

Subject:	Exploring the option of a Temporary Accommodation Board		
Date of Meeting:	14th June 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director, Neighbourhood, Communities & Housing		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 Housing & New Homes Committee requested that we explore the option of creating a Temporary Accommodation Board to support residents in unsupported Temporary Accommodation, following a report produced by Justlife (reference). This is an update on the progress to date.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Housing and New Homes Committee note progress

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Since late 2016 concerns have been raised by residents of temporary accommodation, council members, support agencies and health services working with homeless people regarding conditions in temporary accommodation and the lack of support available to residents.
- 3.2 This has in part become an issue due to the length of time residents are now spending in temporary accommodation due to the high cost housing market and fewer move on options. Managing in temporary accommodation can be difficult for households and so it has been raised that additional support would be helpful.
- 3.3 This was crystallised around a report produced by Justlife entitled "Nowhere fast – the Journey in and out of Unsupported Temporary Accommodation". Appendix One
- 3.4 The council have a contractual arrangement with providers to deliver accommodation of a certain standard in addition to a management contract which has detailed specifications. The council have responsibility for managing these contracts and there is governance in place which the proposed Board would not be concerned with.

- 3.5 A group of residents, members, support agencies and Morley Street GP Surgery have requested that a Board is set up to ensure residents' views are fed back to the council.
- 3.6 Senior Officers and cross party members have subsequently met with residents; support agencies; health services and providers to explore the concept of a Board and how this would fit with the existing contractual relationship between the council and accommodation provider.
- 3.7 There is broad agreement that a Board or group will be of benefit to ensure that all residents of temporary accommodation feel they are able to manage in emergency accommodation and feel safe and confident to report issues.
- 3.8 The group could also contribute to the development of future accommodation specifications and support services when required.
- 3.9 It was agreed that a "Board" may not be the right term but that an "Action Group" might be a more positive term for a group which would be focused around
- i) identifying common problems
 - ii) Understanding each aspect (providers, housing market, individual experiences)
 - iii) Agreeing what we can do collectively (rather than just the council) and manage expectations as to what is achievable;
 - iv) set outcomes that the group are hoping to achieve and clarify what success looks like (so it is not a talking shop)
 - v) Identify information about services and groups in the city that people including residents in temporary accommodation can access
- 3.10 It was agreed at the meeting with Justlife that they may be best placed to take the lead on this as they have experience of setting up such groups and they are a neutral organisation, ie not a provider nor a commissioner of temporary accommodation. Justlife have resources from the Big Lottery fund to work with people in Temporary Accommodation for 2 years to provide this role/function. This has been progressed and a meeting with all parties was held on 30th May 2017.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Not to have a board or group and to continue with current arrangements. however it is recognised that there is a gap in the current provision and as people are remaining for longer in temporary accommodation then a group would provide a vehicle to consider the needs of people and how they best manage in temporary accommodation and would provide a focus point for raising any issues in a positive way.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There has been engagement with:
- some residents of temporary accommodation who are forming into Ethrag – a residents group for people in our temporary accommodation;
 - support commissioners

- Justlife and Morley Street GP which predominantly provides for homeless households
- Accommodation providers.
- Adult Social Care

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 People are remaining in emergency and temporary accommodation for longer and hence issues are arising. Access to services and facilities in the city can be more complex for residents in emergency & temporary accommodation.
- 6.2 A collective, informed understanding of what emergency and temporary accommodation could help residents, the council and stakeholders improve provision and services to residents in temporary accommodation.
- 6.3 Bringing all these issues together for discussion in a group will enable a focus point and a way of resolving them with joint actions.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 If Justlife agree to take the lead on setting up this temporary accommodation group, then the costs to the Council would mainly relate to current staff time and can be met from current homelessness budgets within Housing General Fund.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks Date: 05/05/17

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no significant legal implications arising from this progress report. However under the council's constitution, the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee has responsibility for the setting up, review and abolition of Joint Committees, Sub-Committees, permanent task groups, permanent Member panels, consultation forums and commissions. Depending on the model finally chosen for the Temporary Accommodation Board or Action Group, it may be necessary to seek that Committee's approval.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 09/05/17

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 None

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 None

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.5 None

Appendix One

Justlife Report – Nowhere Fast

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 1.1 None

Public Health Implications:

- 1.2 By developing a group comprising accommodation and support providers and voluntary groups we can consider how we can best support homeless households in temporary and emergency accommodation. This will contribute to their health and wellbeing.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 1.3 If we can better enable homeless households to manage whilst they are in temporary and emergency accommodation and jointly work to respond to issues, this will contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of those households in temporary and emergency accommodation and will improve their overall customer journey at the difficult time in their life.