation and enable people to be moved in within a very short timeframe. In total we acquired 379 rooms in various hotels, guest houses and the Youth Hostel Association (YHA). Those contracts are subject to 7 days' notice, and some of the hotels indicated they would return to commercial use as soon as restrictions were lifted. To offset the risk of losing accommodation at short notice, we subsequently acquired 222 units of student accommodation from the University of Brighton which will be available until September along with the YHA and two of the hotels.

We are now starting to plan the recovery for how those people move on from this short term accommodation. This involves assessing all people accommodated in terms of their needs and developing Personal Housing Plans. There are several plans being developed into an overarching plan which are broadly:

- Assessment of around 400 people currently accommodated
- Move on requirements
- Supply of accommodation
- Commissioning strategy to move away from congregate accommodation.

This is a good opportunity to work with all people who were sleeping rough or about to sleep rough and to develop an alternative model going forwards taking into account the impact of Covid-19 for accommodation with shared facilities.

It is likely that most people will broadly require one of the following types of accommodation to move on to:

- Reconnection where safe to do so
- Housing First
- Supported accommodation
- Private rented accommodation
- Social housing.

We are working in partnership with St Mungo's, Arch Healthcare and Public Health to assess and support people accommodated. So far 200 people have been assessed from which we will develop Personal Housing Plans. Of the assessments undertaken:

- 34% are extremely clinically vulnerable or have significant underlying health needs which mean they will require self-contained accommodation.
- 67% have support needs which will require some form of support when they are placed in accommodation.

- At our last estimate around 21 individuals being supported have No Recourse to Public Funds meaning that their options for move on accommodation are extremely limited or non-existent.

The actions undertaken to date in response to the Pandemic and our response to Government around proposed next steps are set out in the remainder of the document. We propose to keep members updated on progress through the member led Homelessness Reduction Board (subject to approval of Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy recommendations) and future reports to Housing Committee.

1. RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

1.1 Providing accommodation for all rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping was challenging and made possible only because hotels were no longer able to continue with regular business. It was therefore possible within a short space of time to procure 379 units of accommodation in 12 hotels and guest houses. The funding Government made available contributed to this and also provided for the support that was essential to persuade hotels to provide accommodation e.g. on site 24/7 security; cleaning to prevent infection; provision of food. Community support was also co—ordinated to provide goods for entertainment (e.g. kindles, books and jigsaws) to try and keep people in the accommodation; and regular check- in was provided by St Mungo's.

1.2 Following advice of Health and MHLCG, rough sleepers who had been verified i.e. those who had been seen bedding down by St Mungo's, and those who were in congregate accommodation e.g. Somewhere Safe to Stay where accommodation was dormitory style which did not enable social distancing, were triaged into one of the following groups and placed into accommodation accordingly:

- Symptomatic
- Not symptomatic but at high risk of Covid-19
- Not symptomatic but low risk of Covid-19

(This is referred to as the Care and Protect model).

Other people who have become homeless and were at risk of sleeping rough, but have not yet been rough sleeping, have been placed into hotel accommodation outside the triage model.

1.3 The increase in Housing Benefit level has been very helpful and has enabled our charity partner, Umbrella, to access private rented sector tenancies during this period to meet the needs of former rough sleepers.

1.4 Efforts have initially been focused on getting rough sleepers triaged and into accommodation. We are now planning to undertake move-on plans for each individual.

1.5 While the action of getting all rough sleepers accommodated has been effective, there are both risks and opportunities. As we have used hotel accommodation, as soon as the restrictions are eased, the owners will want to return to commercial business and only have to provide the council with 7 days' notice to end the contract.

1.6 To mitigate this risk we have procured student accommodation which will be available until September. In having all rough sleepers off the street, we have an opportunity to gain greater insight into the real reason they became homeless and facilitate better targeting of prevention work going forwards. It will also enable us to engage with people differently whilst they are in accommodation and build trust with them in order to plan a move away from the street on a scale which we have not been able to do before. We are also able to

develop more robust and joined up working between St Mungo's outreach service and Housing Options to determine where we do have statutory housing duties and where we don't so as to develop a clear offer and personal housing plan. Finally, it will enable us to robustly reconnect people to areas they have come from where it is safe to do so using the statutory framework where possible. We are developing an overall plan to manage the assessments of an additional 400 people. We can then identify the cohorts of solutions eg being reconnected, being ready to move to private rented accommodation, or requiring supported accommodation. We are working with the MHCLG to identify where additional resources are required from central government to enable successful move on of all people accommodated under Covid-19.

- 1.7 In the event we are not able to move all existing and potentially new rough sleepers into more settled housing solutions by September, we will review remaining numbers and consider further accommodation to meet this shortfall until they can be assisted to move on.
- 1.8 In terms of the impact on private rented sector (PRS), the delay in evictions has proved effective in limiting the demands for temporary accommodation. The restrictions have meant that flow out of temporary accommodation is very difficult, and so the limited inflow from the PRS has had a positive impact. While it enables a longer period within which to try and resolve issues so that accommodation could be sustained, in reality this has proved difficult due to restrictions in staff being able to engage with people in person and build a positive relationship in line with a psychologically informed approach. The slowdown in the churn of private rented accommodation also has a negative impact in that fewer properties have been available to prevent homelessness and enable people to move on.

2. MOVE ON OPTIONS

- 2.1 In order to anticipate the demand for accommodating the 400 individuals placed so far, our assessment and planning (Personal Housing Plans) for move on will be carried out with partners, St Mungo's. We anticipate the following general cohorts within the overall population so far assisted which will consist of those offered assistance:-
 - through rapid reconnection, under relief duties, to areas where people have a local connection – where it is safe to do so;
 - to return to previous accommodation (this may require support, mediation, conflict resolutions etc);
 - by providing self-contained accommodation (single flats, bedsits, studios);
 - by providing accommodation in shared housing or houses in multiple occupation (HMOs);
 - by providing accommodation in supported housing as part of the council and its partner's supported housing offer to persons with medium to high needs;
 - by providing accommodation within the Housing First model for those with very high needs;
 - by supporting those otherwise able to find accommodation for themselves;
 - using the statutory provisions refer housing duties to another local authority, where there is no local connection to Brighton & Hove and it is safe to do so;
 - by seeking solutions for those without recourse to public funds (ineligible for assistance).
- 2.2 We are exploring the use of HMOs and what support would be needed for tenants and landlords. This would be limited in application for the current group unless we had additional funding to offer on-site support or the expansion of existing sustainment

support within the Housing Options team. However there are opportunities arising from potential changes to the student accommodation market such that we could acquire HMOs for clients new to the street and with lower support needs, and to enhance the community-based support that has been developed in the City.

- 2.3 Increased access to self-contained private rented sector accommodation would enable us to move low need people on from supported housing, and provide additional resource for those in need of support. One barrier is Housing Benefit levels and it would be helpful if the Government could consider maintaining the current increase. We need to be able to create a flow through the supported housing pathway which is currently silted up because of these barriers to the PRS. We have managed to enable some people to move into private rented sector, which has been a challenge during lockdown, and we are identifying the resources needed to build on the relationships we have with local private landlords to enable more people to move into private accommodation.
- 2.4 Related to 2.3, at present, many single people under 35 are entitled to the shared room rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA). This severely restricts access to the private rented sector and is a barrier for many homeless individuals in securing accommodation. There are exemptions to this shared room rate. A meaningful recommendation to government would be a temporary extension of these exemptions to include all persons accommodated during the Covid-19 provisions, and to run for 12 months after the ending of these provisions. This would provide a 12 month opportunity to assist these people and restrict the additional pressure on government budgets to that time period.
- 2.5 To enable accommodation to meet the needs of those most vulnerable and hardest to place, additional support is required from government to further expand the Housing First model. Resources are required for both revenue to enable support and capital to expand the supply of accommodation. We have already identified some revenue funding to support additional Housing First accommodation, and are exploring how further homes could be procured and where additional capital funding from MHCLG is required.
- 2.6 Brighton & Hove City Council has accommodated around 400 (and rising) individuals. The resources to undertake support, to assess, access support, produce move on planning and find accommodation is considerable if we are to avoid these people returning to rough sleeping. We have also seen people who had substance misuse issues struggle to acquire substances during lock down and this presents a unique opportunity to build on the work and help people to detox. Additional resources would need to be forthcoming from MHCLG to enable this scale of work to be continued. Some of this may involve a review and realignment of existing support provision, in light of what we are learning, to develop some creative solutions which might cost more but would generate better outcomes.
- 2.7 However, Brighton & Hove currently has no access to residential rehab (the rehab service we access has closed its doors due to the pandemic) for clients who now wish to engage in treatment. This is a concern, as clients who have never before engaged with treatment are currently engaging, and lack of access to rehab is inhibiting their progression.
- 2.8 Access to mental health services, Adult Social Care support and primary care is working well at present but support offers are limited as most workers are working remotely. Packages of care are not readily available due to shortages of staff in home care provision. The level of multiple and compound need in this client group is profound and this is presenting as a risk for sustainment and an increased cost pressure as additional support staffing has been put into hotel accommodation to meet these needs.

- 2.9 Brighton & Hove is a destination of choice for many people in a wide variety of circumstances such as escaping violence, domestic abuse, drug and social problems as well as being a famous resort and cultural centre which many people move to, to seek work and who arrive without accommodation planned. We have a lot of people, therefore, with no local connection, and following the relaxing of restrictions there will be significant demand for relocating/ referring households back to areas where they do have a connection and where it is safe to do so . Additional funding for further workers to meet the initial increase in demand would be required and has been raised with MHCLG in addition to strengthening legislation around response times for cases referred to local authorities.
- 2.10 A national review is needed of the enforcement powers available to local authorities and police requiring people to cooperate with a statutory referral to another local authority – where accommodation and support can be guaranteed as a result. The infringement on choice, or on principles of liberty, could be ameliorated through a requirement on the receiving authority to demonstrate a plan for moving the referred individual to an area of choice that will be sustainable and not lead to homelessness in that area.
- 2.11 The Chancellor has made provision for people who have been furloughed or unable to work during the restrictions. However, both in social housing and temporary accommodation we have seen rent arrears increasing dramatically and that will impact on overall council income required to fund new housing development and/or to minimise impact on the general fund. It is likely that arrears in private rented accommodation have also increased. While a lot of work is underway to try and enable people to claim benefit where possible, further help is needed to assist those people.
- 2.12 We are hearing increasing numbers of problems in the private rented sector relating to both landlords and tenants affected by income reduction caused by Covid-19, and some failure to pay rent. Relief is in place via the provisions laid out by the Chancellor but this will not mitigate all problems. The measures to prevent evictions are very welcome but we are concerned about the impact on private sector tenants as we come out of Covid-19 lockdown and these restrictions are relaxed. The concern is that large numbers of families and households of all types will become at risk of homelessness because of simultaneous possession action taken by landlords and their agents. This will impact on the courts and could lead to a large influx of households needing accommodation right at the time local authorities are trying to deal with the accommodation needs of large numbers of rough sleepers. We have requested that MHCLG give consideration to the planning of the removal of restrictions on evictions.
- 2.13 This is a unique opportunity to impact on rough sleeping and to use this period to understand what prevention measures would be successful going forwards. This represents a powerful moment to work together with partners to find solutions.
- 2.14 Covid-19 can enable a realignment of social and cultural values. Its impact presents an opportunity to challenge the street culture of begging, exploitation, modern slavery and enforced begging, drug use – to eliminate this within the meaning of governmental target and to challenge the normalisation of rough sleeping that we have seen in recent years.

3. FINANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The costs of placing people in “Care and Protect” accommodation and other hotels, and providing food and support to all of Brighton & Hove’s rough sleepers and people formerly in congregate accommodation is estimated to be £3.901m to early September (379 accommodation units across 12 hotels and guest houses). There is a small amount of funding (up to £0.066m for Brighton & Hove) available in the form of the original Covid-19 Contingency Funding announced by MHCLG in March to meet the immediate needs of rough sleepers needing to self-isolate. The council has also so far received £16.205m in emergency response funding from the Government. This funding is to cover all services of the council not just housing. A recent report to Special P&R Committee suggests that this will be insufficient to meet all of the extra costs, and income shortfalls across the authority with an estimated funding gap of £51.6m for the year 2020/21. Further announcements have been made by Robert Jenrick, the Minister for Housing Communities and Local Government on homelessness and rough sleeping, and the council has recently requested more resources for this purpose from the MHCLG and is waiting to hear the results of this.

Officer: Monica Brooks date: 05/06/20

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In order to avoid legal challenge, the council will need to ensure that the future allocation of accommodation is compatible with its Allocation and Homelessness duties under the Housing Act 1996.

Officer: Liz Woodley Date: 08/06/2020

5. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PARLIAMENTARY SUBMISSION - Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry, Impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on homelessness and the private rented sector.

Response to the crisis and government provisions

Comment on PRS eviction provisions

Concerns and recommendations for the ending of Covid-19 provisions including:

- exploration of HMO type accommodation as a solution for some rough sleepers
- recommendations regarding barriers to accessing the PRS
- recommendation relating to exemptions to under 35 LHA rates to assist access to PRS
- expansion of Housing First
- concerns relating to closure of rehabilitation/detox, and recognition of complex needs and related support from primary care and mental health services
- resourcing for “local connection” provisions
- recommendation for review of enforcement of local connection provisions
- concerns about impact on rental income for the council
- concerns and recommendations for planning removal of eviction provisions
- concerns and recommendations relating to the opportunity the current Covid-19 provisions have inadvertently presented for dealing with rough sleeping
- Comment on realignment of social and cultural values resulting from current crisis with respect to challenging the societal normalisation of rough sleeping in our communities over recent years.

Subject:	Housing Revenue Account Solar Photovoltaic installation programme 2020-2023		
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director, Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Dan Goodchild	Tel: x0486
	Email:	Dan.goodchild@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All wards		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 In the context of Brighton & Hove City Council's declaration of a climate emergency and ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030, this report seeks approval for the council to commence a new Solar Photovoltaic (PV) installation programme on domestic council houses, for the period 2020-2023.
- 1.2 The proposed programme cost is £1.875m. An initial budget allocation of £100k was approved at Budget Council on 27 February 2020. This will be used to initiate the programme with the majority of installations to be carried out in the financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23 if approved.
- 1.3 As part of the above budget allocation 1.2 full time equivalent (FTE) posts will be appointed in order to deliver the work to a high quality.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Housing Committee;

- 2.1 Delegates authority to the Executive Director, Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities to take all steps necessary to:
 - 2.1.1 procure and award a contract for the installation of up to 500 domestic solar PV arrays for the period 2020-2023;
 - 2.1.2 increase this up to 1500 installations by 2026 subject to further Committee approval of budget allocation and additional installs.
- 2.2 Recommend to Policy & Resources Committee to allocate the following additional budget to allow for the delivery of 500 domestic solar PV arrays for the period 2020-23:
 - 2021/22: £875k;
 - 2022/23: £875k.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council has declared a climate emergency, with a target to become a net zero carbon city by 2030. Emissions from housing make up approximately 40% of the city's total emissions and it is estimated that the Councils own housing stock currently emits 45,192tCO₂e per annum.
- 3.2 The Council's [Fuel Poverty & Affordable Warmth Strategy](#) was agreed at the Health & Wellbeing Board in September 2016. The strategy committed the council to 'Support residents struggling to pay their energy bills' and to 'Increase effective targeting of vulnerable fuel poor households and those most at risk of the health impacts of cold homes'.
- 3.3 Solar PV installations on houses are directly connected to the property's distribution (fuse) board. When the panels are generating electricity, any electricity demand required by that property is met firstly by the solar panels – for which there is no cost or carbon emitted – with any remaining demand met by grid-purchased electricity. When the demand for electricity is lower than the generation, electricity is exported to the national grid.
- 3.4 In June 2013¹, a programme of solar PV installations on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets was approved, based on the council generating a commercial return through the availability of a favourable Feed-in-Tariff (FiT) at the time. Properties were selected based on roof orientation and ease of installation in order to maximise the FiT payments to the council. 340 installations were completed before the FiT reduction made the continuation of the project non-economic. These installs generate approximately £150,000 of FiT income per annum to the HRA.
- 3.5 Since this last major programme further solar PV arrays have been installed on new build properties in order to meet Planning and Building Regulation requirements, but there has been no major retrofit programme in this period.
- 3.6 In total the HRA currently maintains 400 solar PV arrays, totalling 1100kWp (1.1MWp). In 2019, these arrays avoided 145tCO₂e being emitted from HRA assets.
- 3.7 363 (832kWp) of these arrays are on houses. Tenants within these properties benefit from being able to use this electricity for free. If it is not consumed, it is exported to the grid. There is no financial implication for doing this.

4. PROPOSED NEW PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The HRA currently has approximately 4000 tenanted houses within its portfolio. It is believed the majority of these would be technically capable of receiving a solar

¹ <http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/documents/s60736/Procurement%20of%20Solar%20Photovoltaic%20Arrays%20for%20BHCC%20HRA%20Property.pdf>

PV install². It is these properties that would be the focus of the programme. Options for tenants and leaseholders to benefit from installations on communal roofs are currently being explored through the EU funded SOLARISE project.

- 4.2 Since the withdrawal of the FiT in March 2019, the financial incentives to landlords to install solar PV have been negligible. Financial returns to the Council have therefore not been considered as an incentive for the creation of this programme of work – the focus is instead on carbon savings for the city and bill savings for tenants.
- 4.3 As with the existing systems, all new installations would be directly wired into a property's distribution board, giving the householder access to free electricity generated by the panels. The amount of solar electricity available for tenants will vary depending on system size, pitch and orientation. Savings will also depend on the lifestyle/energy behaviour of the resident.
- 4.4 It is proposed to install an average system size of 8 panels (approx. 2.4kW), which is similar to our current system sizes. Panels come with a performance guarantee that ensures they will operate at a minimum of 80% after 20 years, although almost all systems are outperforming this guarantee to date. Panels would be expected to continue to generate electricity after twenty years.
- 4.5 It is expected that tenants will save up to £150 and 0.6tCO₂e per annum depending on their consumption habits. This represents a total lifetime saving from the panels of £2.48m on tenants' energy bills and a year one carbon saving of 300tCO₂e.
- 4.6 To manage the installation programme, it is proposed to appoint the following posts and capitalise the salary costs, estimated at £124,500 for the lifetime of the project, as part of the project:
 - 1.0FTE – Technical project manager. This post will provide technical oversight of the procurement specification, lead the procurement process and contract manage the installation phase including quality assurance;
 - 0.2 FTE – Admin. This post will provide support to the Technical project manager posts, in particular tenant and installer liaison.
- 4.7 It is proposed to filter and prioritise properties for installation based on the reasoning set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.8 Tenants will be able to opt out of the programme by informing the council in writing and reverse this decision in the same manner.
- 4.9 There would be an additional cost of £25.80per installation per year for remote monitoring. This is considered essential for the Council to monitor system performance and would be included in future years' budgets.

² Previous feasibility studies required installations to generate a financial return for the Council in order to be considered viable. Without this restriction, only roof condition and grid capacity are likely to restrict the number of installs.

Procurement

- 4.10 Solar PV installation is a specialist area of work which the Council does not have the relevant skills and experience (beyond contract management) to deliver in-house at the proposed scale. Installation of solar PV at this scale requires supply chains that the council does not have access to. Further, it would also require the resource and buying power of a specialist contractor working regionally, nationally and internationally across a larger portfolio of projects.
- 4.11 It is proposed to procure the installations through an existing framework. Several suitable frameworks have been identified:
- Fusion21, Energy Efficiency Framework - Lot 4 - Domestic Solar PV and Battery Storage;
 - Eastern Shires Procurement Organisation (ESPO) Renewable Energy Solutions Lot 1 - The supply and installation of Solar PV systems;
 - Procurement for Housing (PfH) The Renewables & Energy Efficiency Works and Associated Consultancy Services framework Lot 1A – Solar PV.
- 4.12 Further analysis of these frameworks (and any others) will be conducted, including assessing the social value and community wealth building benefits each would deliver to the City. This analysis will be presented to the Executive Director for Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities to agree which framework will be used.
- 4.13 It would be possible for the Council to run a compliant procurement in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, in-house, however this would be more resource intensive and take longer to procure.
- 4.14 The Council will be exploring the option of carrying out the future maintenance and repair of solar PV systems through its own in-house electrical team when the installations are complete on the proposed programme. The existing solar PV servicing and maintenance contract comes to an end in 2021.
- 4.15 It is proposed to procure a contract for 500 installs, with an option to increase this total in increments of 250 up to a total of 1500. This would allow for continuity of the installation programme should the programme be extended and subject to contractor performance. In this instance, a further Committee Report will be brought to Housing Committee in order to obtain appropriate budgetary authority and allow members to grant approval for the extension of the programme.
- 4.16 In order to balance the need for effective tenant engagement and the capability of the market to act, it is proposed to run the programme over three years, with the following breakdown per year:

2020/21	£125k
2021/22	£875k
2022/23	£875k

- 4.17 If the project is approved, then it is expected that the following timelines would apply:

July	Budget approval sought from Policy & Resources Committee
Aug – Nov	Procurement exercise
Aug – Nov	Early sift of possible properties
Dec – Jan	Mobilisation of successful contractor and more detailed analysis of properties
Feb 2021	Tenant engagement letters sent
Mar 2021	Installs begin
Mar 2021 – Dec 2022	Installation period. Approximately 1 per working day.
Spring 2022	Budgetary approval could be sought for additional funding to continue programme

Options to scale up the programme

- 4.18 The proposed programme size outlined in the recommendations has been based on feedback from the market, the risks outlined in section 5 and the capacity of the Housing team to deliver the programme.
- 4.19 A high-level analysis of alternative programme sizes has been carried out. To increase the programme to 1000 installs the estimated capital cost (including additional resource to deliver the programme) is approximately £3.5M. This does not include any borrowing costs outlined in 7.2.
- 4.20 In addition to resource to deliver the programme and budget availability, there are two other main considerations that would affect how deliverable a larger programme might be;

Grid Capacity

The local electricity District Network Operator, UK Power Networks, considers almost all of Brighton & Hove to be a ‘constrained’ area. This means there is relatively little capacity to connect new ‘distributed generation assets’ to the electricity grid. As set out in Appendix 1, where a grid connection agreement is refused by UKPN, properties will be unable to receive solar PV until the local distribution network is upgraded, the Council has no control over this.

It is highly likely that installing 1000 new solar PV systems would mean some grid connection agreements are refused. This will mean that potentially significant areas of the city are unable to receive solar PV within the programme period. This also has the potential to restrict new development which relies on this capacity for new connections.

Market Capacity

Feedback from soft market testing indicated that suppliers could meet the requirement to install 5 arrays per week. A second team would be required to install 10 a week and this would increase the likelihood of work being subcontracted. Additional quality checks and costs would therefore be required to ensure the work was up to a satisfactory standard.

5 RISKS

- 5.1 The key risks to the project's deliverability are:
- Contractor longevity
 - Extreme weather
 - Grid capacity
 - Covid-19 pandemic restrictions
- 5.2 The first two risks can be mitigated through the procurement process and project delivery. The primary unknown risk is around grid capacity, which would mean that a household in a specific area would be unable to get any solar PV. There is nothing the Council can do to mitigate this risk as it is the responsibility of the district network operator. More information on risks is included in the eligibility criteria listing at Appendix 1.
- 5.3 The council will continue to monitor the situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic and it is possible that delays will be incurred as a result of tenants self-isolating, additional measures or requirements put on contractors or further restrictions on works projects of this nature.

6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Residents have expressed an interest in the Council's plans to reduce carbon emissions and what support can be provided to help residents reduce their fuel bills further, as outlined throughout the report the deployment of solar PV would contribute to both of these outcomes.
- 6.2 The proposals were discussed at Home Group on 4 March 2020 and attendees were supportive of the project. Further information regarding the project will be discussed with Home Group if approval to proceed is given and once the programme has commenced.
- 6.3 Should specific areas or estates be identified by early analysis as being particularly suitable, then further targeted engagement with tenant groups in these areas would be conducted throughout the delivery phase.
- 6.4 The Procurement Advisory Board was consulted in relation to the HRA Solar PV installs 2020-2023 on the 11 May 2020 and provided the recommendations that have been reflected in this report.

CONCLUSION

- 6.5 The installation of solar PV systems on council houses presents a simple, low-risk and effective way of reducing carbon emissions from housing in the city and helping residents with their fuel bills.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 A budget of £0.100m was approved as part of the 2020/21 HRA Capital Programme to commence a new Solar PV programme. The additional £0.025m required for this financial year will be reported and managed as part of the capital budget monitoring process.

- 7.2 The additional capital budget requirement of £0.875m per annum could be met from within the yearly direct revenue funding allocation (being the revenue surplus within the HRA budget). However, this would depend on other priorities at budget setting time. If not met from DRF, the HRA would be able to borrow to fund this expenditure at an estimated annual cost of £0.140m per year. The costs of borrowing (if required) together with the costs of remote monitoring required for the new installations (£25.80 per install), as well as any further maintenance costs would need to be built into future revenue budgets.
- 7.3 The report describes an option to scale up the programme to 1000 panels at a capital cost of £3.5m, (an additional £1.750m) and outlines the risks associated with this in paragraph 4.20. If the HRA were to borrow in order to fund a further £1.750m, this would cost a further £0.140m per year for the HRA, so £0.280m per year in total. However, if sufficient revenue funds are available at the time then no borrowing would be required.
- 7.4 Any decision to commit to installing solar PV panels will of course reduce the resources available for the HRA to fund other priorities such as building or buying of new council homes or repairs and maintenance of current homes.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 04/06/2020

Legal Implications:

- 7.5 The procurement of the contract for the supply and installation of Solar PV must comply with the council's Contract Standing Orders and, where applicable, EU and UK public procurement obligations.

Lawyer Consulted:

Wendy McRae-Smith

Date: 29/5/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 7.6 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and is included at Appendix 2.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.7 Undertaking this project would significantly improve the sustainability of the council's Housing stock, reducing carbon emissions by approximately 305tCO₂e per annum. Alongside other renewable energy-based projects and plans to improve the energy efficiency of homes this will contribute towards the Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.8 Public Health

Strategically addressing cold homes and fuel poverty in vulnerable groups will contribute to the prevention of ill health and excess winter deaths, reduce health and social inequalities, and improve wellbeing and quality of life. Supporting and

enabling residents to pay less for their energy can contribute to tackling fuel poverty and cold homes.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1. Prioritisation of properties

Appendix 2. Equalities Impact Assessment

Glossary

tCO₂e: tonnes equivalent of carbon dioxide emitted - a commonly used metric to measure carbon emissions

kWp: kilowatt peak – the peak power of the system

MWp: Megawatt peak (1MW = 1000kW) – in this instance the total installed capacity

Housing Committee

Agenda Item 8

Brighton & Hove City Council

Housing Committee	Agenda Item
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Appendix 1: PRIORITISATION OF PROPERTIES FOR INSTALL

This appendix sets out the proposed approach to ensure an equitable distribution of solar PV systems amongst tenants. It is a process by which properties are firstly deemed technically feasible and then prioritised.

Technical feasibility criteria

The following must all be true for a house or bungalow to be considered technically feasible for installation:

Reason for exclusion	Justification	Notes
Property is not a house or bungalow	Unsuitable for solar PV system	SOLARISE project aims to benefit tenants within blocks.
Property does not have an East, South or West-facing roof	Yield from solar panels facing North not cost effective in terms of generation potential	Very few houses only have a North facing roof (i.e. most will also have a south facing roof).
Needs reroofing	Not cost effective to remove panels for reroofing in medium-term	Could install solar PV when reroofing occurs as part of re-roofing programme (not currently part of the reroofing specification) or as part of a future solar PV programme
Structural issues with the roof	Unsuitable for solar PV system	Unlikely that there is a cost-effective resolution to this but potential to re-visit if structural issues are addressed
UKPN reject grid connection application due to capacity constraints in the area*	Unsuitable for solar PV system	In due course, UKPN will upgrade the distribution network in an area, at which point installs can recommence locally. Practically the entire city is classed as having 'limited capacity' and so this is a risk across all areas

note that as there is a cost to make a grid connection application, this will not be known until **after the prioritisation and tenant engagement work has been conducted.*

Technically feasible properties will then be prioritised based on a range of measures that indicate that the occupant is more likely to be paying higher energy bills or struggling to pay their energy bills but based on property type and area rather than specific householder eligibility:

	Priority	Justification
1.	Property's current EPC is D or worse	Fuel bills likely to be higher than majority of the Council Housing stock. This can be revised (i.e. to EPC C) once most Eligible D and E properties are completed
2.	Property has electric heating	Fuel bills likely to be higher than properties heated with gas, and potential for greater benefit from the generated electricity
3.	Priority for properties in an LSOA within the city's top 29 for Indices of Deprivation	Tenants at greater risk of fuel poverty

No prioritisation will be based on:

- Roof orientation, height or shading...all of which impact on:
- System performance
- Location (aside from fuel poor areas)

Note: We have not proposed a more specific targeting approach based on individual eligibility of householders i.e. in receipt of certain benefits due to the potential for labelling those households via the solar PV install. The above property based approach also ensures that the property itself is future-proofed for reducing fuel bills for future occupants in addition to existing occupants.



Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA)

EIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-usersⁱ. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groupsⁱⁱ. They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisionsⁱⁱⁱ.

We aim to work closely with residents before, during and after works. For projects such as this we discuss options and proposals with residents as early as possible to ensure we capture their priorities, so we can feed this into any proposals where possible. We also write to tenants following works to ask for their feedback on how the project went and whether the work made a difference. We intend to increase the information we gather to include asking whether we have met the tenants individual needs during the period of the works.

Title of EIA	HRA Solar PV programme 2020-23 Reference number: HNC47
Team/Department	Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Miles Davidson Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Manager, Interim Manager M&E Team Dan Goodchild – Home Energy Efficiency Project Manager
Date of EIA	18.05.2020
Focus of EIA^{iv}	The focus of this EIA is on the proposed HRA solar PV programme on up to 500 homes 2020-23. It also allows us to examine the potential impacts on groups resulting from the installation of a solar PV panels on roofs of up to 500 homes across the city.

Scope of Works:

HRA solar PV programme on up to 500 homes across the city 2020-23. It is proposed to install an average system size of 8 panels (approx. 2.4kW), it is expected that tenants will save up to £150 and 0.6tCO₂e per annum depending on their consumption habits. This represents a total lifetime saving from the panels of £2.48m on tenants' energy bills and a year one carbon saving of 300tCO₂e

Tenants will be able to opt out of the programme by informing the council in writing and reverse this decision in the same manner.

It is proposed to filter and prioritise properties for installation based on the reasoning set out below.

Technical feasibility criteria

The following must all be true for a house or bungalow to be considered technically feasible for installation:

Reason for exclusion	Justification	Notes
Property is not a house or bungalow	Unsuitable for solar PV system	SOLARISE project aims to benefit tenants within blocks.

Property does not have an East, South or West-facing roof	Yield from solar panels facing North not cost effective in terms of generation potential	Very few houses only have a North facing roof (i.e. most will also have a south facing roof).
Needs reroofing	Not cost effective to remove panels for reroofing in medium-term	Could install solar PV when reroofing occurs as part of re-roofing programme (not currently part of the reroofing specification) or as part of a future solar PV programme
Structural issues with the roof	Unsuitable for solar PV system	Unlikely that there is a cost-effective resolution to this but potential to re-visit if structural issues are addressed
UKPN reject grid connection application due to capacity constraints in the area*	Unsuitable for solar PV system	In due course, UKPN will upgrade the distribution network in an area, at which point installs can recommence locally. Practically the entire city is classed as having 'limited capacity' and so this is a risk across all areas

note that as there is a cost to make a grid connection application, this will not be known until **after the prioritisation and tenant engagement work has been conducted.*

Technically feasible properties will then be prioritised based on a range of measures that indicate that the occupant is more likely to be paying higher energy bills or struggling to pay their energy bills but based on property type and area rather than specific householder eligibility:

	Priority	Justification
1.	Property's current EPC is D or worse	Fuel bills likely to be higher than majority of the Council Housing stock. This can be revised (i.e. to EPC C) once most Eligible D and E properties are completed
2.	Property has electric heating	Fuel bills likely to be higher than properties heated with gas, and potential for greater benefit from the generated electricity
3.	Priority for properties in an LSOA within the city's top 29 for Indices of Deprivation	Tenants at greater risk of fuel poverty

No prioritisation will be based on:

- Roof orientation, height or shading...all of which impact on:
- System performance

- Location (aside from fuel poor areas)

Note: We have not proposed a more specific targeting approach based on individual eligibility of householders i.e. in receipt of certain benefits due to the potential for labelling those households via the solar PV install. The above property based approach also ensures that the property itself is future-proofed for reducing fuel bills for future occupants in addition to existing occupants.

Age	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested actions
Proposal		
<p>Couples over 60 have the highest average fuel poverty gap of £393 p.a. (Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2020)</p> <p>Excess winter deaths (EWD) are higher among people aged 65+. In 2013/14 51% of cold related deaths were among people aged 85 and older; 27% were among those aged between 75 and 84; 22% were among people under 75. ('Statistical bulletin: excess winter mortality in England and Wales, 2013/14'). In Brighton & Hove (for the three years of 2010/11 to 2012/13) 50% EWD of were in people aged 85 or over.</p> <p>Older households who receive the installations will have the potential to reduce their energy bills thus reducing the fuel poverty gap and enabling more affordable heat across their energy supplies.</p>		
Works		
The scope of works is largely external so small impact on householders.	Residents are unable to plan ahead and put measures in place to reduce the impact this work will have.	The proposal includes project support to enable liaison and communication with residents, including how to maximise the benefits of the installation.
Disability		
Proposal		
<p>People in England (2013) who have a long-term illness or disability are more likely to be fuel poor (12%) than those who do not (10%). In Brighton & Hove, Health Counts Survey respondents who had a limiting long-term illness or disability were significantly more likely to be unable to keep their home warm in winter. 16.3% of people living in Brighton & Hove have their daily activities limited a little or a lot by a long-term health problem or disability (Census 2011). Nationally, disabled people are more likely to live on low incomes and experience poverty than non-disabled people.</p> <p>Disabled people are more likely to need a warmer home environment to maintain their health; some disabled people may need to use benefits</p>		

intended to support their independence to ensure their home is warm enough.

Solar PV will reduce the householder's energy bills overall, reducing the likelihood/depth and impact of fuel poverty and EWD.

Works	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
Tenants have told us that there are days when their health issues restrict what they are able to do or may mean they require more care.	Residents may need flexibility around scheduling to allow for health issues (bad days) and other commitments such as Occupational Health visitors or carers.	Project management will liaise directly with residents re. the scheduling of works around individual's needs.

Gender Reassignment	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
<p>Proposal</p> <p>The Brighton & Hove Trans Needs Assessment found that the trans community have more people with a disability or long-term health need than the general population. 44% of respondents reported that they have a limiting long-term illness or disability, compared with 26% of all respondents to the Health Counts Survey.</p> <p>Solar PV will reduce the householder's energy bills overall, reducing the likelihood/depth and impact of fuel poverty and EWD.</p>		

Works		
We will consider the needs of the trans community during the works.	No specific feedback received relating to this group.	No specific actions identified for this group. All contractors will be respectful of people who are trans or non-binary and will use the names and pronouns (like 'he', 'she', they) that the person uses.

Race and Ethnicity & Religion and Belief	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
<p>Proposal</p> <p>In 2018, the median income for ethnic minority households was, on average, lower than the income for white households which partly explains their higher likelihood of fuel poverty 17.7% of households compared to 9.3% of white households.</p> <p>Solar PV will reduce the householder's energy bills overall, reducing the likelihood/depth and impact of fuel poverty and EWD.</p>		

<p>Works</p> <p>Where English is not their first language residents may have difficulty reading and understanding the content of letters relating to the works.</p>	<p>Residents will not be aware of the works and how this will impact on them including how they might best benefit from the generated electricity.</p>	<p>We will be utilising the services of a translation / interpreting service should this be a requirement.</p> <p>Contractors will be sensitive to religious dress codes and ensure they are not dressed in a manner that could give offence, e.g. bare arms and shorts.</p> <p>Ensure that staff and contractors are aware of significant religious holidays and cultural events for all faiths, where these mean that people will not want to meet with visitors or will be observing religious rituals.</p>

Sex / Gender	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
<p>Proposal</p> <p>In Brighton & Hove (for the three years of 2010/11 to 2012/13) there were 373 EWD. Of these, 58% were female. Of EWD in Brighton & Hove of people aged 85 years or over, 79% were female.</p> <p>Solar PV will reduce the householder's energy bills overall, reducing the likelihood/depth and impact of fuel poverty and EWD.</p>		
<p>Works</p> <p>No specific feedback received relating to this group.</p>	<p>Some women may have negative perceptions about contractors.</p>	<p>Ensure that all contractors abide by BHCC and the main contractors code of conduct and are courteous and polite to all residents.</p>

Sexual Orientation	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
Proposal No specific impacts identified		
Works		
No specific feedback received relating to this group.	No specific positive or negative impacts identified for this group.	Ensure that all staff are respectful of residents who are lesbian, gay or bisexual and do not make assumptions about the gender of partners.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
Proposal No specific feedback received relating to this group.		
Works		
No specific feedback received relating to this group.	No specific positive or negative impacts identified for this group.	No specific actions identified for this group.

Other Relevant Groups	Findings / Evidence / Comments	Suggested areas for development
Proposal Unemployed households in England have the highest rates of fuel poverty across all economic activity groups but have smaller average fuel poverty gaps. Solar PV will reduce the householder's energy bills overall, reducing the likelihood/depth and impact of fuel poverty and EWD.		

EIA sign-off: (for the EIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

Lead Equality Impact Assessment officer:

Dan Goodchild

Date: 15th May 2020

Team Manager:

Miles Davidson

Date: 15th May 2020

ⁱ The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately in their work.
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services which provide services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** to show that we have fulfilled our duties we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled or the EIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. Properly used, an EIA can be a tool to help us comply with our equality duty and as a record that to demonstrate that we have done so.

ⁱⁱ **Our duties in the Equality Act 2010**

As a public sector organisation, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people in relation to their 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on what you are assessing, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and how serious any potential impacts might be. We use this EIA template to complete this process and evidence our consideration.

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **advance equality of opportunity.** This means the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
 - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** This means:
 - Tackle prejudice
 - Promote understanding

iii EIAs are always proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected within the context

The greater the impacts, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.

^{iv} **Focus of EIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time – eg: ‘Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)’

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?
- Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function tell you?
- What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

Subject:	Procurement of interim major capital projects		
Date of Meeting:	17 June 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director, Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Geof Gage	Tel: 01273 293235
	Email:	geofrey.gage@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	ALL		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority from Housing Committee to procure and award contracts for interim major capital projects.
- 1.2 This report follows decisions to procure contracts for planned maintenance and improvement programmes and a multi contractor framework agreement for major capital projects made by Housing & New Homes Committee on 28 September 2018 and Policy, Resources & Growth Committee on 11 October 2018.
- 1.3 The multi contractor framework agreement was expected to commence in late 2020 with interim procurement arrangements in place for any required projects for 2020/21. This timeline has been impacted by the current coronavirus emergency which has delayed when planned and major capital projects will now be on site.
- 1.4 An interim programme has been prepared for those major capital projects which need to be completed earlier than the anticipated start date for the wider programme being procured in line with the committee decisions above (see attached in Appendix 1).
- 1.5 Budget approval for the projects referred to in this report, with the exception of Palace Place, has been confirmed following the HRA Budget and Capital Investment 2020/21 and Medium Term Financial Strategy Report to Budget Council in February 2020.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Committee:

- 2.1 Delegates authority to the Executive Director, Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities to procure and award the contracts for the major capital projects which are set out in Appendix 1.

3 CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The programme set out in Appendix 1 covers projects over £500,000 that are required for an interim period until the new framework agreement for major capital projects is awarded.
- 3.2 In considering which projects should be undertaken in 2020/21 officers have taken into account health and safety requirements and also projects that will enhance the Council's housing stock as part of the Council's commitment to provide further homes.
- 3.3 In consultation with procurement colleagues officers have agreed routes to market for the procurement of the works which will either be by running standalone tender processes or by utilising existing third party frameworks. The framework detailed in 1.2 will then be used for future projects once it is in place.
- 3.4 Tender documents for the projects are being prepared and officers are in a position to commence the procurements for the works should committee approve the recommendation set out in 2.1 above.
- 3.5 Works are planned to start on site in early 2021 with works for the 2021/22 programme being procured through the new framework agreement for major capital projects.
- 3.6 Other capital works to the housing stock including mechanical and electrical projects and some planned works will be delivered through existing arrangements and are not included in this programme or procurement.

Proposed Programme

- 3.7 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed programme of major capital projects.

Works to existing blocks

St James House

Concrete repairs and replacement of the common way staircase windows and replacement of the spandrel panels beneath the kitchen windows to meet new standards following updated government guidance.

Essex Place

Replacement of spandrel panels beneath balcony windows at Essex Place to meet new standards following updated government guidance. This requirement does not relate to the external wall insulation.

Dinapoore House

Structural works to the walkways to the main entrances of Dinapoore House.

Hidden Homes programme

Palace Place

To enable proposed refurbishment of the building to provide a mixed-use scheme of 8-11 residential units to the ground and upper floors with basement to be

retained as a small commercial unit. This proposed project is subject to planning permission, budget, business case and relevant Committee approvals including approval of the appropriation of the building.

Saxonbury, Richmond Heights and Highleigh

These proposed projects are part of the Hidden Homes programme and are for the conversion of empty spaces beneath the existing tower blocks on the Albion Hill estate to provide three x two-bedroom units to each block. This follows a successful similar scheme at Normanhurst on the same estate. Projects are subject to resident and community consultation and planning permission.

- 3.8 Officers have consulted with procurement colleagues and the proposed procurement route for each project is set out in the table in Appendix 1.
- 3.9 The procurement process for each project will be run in accordance with the following indicative timelines:

June	Resident engagement stage one where required
July - August	Creation of tender documentation
September - October	Tender period
October - November	Tenders received and evaluated
November - December	Resident engagement stage two where required
December	Appointment of successful contractors
January 2021	Mobilisation of successful contractor
February 2021	Start on site

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Consideration has been given to delaying works until the multi-contractor framework agreement for major capital projects detailed in 1.2 is in place. This would significantly impact on the timeline for completion of these works which have been prioritised for 2020/21. Following this route would mean these projects would not begin until later in the 2021/22 financial year and would also see a pressure on council resources to procure and manage these works alongside projects planned for 2021/22.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Residents have been consulted as a first stage project initiation, further detailed engagement will be carried out if the programme is approved.
- 5.2 It will be necessary to undertake a two-stage leasehold consultation process on some projects; the first stage is being undertaken at present.
- 5.3 An initial report was taken to the council's Procurement Advisory Board on 11th May 2020. In line with their recommendations this report to Housing Committee seeks authority to proceed with these procurements.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed programme is to undertake projects where works are essential for Health & Safety reasons and to continue with our provision for further housing opportunities. This programme is considered necessary to maintain programmes and to mitigate the impact on future years programmes, which could be delayed should these projects be held back.
- 6.2 This programme will not impact on the proposed framework agreement arrangements when in place. Officers are drawing up a programme for 2020/21 to be tendered through the framework agreement in early 2021.

7 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The forecast costs for the interim programme of major projects, with the exception of Palace Place, will be met from within the approved HRA capital budget for 2020/21. Due to the anticipated start dates it will be necessary to re-profile a significant proportion of the capital budget into 2021/22 and this will be reported as part of the Targeted Budget Monitoring cycle to Policy & Resources Committee. As stated in the main body of the report, the budget for Palace Place is subject to a full business case and relevant Committee approvals.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley

Date: 04/06/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 In accordance with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, Housing Committee is the appropriate decision-making body in respect of the recommendation set out in paragraph 2 above. In addition, in order to comply with Contract Standing Order 3.1, authority to enter into contracts in excess of £500,000 must be obtained by the relevant committee.
- 7.3 The procurement and award of the proposed contracts must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Lawyer Consulted: Isabella Sidoli

Date: 28/05/20

Equalities Implications

- 7.4 Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for each project.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.5 The individual projects will have consideration for sustainability and statements will be provided for each.

Any Other Significant Implications

7.6 None.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

7.7 Key risks to the projects detailed in this report include delays due to weather, changes to specification requirements and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

7.8 The council will continue to closely monitor the risk and impact of Covid-19 on the construction industry and on projects and work with contractors to ensure works are completed in a safe and controlled way. It is possible that additional measures or restrictions may impact on the timeline for projects detailed in this report. In addition, the council and contractors will work closely with residents to ensure that appropriate controls are in place to carry out works safely and to re-programme or adjust works where residents are isolating or shielding.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1. Programme of Major Capital Projects

Appendix 1: PROGRAMME OF MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Major Capital Project	Type of Work	Budget	Procurement Comments
St James House Externals	Concrete Repairs, windows and common area windows	£2,500,000	Open procurement process advertised through the South East Shared Services portal.
Essex Place	Replacement of spandrel panels	£700,000	Open procurement process advertised through South East Shared Services portal or call off from appropriate central purchasing body framework subject to Section 20 leaseholder consultation requirements.
Dinapoore House	External repairs and roof works	£700,000	Open procurement process advertised through the South East Shared Services portal.
Palace Place	Refurbishment Project	£990,000	Call off from central purchasing body framework.
Saxonbury	Hidden home conversion	£430,000	Combine the three sites into one procurement activity to be more attractive to the market place Call off from central purchasing body framework.
Richmond Heights	Hidden home conversion	£430,000	
Highleigh	Hidden home conversion	£430,000	
Total		£6,180,000	

Subject:	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025		
Date of Meeting:	17th June 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Justine Harris and Emily Ashmore	Tel: 01273 293772
	Email:	Justine.harris@brighton-hove.gov.uk Emily.ashmore@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Housing Committee meeting on 15th January 2020 agreed to note the progress on the development of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025. It also agreed for the draft strategy to be subject to a final consultation in the city.
- 1.2 The draft strategy takes account of the findings of the Homelessness Review and responds to the findings of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation. The full reports are available as appendices to the draft strategy.
- 1.3 The report submits the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025 for adoption.
- 1.4 On 29th April Housing committee passed the notice of motion “Homelessness and the corona virus” stating a commitment subject to funding to:
 - Declare its intention to consider how to provide appropriate move-on accommodation and support for all rough sleepers currently housed and supported in hotels/other accommodation in time to avoid them returning to rough-sleeping.
 - Consider how the current unconditional offer of accommodation to rough sleepers can continue once the hotel/other accommodation provided during the coronavirus outbreak is no longer available.
- 1.5 This report seeks to integrate the response to the notice of motion into the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Housing Committee

- 2.1 That the work in developing the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025, including, Homelessness Review and Consultation Feedback Report be noted.
- 2.2 That the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025 be adopted.
- 2.3 That the formation of a Member led Homelessness Reduction Board as outlined with terms of reference detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be recommended to the Policy & Resources Committee along with the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy being referred for information.

Policy & Resources Committee

- 2.4 That the establishment of a Member led Homelessness Reduction Board with the terms of reference as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.
- 2.5 Housing Committee notes that the Homeless Reduction Board will:
 - Over the next 3 months regularly monitor the progress toward achieving safe reconnection and rehousing of all rough sleepers currently housed in hotel/ other temporary accommodation.
 - In line with the joint commitment to work towards eliminating the need for rough sleeping, explore options for sustaining an unconditional offer of crisis accommodation for all people living on the streets and present costed options to Housing Committee (in September).
 - Monitor the progress and impact of:
 - Temporary 80% allocations for statutory homeless under the Housing Allocations Plan;
 - Maximise verified rough sleepers with support needs housed as part of achieving the CIQ quota set in line with the Allocations Policy (2018), review how meeting retrospective targets on housing of verified rough sleepers and others in the CIQ have progressed and report to Committee on options to remedy any shortfalls against the Allocations Plan.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Section 1(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district, then formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review. The Council is required to take account of the Homeless Code of Guidance (2018), in particular Chapter 2: Homelessness strategies and reviews.
- 3.2 The Housing Committee, at its meeting on the 15th January, received an update on progress of the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2020-2025. The Committee noted the consultation on the Homeless & Rough Sleeper

Strategy undertaken to date; our response; and how this has shaped the development of the new draft strategy.

- 3.3 The committee approved the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for further consultation.
- 3.4 This report notes the result of the further consultation and submits the report with background documents.
- 3.5 This strategy has been further developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is intended to be an agile document designed to respond to emerging needs in a national and local context. It also acknowledges the challenges and opportunities we're seeing now and anticipate to see in the future.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Homelessness Act 2002 Section 1(4) requires housing authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of a homelessness review. This Review of Homelessness is summarised in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Housing authorities must consult public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. Housing authorities will also wish to consult with service users and specialist agencies that provide support to homeless people in the district. The Homelessness Act 2002 Section 3(4) provides that a housing authority cannot include in a homelessness strategy any specific action expected to be taken by another body or organisation without their approval.
- 5.2 The second round of consultation was carried out on the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy in a variety of ways to ensure all interest groups had opportunity to feed back. These included using the Council's consultation portal and holding a number of meetings with different groups. We also received some written submissions from 44 individuals and 28 organisations
- 5.3 For the consultation as a whole 204 people attended consultation events and 358 people responded to the online portal.
- 5.4 Further to this, 386 landlords and letting agents responded to a consultation on the private rented sector which was undertaken in relation to the strategy.
- 5.5 Details of the consultation are set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation Feedback Report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The routes into and out of homelessness and rough sleeping are complex and wide reaching. To enable prevention and solutions requires a multi-faceted response involving not only the council but partners such as health and voluntary

and community groups. The strategy and the governance through the Boards will enable the council to have oversight and drive forwards the changes required to minimise people becoming homeless and to expedite solutions where that is not possible.

- 6.2 The draft strategy places importance on accountability and transparency for the delivery of services across the city to everyone who is affected by homelessness.
- 6.3 The proposed governance arrangements will ensure we capture work being done and work collaboratively to keep a focused and deliverable approach over the lifetime of the strategy.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The costs associated with undertaking consultation to support this strategy have been met from existing resources within Housing General Fund budgets. Following the adoption of the strategy, action plans will link to the identified values and priorities. Any action plans requiring further financial resources will need to be reported to the relevant Committee(s) for approval.
- 7.2

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 01-06-20

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The legislative requirements for a Homelessness Strategy are included within the body of the report. Under the council's constitution, the setting up, review and abolition of Joint Committees, Sub-Committees, permanent member Working Groups, permanent Member panels, consultation forums and commissions is reserved to Policy and Resources Committee. Consequently, the establishment of the Homelessness Reduction Board and its Terms of Reference are matters for that Committee. As the Board is not being constituted as a Sub-Committee, it cannot legally have any decision making powers.

Lawyer Consulted:

Name Liz Woodley

Date: 03/06/20

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025. The evidence supports facts that are already known to the council on a number of factors. For example, it is known that the life expectancy of a rough sleeper remains significantly lower than that of the general population. It is also known that the percentage of males found rough sleeping is much higher than that of females.
- 7.5 A number of equality themes emerged from the consultation. These themes have been imported into the EIA.

- 7.6 The EIA will be presented to the Homelessness Reduction Board who will take responsibility for ensuring that actions from the EIA are contained in the Annual Homelessness Reduction Action Plan.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.5 Rough sleepers are known to be victims of crime in the city. Cases are reported of rough sleepers being verbally abused and physically attacked. A proportion of rough sleepers will be in the judicial system and leaving prison without somewhere to live is a driver to rough sleeping. Some people rough sleeping are more likely to have chaotic lifestyles which involves criminal activities to fund substance misuse. By prevention homelessness where possible or moving to speedy solutions to help people, the impact for crime and disorder will lessen.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.6 Recent events of the covid-19 pandemic have seen a significant amount of work to protect rough sleepers and the general homeless population. This gives the council an opportunity to build on the work that has happened over the past months and include in the action planning process a sustainable exit strategy to find sustainable long term housing solutions to rough sleeping in the city.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.6 Reducing and resolving homelessness should have a positive impact for public health. In recognition of this fact it is proposed there will be representation from the Health & Wellbeing Board on the Homelessness Reduction Board to ensure a cohesive approach. This will be kept under review in the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.8 The Homelessness Code of Guidance is clear that for the Homelessness Strategy to be effective, we should ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners. Corporate and partnership involvement in identifying strategic objectives will help to ensure all relevant departments and agencies are committed to supporting their delivery.
- 7.9 A variety of organisations have been consulted in the development of this strategy. It is envisaged that strategic actions identified during the development of this strategy will be delegated to the new Homelessness Reduction Board. The Board will have responsibility to drive the agenda forward over the lifetime of this strategy by developing annual actions plans. Oversight of the work of the Homelessness Reduction Board will be exercised by the Housing Committee.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2020-2025.

2. Homeless Reduction Board Terms of Reference.

Background Documents

1. Review of Homelessness & Rough Sleeping 2020.
2. Consultation feedback Report: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping.

Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025

Introduction

Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for Brighton & Hove Council. Since the last review of homelessness in Brighton and Hove there have been significant challenges as well as a number of opportunities.

Our immediate, recent challenge has been in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We have made an accommodation offer to all people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough. We now need to continue to progress this work, supporting them into sustainable accommodation, ensuring rough sleepers do not return to the streets. The council intends to provide appropriate move on support and accommodation for all rough sleepers currently accommodated. However, we do not currently have sufficient resources to meet all of the needs and therefore have requested support from Government if we are to avoid people returning to the streets. Whilst this continues to be an extremely difficult time for many people, we also have a unique opportunity to ensure homeless people have a route to a more secure life and better future.

This strategy developed in a context of increasing demand for services. The financial climate over the past five years has been challenging for many residents, the council and other statutory and voluntary sector partners.

The rising costs to own or rent a home have continued. Locally the difference between the maximum housing benefit for accommodation and actual rent is significant. This currently stands at a shortfall of £118.70 per calendar month for a single room in a shared house and for a two-bedroom property this rises to £345.62.

The cost of renting means that residents are increasingly struggling to make ends meet, with many people living in fuel and food poverty. In line with other parts of the country, throughout the lifetime of the last strategies we saw a substantial increase in people sleeping rough.

Rough Sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness. This is however only a part of the challenge that we face. The numbers of people in temporary accommodation remain high, work needs to continue to prevent people from becoming homeless. Over the period of the pandemic we have accommodated people who were insecurely housed. This means we're now working with people who were previously 'hidden homeless', sofa surfers and those who might otherwise have been in hostels with shared facilities. This gives us an opportunity to help them to find sustainable solutions going forwards.

This strategy will look at the issue of homelessness in all of its forms.

During the life of the last strategies, the council has been successful in obtaining additional funding primarily from central government. As Chair of Housing Committee, I have seen the amount of work going on in the city, across all sectors and within the community to reduce homelessness. This has been highlighted during the period of the pandemic. It includes the range of services available to people sleeping rough to move them out of homelessness. We have seen homelessness prevention focussing on earlier interventions, acting before things get to a crisis, this approach is enabling us to prevent around 1000 households a year from becoming homeless.

There is however much more to do. This strategy will build on our substantial knowledge, while reflecting an approach that has an emphasis on accountability and transparency for the delivery services to everyone affected by homelessness. It aligns to the aspirations of the Homelessness Bill of Rights, which has a welfare first based approach to homelessness.

A fundamental change to the strategy is the governance structure, a formation of the Homeless Reduction Board. The board will direct the work and form an annual action plan. Effective partnership working will be essential to ensure it meets its aims. The governance arrangements will ensure we capture work being done across the city and are able to work collaboratively to keep a focused and deliverable approach

Thank you to everyone who to everyone who works every day to help deliver the services that contribute to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping. I also want to thank everyone who took part in the development of this strategy.

Best wishes

Cllr Gill Williams

DRAFT

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Homelessness means that someone has no home that is available and reasonable for them to live in.

Examples of homelessness:

- Rooflessness (e.g. sleeping rough)
- Houselessness (with a place to sleep but temporary, or a shelter)
- Living in insecure housing (threatened with eviction, domestic violence, or staying with family and friends known as 'sofa surfing')
- Living in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, extreme overcrowding).

The causes of homelessness can be structural, individual, or both.

Structural factors may include:

- Poverty
- Inequality
- Housing supply and affordability
- Unemployment or insecure employment
- Access to social security.

Individual factors may include:

- Relationship breakdown
- Poor physical health
- Mental health problems, including the consequences of adverse childhood experiences
- Learning Disability
- Experience of violence, abuse, neglect, harassment or hate crime
- Drug and alcohol problems (including when co-occurring with mental health problems)
- Bereavement
- Experience of care or prison
- Refugees.

There isn't a single intervention that can tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, there needs to be a citywide partnership approach.

The Homelessness Act

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness services in their area and publish a homelessness strategy based on this review.

In 2019/20 Brighton & Hove carried out a review of homelessness and rough sleeping and related services. It also carried out consultations with residents, service users, voluntary and statutory services, charities & community activists with experience in this area as well as other interested parties such as landlords and the business community, an online citywide consultation was open in November-

December 2019. In January-February 2020 the first draft of the strategy was consulted on.

Over the past 16 years, Brighton & Hove has developed four homelessness strategies, in addition to a separate strategy that addressed the needs of people sleeping rough and a number of related strategies covering youth homelessness, single homelessness and temporary accommodation.

Aims & Principles of the Strategy

This strategy sets out a strategic framework to inform work plans, engagement with communities and the citywide response to homelessness and rough sleeping. The strategy is designed to be agile to allow the city to meet emerging challenges during its lifetime. Including, responding to situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic and our intention to provide appropriate move on and support for all rough sleepers currently housed in response to the current emergency to avoid them returning to rough sleeping. **Values:**

We believe that everyone, whether homeless or not should have:

- A safe, secure accommodation and if needed, an appropriate level of support to create a good quality of life
- The full protection of the law, and not be subjected to violence, abuse, theft and discrimination
- Respect and a good standard of service
- Equality of access to information and services
- Equality of opportunity to employment, training, volunteering, leisure and creative activities.

We will work with partners making sure:

- We work collaboratively with people who are in need of services, to ensure they are listened to, involved in determining the solutions to their own housing need, and are given a voice in the development of solutions to homelessness and rough sleeping.
- We communicate effectively across services and communities to ensure a consistent person centred approach is delivered across all services.

Principles

People

- We work collaboratively with individuals and families to find a solution to their homelessness.
- We will support peoples' strengths whilst recognising the barriers that may prevent people resolving their own homelessness or rough sleeping.
- We will try to prevent or resolve homelessness working with people to promote wellbeing, greater social inclusion and positive relationships.

Partnerships

- We will work in collaboration with all services and agencies providing services and support around homelessness prevention, interventions and sustainability.

- We will work in collaboration with people experience homelessness to inform and co-produce the design, delivery and evaluation of services addressing homelessness and rough sleeping
- We will work collaboratively with partners to ensure that we are supporting the aims and principles of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Progress in delivering Previous Strategies

The Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019 was agreed by the Housing Committee in June 2014. Its aim was to prevent homelessness or provide accommodation and various support services to tackle a range of issues. The Rough Sleeping Strategy was agreed in June 2015. The Council and its partners worked hard to coordinate and focus combined energies on preventing homelessness and improving services for people experiencing homelessness. Despite homelessness and rough sleeping providing an ongoing and growing challenge for the city, there have been a number of achievements. A full list of achievements can be found in the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review. This is available to view and is included as an appendix.

Homelessness Strategy 2014–19

- Trailblazer funding awarded to trial new ways of working and intervening to prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage
- 1645 young people engaged with Prevention Workshops as part of the Trailblazer project, 95% reported improved knowledge
- 1403 households were helped to move to the private rented sector via the council's Direct lets Scheme.
- Housing Allocations Policy was reviewed, 40% of social housing is now allocated to statutory homeless households. This has increased the number of homeless households securing a permanent home. In 2016/17 147 homeless households were allocated social housing. The changes to the policy have seen an additional 356 households housed through the housing register in 18/19 bringing it to a total of 797

Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 – 2020

- The development of new services for people sleeping rough in the city, including those without a local connection to improve reconnection work 'No Second Night Out', 'Somewhere Safe to Stay', and a 365 day a year night shelter.
- A successful bid to establishment a Social Impact Bond (SIB) as a means to fund the resolution or prevention of rough sleeping for a group of 100 people.
- The establishment of the Multi-Disciplinary Rough Sleeper Navigator Team, an assertive outreach service working to end the rough sleeping of people with multiple and compound needs by working holistically, assertively and through the lens of trauma informed care.
- The ongoing delivery of dedicated primary health care services to homeless people via Arch Healthcare.
- Expansion of our Housing First service from 12 units to a minimum of 40.
- An enhanced Severe Weather Emergency protocol offer

- The delivery of a gender informed service for women with multiple and compound need and the establishment of a gender informed move on pathway for vulnerable women.
- Provision of a weekend winter shelter

A full list of achievements can be found in the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review document.

Summary findings from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping review

As the council prepared to update the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy, we reviewed local data on homelessness and housing issues. Through this process several findings were identified, whilst many will not be surprising, it does support several of the strategic priorities identified later in the document. It firmly supports the fact that affordability in the city is growing issue as the housing market continues to be out of the reach of average households.

The full review of homelessness can be found in the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review document

Summary of findings from the City-Wide consultation

The Council carried out a city-wide consultation. The first was an online questionnaire and facilitated sessions, the second was a consultation on the first draft of the strategy. A range of individuals and organisations across the city responded. A full consultation feedback report on the analysis has been produced and the findings have been used to develop this strategy.

We also carried out a consultation aimed specifically at private rented sector landlords, 386 responded. The biggest cause of homelessness is end of private rented sector tenancy. The consultation with landlords highlighted significant opportunity to increase earlier intervention.

In total 164 people attended group sessions, 721 individuals and 23 organisations responded to an online portal.

The full Consultation Report is available as an appendix to the strategy. These are the key findings of the consultation:

Support

We know that there are many factors to why someone is insecurely housed or experiencing homelessness. There is a wide range of support needs from those needing practical support, such as financial, or finding accommodation, to those that have multiple and compound needs and may experience several overlapping problems at the same time, such as mental ill health, addiction, offending and family breakdown.

In addition, we have identified the need to examine how we can increase support to people who have exited homelessness to ensure they are able to maintain their accommodation and avoid returning to homelessness. This supports sustainability as a key strategic priority.

Meaningful Partnerships

The consultation identified the importance of meaningful partnerships to the delivery of our strategic priorities and the council will ensure that partnerships are a major factor in developing the annual action plans associated with the delivery of this strategy. For this reason, Partnerships and Collaboration are contained as values & principles that underpin the strategy.

Communication

Communication is a key component also contained within the values and principles of the strategy. This is essential for the way we and partners work with homeless people and their households, making sure they are listened to: involved in determining the solutions to their own housing need and are given a voice in the development of solutions to homelessness and rough sleeping.

It is important communication is effective between partners to ensure we are all working to support the same aim of reducing homelessness.

Education & training

We know that increasing income is vitally important in order for people to move from homelessness to greater stability. However only 62% of Brighton & Hove residents, who are in work are employed full time. Increasing education and training opportunities was a recurring theme through the consultation activities, especially as it related to increasing employment training and access to job opportunities beyond traditional service industries.

Another element identified was the need for a community education effort to help dispel the common misconceptions and stigmas surrounding homelessness. The associated negative stereotypes that burden people experiencing homeless make recovering from homelessness more challenging

The consultation highlighted the need to ensure all staff, both within the Council and externally, that are interacting with people experiencing homelessness are appropriately trained and have the skills to provide a person-centred approach to advising and supporting people experiencing and at risk of homelessness

Challenges

Affordability

We know that affordability is a major factor for the City. The impact of this is felt particularly by those who live in the private rented sector, or who are ready to exit supported accommodation. Where the council cannot intervene directly in the private rented sector we wish to support positive engagement with local private landlord associations and landlords to prevent homelessness and insecurity of accommodation and promote more long-term affordable private rented sector homes. In addition, it is important to identify interventions that can help offset these impacts to support people to move into more stable accommodation.

Findings from the review of homelessness showed that the gap between the average rent and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) expanded, to £771 per month between the

average rent in Brighton and the LHA. The average annual rent inflation is higher than the Retail Price Index (RPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all bedroom categories. The result of this is that Brighton & Hove became increasingly unaffordable for a significant percentage of the population, especially those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Recent changes to the LHA rate came into force from the 1st April. Early indications show that affordability of accommodation in the private sector has improved slightly within the city. The accommodation outside of the city that falls within the same LHA rate has shown an increased improvement, albeit with less properties to rent. It is not known currently what effect, if any, the increase LHA rates will have on rents in the area.

Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping in Brighton and Hove has been increasing since 2010 with over 800 rough sleepers found in the city over a 2-year period. In November 2019 the official street count of rough sleepers on one night was 88.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic there is an accommodation offer to all rough sleepers, so we are in the unique position where no-one needs to sleep rough during the pandemic. We have accommodated around 400 people and we are working with all of them to develop personal housing plans and accommodation pathways to prevent a return to rough sleeping.

Following the pandemic accommodation with shared sleeping spaces may no longer be acceptable, in response we are also changing the model of provision so that we do not have congregate accommodation.

Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS)

UCFS rollout in Brighton and Hove began in October 2017. Housing cost decisions for UCFS claimants are not made locally.

Hidden Homelessness

This group of people do not appear in official statistics and it is therefore difficult to quantify this issue. Polling conducted by ComRes, in 2017, suggests that two-fifths of 16- to 25-year-olds in the UK have sofa-surfed at one time because they had nowhere to live. One in ten of these young people did so for more than a month in total. Crisis Homeless Monitor estimate that the number of hidden homeless nationally has risen since 2008 by one third. It is believed that the tight housing market and the worsening real income/living standards are key drivers to homelessness in this group. It is known that the Hidden Homelessness can be in a dangerous position leaving people at risk of abuse, assault and exploitation. This may include destitute and vulnerable asylum seekers in the community.

Social housing

There are currently 17,910 social rented properties in the city. Council housing stock has fallen by 778 properties since 2011 but the council remains the largest landlord. There are just under 10,000 households on the council waiting list for social housing. However, in 2018/19 only 787 properties became available to let, half of which were one bedroom flats or studio. This means that as demand is much higher than supply that there will be a long waiting times for many households.

Providing additional affordable homes is a key priority in our Housing Committee Work plan 2019-2023 approved by Committee in September 2019, including developing 800 additional council homes and 700 other new homes.

The number of households in temporary accommodation, who are owed either a full housing duty or a duty owed under the Children's Act or Adult Social Care legislation that require accommodation remain high. Under the Council's Allocations Policy 40% of available properties are prioritised to accepted homeless households, and 10% to the Council's Interest Queue (which cover Children's Act and Adult Social Care requirements)

Homeless acceptances fell in 2018/19 to 283 as a result of the positive prevention work, we undertook. Whilst 314 social tenancies were allocated to those accepted homeless this will have a small positive impact on the number of households in temporary accommodation, which at the May 2020 is 1711. As a city we need to increase prevention and reduce the number of accepted households still further or develop more options for moving people in to the private rented sector.

Multiple and Compound Needs and Rough Sleeping

We know that over a quarter of people sleeping rough in Brighton & Hove have multiple and compound needs, which means that they may experience several overlapping problems at the same time, such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, offending and family breakdown. This group of people require greater levels of support to find a route off the streets and can struggle to engage with services including Health & Adult Social Care, and Substance Misuse Services.

Supported Housing

Brighton & Hove commission almost 690+ units of supported housing through a series of pathways. However, many people find it hard to move on when they are ready to live independently due to the shortage of available of social housing or access to private rented homes. Additionally, there is a lack of accommodation for those needing enhanced services such as those impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Mental Health, Substance Use, and Learning Disabilities.

Following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic some of the supported housing delivery will need to be reconsidered. This is a good opportunity to work with all people who were sleeping rough or about to sleep rough and to develop an alternative model going forwards taking into account the impact of Covid-19 for accommodation with shared facilities.

The Covid-19 crisis response has also provided an opportunity to consider the long-term solution to homelessness and to work with Government to seek additional resources to enable this. It includes the expansion of the Housing First model, to give people with high need the best chance to sustain secure accommodation; expanding access to private rented accommodation. Expanding the capital grant programme to purchase more accommodation and supporting reconnection, where it is safe to do so by a national response so local authorities have adequate provision to for people who would otherwise be rough sleeping in their area.

Strategic Context

The National Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018

Brighton and Hove Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will reflect the national approach. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars', Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery. These are reflected in Brighton and Hove's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The current pandemic provides a unique opportunity for all rough sleepers to have accommodation.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018, key measures in the Act include:

- An extension of the period 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days.
- A duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
- A 'duty to refer' - public services need to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Local Context

The Corporate Plan 2020-2023

The Corporate Plan was approved by full Council on the 19th December 2019. The Council has identified six outcomes that we want to achieve for the city. They are:

- A city to call home
- A city working for all
- A stronger city
- A Growing and learning city
- A sustainable city
- A healthy and caring city.

A city to call home has five key areas of action which relate to this strategy. These are:

- Reduce homelessness and rough sleeping
- Provide genuinely affordable homes
- Improve private rented housing
- Improve council housing
- Make better use of existing housing capacity.

The Corporate Plan places the issues of homelessness and rough sleeping at the heart of work.

Further to this, objectives in the Housing Committee Work Plan 2019-23 includes 'Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping' as a key priority.

Key actions include:

- Develop 800 additional council homes.
- Develop 700 other new homes
- Improving private rented housing
- Research and review an ethical loan scheme
- Develop/commission an information/advice hub for private renters and consider options for a private tenants forum
- Research and develop a social lettings agency
- Ensure homeless people are involved in the early design and development of services which directly affect them.
- Develop the enforcement approach to private sector housing to reflect the full range of potential options available to improve management and standards.
- Provide a 365 day night shelter
- Expand Housing First
- Develop a strategy for the provision of council run temporary accommodation including Seaside Homes
- Work with Community Land Trust to develop self-build opportunities
- Work with Homes for Brighton & Hove and registered providers in the city to develop 500 shared ownership properties for essential workers who live and work in the city. Make fuller use of shared housing capacity
- Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty homes are brought back into use
- Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation

This Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy also aligns with the following;

[Health and wellbeing in Brighton & Hove Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019 \(JNSA\)](#)

[Brighton & Hove Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2030](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment International Migrants in Brighton & Hove 2018](#)

Homeless Bill of Rights

The values of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy align to aspirations within the [Homeless Bill of Rights](#) as amended for Brighton & Hove by Housing Rights Watch, FEANTSA and Just Fair.

The Homeless Bill of Rights should be viewed as a standard against which the Council and its partners judge our policies and practices. The progress of the aspirations contained in the Homeless Bill of Rights will be monitored by the Homeless Reduction Board.

Strategic Priorities 2020–25

Post Covid-19 Pandemic Recovery

We are currently in the midst of a global pandemic which will have a profound impact on the way we all live and work. This will have implications for the foreseeable future

as we redevelop services to ensure staff, customers and residents are safe. This presents challenges but also opportunities.

Events of the past 3 months have seen an increase in demand for homeless & rough sleeping services in the city. As people have lost their jobs or have unable to carry out their normal work routines, this will inevitably cause additional pressure on people's housing situations. Much of the demand may still be to come once the economy opens back up.

We have also seen the amazing work which has been undertaken within the authority, partner organisations, and other community and resident groups city wide. It is everyone's wish that this can be sustained.

It is clear the pandemic will have a significant financial impact both locally and nationally. This will be relevant in terms of funding streams and also the response of the economy may lead to increased economic insecurity. Similarly health impacts (physical and mental) are unknown and this may also have an impact on housing need. Many of our partner agencies from this strategy will see impacts on their services. We need to develop new approaches. Whilst this is a challenge this also gives us a unique opportunity.

We propose to reflect our emerging response to provision of appropriate move on and support for the homeless and rough sleepers we have accommodated during the current pandemic in development of our Action Plan via the Homeless Reduction Board for reporting back to future Housing Committee meetings.

This strategy covers the period of 2020-2025 and details how we will work in this new environment with partners and those experiencing homelessness to develop and improve services, which prevent and alleviate homelessness and rough sleeping. It looks at strengthening the way we make improvements across homeless services. In order to make significant impacts the strategy focuses on three key priorities and will be accompanied by a detailed action plan. Full details on the actions being undertaken will be outlined in the Action Plan.

Prevention

*"The best way to tackle homelessness is to stop it happening in the first place. To do so is both cost effective and humane."*¹

Prevention is about addressing the issues that give rise to people being at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping, supporting people to sustain suitable accommodation and enabling people to lead fulfilling lives as independently as possible.

This means reducing risk factors and, supporting people to manage risks as effectively as possible.

Effective prevention can only be achieved if there is a systematic approach to prevention with all services, agencies and the community working to an early

¹ Everybody In. The Plan to end Homelessness 2018

intervention model and knowing where to offer support or signpost people for support.

The earlier we can identify a risk to accommodation the more likely we can prevent homelessness by enabling a household to sustain suitable housing or by supporting them to find alternative suitable housing.

Key Objectives:

- We will continue to develop our preventative work to reduce the number of households presenting to homelessness services in Brighton and monitor our progress in this area.
- Work towards eliminating the need for rough sleeping in line with the joint 2019-2023 Housing programme.
- We will work with those with a lived experience to understand the reasons for homelessness and seek to ensure that we are addressing these risks at an early stage.
- We will remodel the Housing Options service to offer a psychologically informed environment, learning from people with experience of homelessness; ensuring staff are trained and are working in a personalised way with those approaching us for support.
- We will enhance our service offer for those for whom we were unable to prevent their homelessness by strengthening relationships between street outreach, and Housing Options
- We will endeavour to ensure that those who come through our Housing Options service do not end up rough sleeping by focusing work with those leaving institutions and by working closely with services like Somewhere Safe to Stay and Sussex Nightstop.
- We will continue to work with partners to develop the duty of public bodies to refer when they identify someone is a risk of homelessness, as laid out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Intervention

Interventions to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Brighton & Hove are a key priority. Rough Sleeping within Brighton and Hove is significant issue with the city remaining one of the top ten areas nationally for rough sleepers.

Key Objectives

- In line with the National Rough Sleeper Strategy we have undertaken to work in partnership to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicate it by 2027. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic the council intends to provide appropriate move on support and accommodation for all rough sleepers currently accommodated. However, we currently do not have sufficient resources to meet all of the needs and therefore have requested additional support from Government if we are to avoid people returning to the streets.

- We will utilise data to ensure we understand our rough sleeping and homeless population and are able to target resources effectively to support individuals and groups.
- We will use evidence and national good practice to inform service design and delivery.
- We will seek to further develop our 'no second night' out model with the aim of intervening quickly to offer accommodation away from the streets and preventing entrenchment.
- We will increase our 'Housing First' offer in line with the corporate plan.
- We will ensure the voices of those with lived experience of homelessness are fed into the evaluation and remodelling of accommodation pathways for single homeless people.
- We will ensure that the services we offer for those experiencing homelessness are accessible and work for all.
- We will increase access to mental health support and improve advice and training for staff working with complex needs clients to create 'psychologically informed environments' within all homelessness services
- We will ensure that the services we provide put equality and diversity at the heart of their delivery.
- We will work with stakeholders to improve the quality of and the support offered in our emergency and temporary accommodation provision.
- As we enter the Covid-19 recovery phase, we will take the opportunity increase the supply of private accommodation available to homeless households by working with landlords who have previously targeted the student market, including acquiring use of HMOs subject to business case and budget

Sustainability

Providing somewhere to live is not the end of the story. In order to succeed we need to make sure that accommodation is sustainable. This means that resettlement plans for individuals and households are in place. We will work to build resilience and ensure that people understand both their rights and their responsibilities.

Ending the cycle of homelessness is not just about housing. We know that a change in circumstance can quickly put someone at risk of repeat homelessness and we need partners to work with us to ensure that referral routes back into a service are quick and as seamless as possible.

We also need staff to be able to work with people in a way that means that they do not feel stigmatised or feel that they have failed if they ask for support.

Key Objectives

- We will develop our work with those experiencing homelessness to build resilience, develop support networks and prevent repeat homelessness.
- We will ensure that referral routes back into preventive services are as quick and seamless as possible.
- We will evaluate and develop our support for people accessing private rented accommodation to ensure they have the best possible chance of sustaining their accommodation long term.

- We will continue to develop our relationships with private landlords to increase the accommodation available to those who have experienced homelessness.
- We will increase our move on options for those exiting supported accommodation.
 - We will work with former rough sleepers, accommodated during the Covid-19 pandemic to develop accommodation pathways to reduce risk of anyone needing to return to rough sleeping.
- We will ensure that services are in place to support those transitioning between supported accommodation and independent accommodation.
- We will develop our support for people who wish to access training, education and work in order to break the cycle of poverty.

Governance and delivery of the strategy

No one organisation alone can solve the complex issues that the city faces around homelessness and rough sleeping. The next five years will require a multi-agency approach to deliver excellent services, look for innovation and drive forward this strategy. We need to ensure that together with our partners we have the structures and skills in place for the delivery of the strategy's priorities.

Delivering the Strategy

There is a considerable amount of work underway to tackle homelessness. However, in order to ensure the success of this strategy we need to make sure that together with our partners the structures are in place to deliver on the strategic priorities in a transparent and accountable manner.

Each key objective will be accompanied by an action plan. These action plans will take into account of the work of the council and its commissioned services. Brighton & Hove City Council Housing and Health & Adult Social Care will work in partnership with Health, Children's Services, the Probation Service, Sussex Police, and our voluntary and third sector partners to develop collective commitments to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. Once these commitments are made, they will be included in the action plan and monitored. This will ensure that all agencies are committed to playing an active role ending homelessness.

In an ever changing environment we will make sure that the action plans remain agile and kept up to date to reflect the current and emerging needs in our city and look to innovate and learn from good practice elsewhere.

Governance

Brighton & Hove City Council's Housing Committee has the overall responsibility for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

A Homeless Reduction Board (HRB) will be established. The governance of the strategy will reflect the model used for the Housing Supply member board, with the addition of the chair of the Health & Wellbeing board as non-voting member.

The purpose of the HRB will promote homelessness reduction and prevention through the development of improved and integrated homelessness services.

The Strategy and Action Plan shall be referred to the Housing Committee. Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored by the Housing Committee on a six monthly cycle. Quarterly statistics will be provided to Housing Committee.

Composition

Voting members:-Four elected Members

- Chair of Housing Committee
- Opposition Spokesperson (Green Party)
- Group Spokesperson (Conservative Party)

Non-voting members (Panel Members):-

- Chair of Health & Wellbeing Board
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Probation Service
- Prison Service
- Brighton & Sussex University Hospital Trust
- Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust
- Sussex Police

Officer(s) in Attendance

- Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing
- Executive Director Families, Children and Learning;
- Executive Director Health and Adult Social Care;

Quorum

At each meeting, the quorum requirement is at least two voting members

Chair

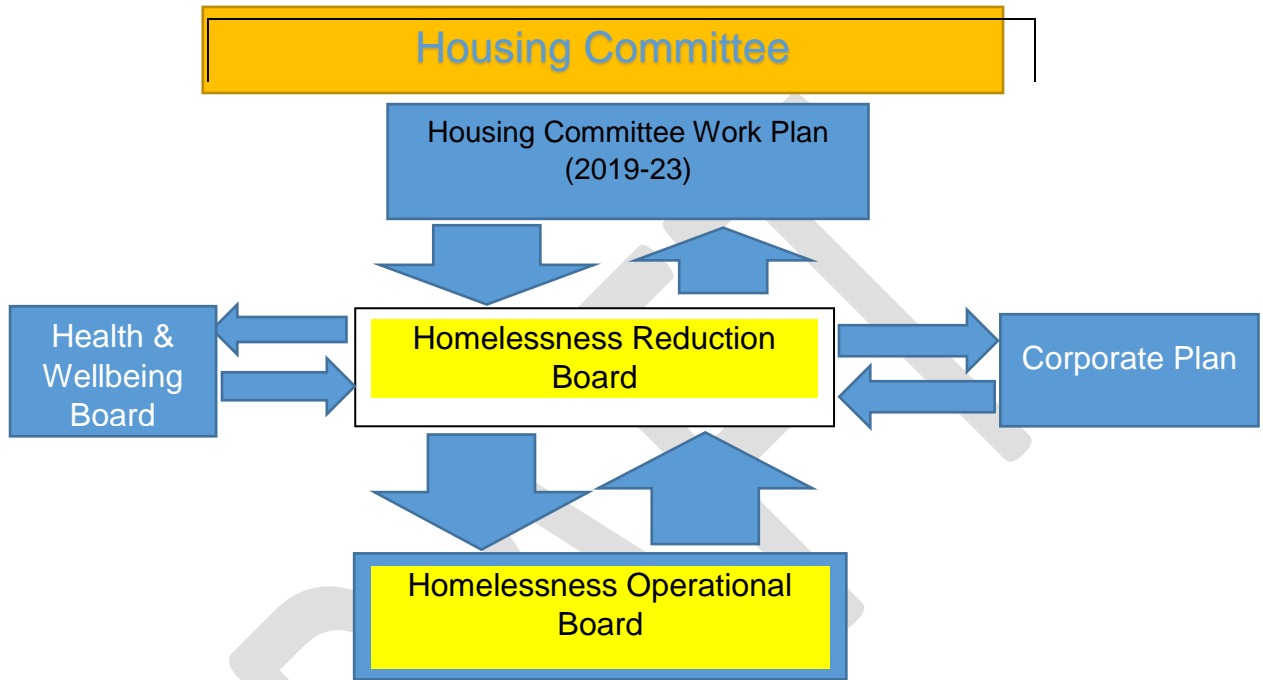
The Board will be Chaired by Chair of the Housing Committee

A Homeless Reduction Board will be responsible for developing the strategic vision for reducing homelessness in the locality and monitoring progress in achieving it, including:

- Monitoring any key actions;
- Setting and monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs), across homeless services.
- Using data, evidence, and the input of those with lived experience of homelessness to identify challenges, gaps in provision, including those that may apply to particular groups of people, and priority actions.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of service provision and interventions;
- Coordinate and agree to all funding bids (within budget resources) in respect of homelessness and rough sleeping;
- Mapping homelessness services and the delivery chain in the locality, redesigning them where appropriate to improve effectiveness and outcomes;
- Identifying and co-ordinating across all partners the effective use of funding for homelessness services and interventions; and,
- Promoting and facilitating the joint commissioning of homelessness services and interventions.

Homeless Operational Board

A Homelessness Operational Board will also be established. Its role will be to assist the Homelessness Reduction Board by developing the key actions and key performance indicators. It is key to the success of the strategy that it has representation from a wide range of organisations including from the BME, LGBTQ+, Faith Groups and those with a lived experience of homelessness. This board will be chaired at Executive Director Level.



Appendix One

Research reports

LGiU Homelessness Commission 2019:

The Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) held a commission on homelessness that reported in 2019. The LGiU is a local authority membership organisation.

The report notes that the drivers of homelessness are:

- Growth in the Private Rented Sector
- Low Housing Supply
- Broken Welfare System
- Young people and other vulnerable groups often fall through the cracks of a fragmented and overly centralised public sector.

The report made the following recommendations:-

- A sustainable housing and homelessness strategy, with adequate funding.
- Local variation of housing allowance varied by local councils
- Introduce minimum three-year tenancies.

Crisis - The Homelessness Monitor: England 2019

The Homelessness Monitor series is a longitudinal study providing an independent analysis of the homelessness impacts of recent economic and policy developments in England and elsewhere in the United Kingdom. This eighth annual report for England updates Crisis account of how homelessness stands in 2019, or as close to 2019 as data availability allows.

The report allows local authorities to see what is going on regionally and nationally. The year includes some feedback on the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This contextualises the issues seen in Brighton and Hove and assists in our development of the strategy. Some of the key points are:-

- Rough sleeping may have levelled off somewhat in England after rapid growth since 2010, with official estimates recording a 2 per cent decrease nationally, and a 19 per cent reduction in those areas targeted by the Rough Sleeping Initiative, between 2017 and 2018.
- Three quarters of local authorities responding to this year's survey (75%) consider rough sleeping a problem in their area, and for nearly one council in four (23%) it was said to be a "major problem".
- Statutory homeless acceptances fell slightly in 2017/18, although still remain 42 per cent above their 2009 low point.
- The rise since 2010 in the number of households made homeless by the ending of private tenancies seems to have peaked.

- Homelessness temporary accommodation placements, have continued to rise, and now stand 71 per cent higher than in 2011, with a disproportionate rise in Bed & Breakfast use.
- By mid-2018 some 85,000 homeless households were living in temporary accommodation, equating to over 200,000 people.
- Most local authorities (62%) reported that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which came into force in April 2018, had enabled a more person-centred approach to managing homelessness.
- There are concerns about impacts of future welfare reforms. Nearly two thirds of local authorities anticipate a “significant” increase in homelessness as a result of the full roll-out of Universal Credit, with a further 25 per cent expected some level of increase.

Homelessness National Audit Office 2017

The National Audit Office (NAO) scrutinises public spending for Parliament. In 2017 the published a report on Homelessness in England. It can be seen from the recommendations that this is now a driver for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in its direction of travel. The recommendations have translated into action plans for the MHCLG which aim to increase transparency on Local Authority Plans and accountability in delivering against the plans.

- The MHCLG should develop and publish a strategy that sets out how it will achieve its objectives relating to homelessness.
- The MHCLG should work with local authorities to establish how they are making use of measures to tackle homelessness, in order to gain a full understanding of effectiveness and share best practice.
- The MHCLG should work with local authorities to ensure that they are making the most effective use of temporary accommodation. This work should include enabling local authorities to increase their use of the innovative short-term solutions that they are taking.
- The government, led by the MHCLG and the Department for Work & Pensions, should develop a much better understanding of the interactions between local housing markets and welfare reform in order to evaluate fully the causes of homelessness.

To date a National Rough Sleeping strategy has been developed.

Homelessness: Applying All Our Health Public Health 2018

This is a public health resource to help front-line health and care staff use their trusted relationships with patients, families and communities to take action on homelessness.

Health and care professionals play an important role, working alongside other professionals to:

- Identify the risk of homelessness among people who have poor health, and prevent this.
- Minimise the impact on health from homelessness among people who are already experiencing it.
- Enable improved health outcomes for people experiencing homelessness so that their poor health is not a barrier to moving on to a home of their own.

There needs to be clear local action, partnership working (across the local authority, clinical commissioning group and other local organisations), understanding, and alignment of commissioning decisions to prevent and respond to homelessness across the life course. This can include:

- Reducing the risk of homelessness to children and young people to strengthen their life chances.
- Enabling working-age adults to enjoy social, economic and cultural participation in society.
- Breaking the cycle of homelessness or unstable housing by addressing mental health problems, or drug and alcohol use, or experience of the criminal justice system.

This requires strong local leadership and prioritisation to identify unmet need, funding and actions to address gaps in provision.

A full list of other reports that have been considered in the development of this strategy can be found in the Homelessness Review.

DRAFT

Terms of Reference -The Homeless Reduction Board

1. Name

Homelessness Reduction Board (HRB).

2. Purpose

The purpose of the HRB is to promote homelessness reduction and prevention through the development of improved and integrated homelessness services as set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Brighton & Hove City Council's Housing Committee has the overall responsibility for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The role of the HRB is to ensure that structures are in place to deliver on strategic priorities contained in the strategy.

The HRB will also monitor relevant actions agreed in the Council's Corporate Plan and the Housing Committee Work Plan.

Each strategic priority will be included in an action plan. This will consist of the work of the council and its commissioned services. Housing and Health & Adult Social Care will work in partnership with Health, Children's Services, the Probation Service, Sussex Police, and our voluntary and third sector partners to develop collective commitments to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. Once these commitments are made, they will be included in the action plan and monitored.

2. Status

The HRB shall be an advisory board to Housing Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board. The HRB will not have subcommittee status and the political balance rules in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 will not apply.

However, it is expected that the Board will be established on a cross party basis.

3. Areas of focus

1. To promote integration and joint working in Homelessness & Rough Sleeping services across the City in order to improve the homelessness outcomes of the people of Brighton and Hove;
2. To develop the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), relating to homelessness & rough sleeping, for the City;
3. To cooperate in the development of other strategies for the City. To ensure that homelessness is accurately reflected in these strategies and integrated across the City;
4. To receive the Clinical Commissioning Group's draft annual commissioning plan and to respond with its opinion as to whether the draft commissioning plan takes account of the Homelessness Reduction Strategy.
5. To establish and maintain a dialogue with the Council's Local Strategic Partnership Board, including consulting on its proposed strategies and

reporting on outcomes in line with the City's Performance and Risk Management Framework;

6. In line with government guidance to promote transparency and accountability the HRB will involve stakeholders
7. To review annual progress against city priorities and the approved annual action plan
8. To consider reports, where appropriate, from relevant programme boards and related multi-sector committees with a remit for public health in order to inform the Homelessness Reduction Strategy including: Alcohol Programme Board, the Substance Misuse Programme Board and the Sexual Health Programme Board.
9. Leadership and Agenda Setting and Accountability
 - Promote creative and innovative approach to homelessness reduction.
 - Promote the agenda on integration - both in terms of sharing commissioning resource but also in terms of delivering a joined up service for homeless people.
 - Provide collective leadership to a whole range of City-wide collaborative working and whole system issues - including emergency planning, resilience and preparedness, urgent care etc.

4. Reporting

The HRB will report to Housing Committee & Health & Wellbeing Board (as appropriate) with recommendations as necessary.

5. Membership

Membership of the Board shall consist of three voting elected Members (1 Labour, 1 Green, 1 Conservative) and one non-voting elected Labour member, Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board.

It will also have a panel of non-voting members formed of other public bodies and organisations working to alleviate and address issues associated with homelessness and rough sleeping.

Voting members: -

Chair of Housing Committee
Opposition Spokesperson Housing Committee (Green Group)
Group Spokesperson Housing Committee (Conservative Group)

Non-voting members (Panel Members): -

1 Chair of Health & Wellbeing Board
2 Clinical Commissioning Group
3 Probation Service
4 Prison Service
5 Brighton & Sussex University Hospital Trust
6. Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust
7. Sussex Police
8. Two members of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Operational Board

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Officers in Attendance

Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing
Executive Director Families, Children and Learning
Executive Director Health and Adult Social Care

Quorum

At each meeting, the quorum requirement is at least two voting members

Chair

The Board will be chaired by Chair of the Housing Committee

The appointments may be made, in accordance the wishes of the political groups, at the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee when the terms of reference are agreed or notified to the Chief Executive by the Group following the meeting.

6.. Meetings and ways of working

The timing and number of meetings will be dictated by the volume of business for the HRB. The group will meet at least quarterly.

Board papers will be circulated at least 5 working days in advance of the board meetings.

Board papers will be published on the council's website after the meeting, except where the Board determine that the information contained therein would be exempt from disclosure.

It is expected that the Member Working Groups will reach decisions by consensus where possible. Where there is no agreement, the voting Members will cast a vote and if there is an equality of votes Chair shall have the right to exercise a casting vote.

The Group will agree ways of working appropriate to the role and remit of the Group.

7-. Review

These terms of reference may be reviewed and amended by Policy & Resources Committee.

