

# Public Document Pack

Democratic Services



## COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 9 July 2024 at 7.30 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall

Online access to this meeting is available on YouTube: [Link to online broadcast](#)

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair)	Councillor Alison Kelly
Councillor Bernice Froud (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Rachel King
Councillor Rob Geleit	Councillor Humphrey Reynolds
Councillor Graham Jones	Councillor Kim Spickett

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

For further information, please contact [democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk) or tel: 01372 732000

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

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## Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are no matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Should any such matters arise during the course of discussion of the below items or should the Chair agree to discuss any other such matters on the grounds of urgency, the Committee may wish to resolve to exclude the press and public by virtue of the private nature of the business to be transacted.

## Questions and statements from the Public

Up to 30 minutes will be set aside for questions and statements from members of the public at meetings of this Committee. Any member of the public who lives, works, attends an educational establishment or owns or leases land in the Borough may ask a question or make a statement on matters within the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

All questions must consist of one question only and cannot consist of multiple parts. Questions and statements cannot relate to planning or licensing committees matters, the personal affairs of an individual, or a matter which is exempt from disclosure or confidential under the Local Government Act 1972. Questions which in the view of the Chair are defamatory, offensive, vexatious or frivolous will not be accepted. Each question or statement will be limited to 3 minutes in length.

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Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services by noon on the third working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 4 July**.

A written copy of statements must be received by Democratic Services by noon on the working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 8 July**.

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## **AGENDA**

### **1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

To take any questions or statements from members of the Public.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)**

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2024 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

### **4. HOMELESSNESS: ANNUAL ACTION PLAN UPDATE (Pages 11 - 32)**

EEBC continues to have a significant financial outlay on temporary accommodation costs to meet its homelessness obligations under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The level of expenditure exceeded the budget set for 2023/24 and it will be a significant challenge to meet 2024/25 budget targets. This report sets out the actions taken to minimise homelessness expenditure and identifies the funding which was utilised to cover the additional expenditure for 2023/24.

### **5. URGENT ITEMS (Pages 33 - 36)**

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 16 January 2024**

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**PRESENT -**

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair); Councillor Bernice Froud (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn, Shanice Goldman, Alison Kelly, Rachel King and Kim Spickett (as nominated substitute for Councillor Darren Talbot)

Absent: Councillor Lucie McIntyre and Councillor Darren Talbot

Officers present: Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Rachel Kundasamy (Community Development Manager) (Items 14-18 only), Serena Powis (Community Development Officer) (Items 14-17 only), Richard Appiah-Ampofo (Senior Accountant) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

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**14 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions or statements were received from members of the public.

**15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Voluntary Sector Funding 2024-25**

Councillor Alison Kelly, Other Interest: Councillor Kelly declared that she had a non-registerable interest in item 4 of the agenda (Voluntary Sector Funding 2024-25) due to being a volunteer for Age Concern and Citizens Advice, and stated that, having reviewed the LGA code of conduct and having received guidance from the Monitoring Officer, she wished to record the interest before the item was debated.

**16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 10 October 2023 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

**17 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING 2024-25**

The Committee received a report considering the continued future support of voluntary organisations and setting out the proposed funding arrangements for 2024/25.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Central Surrey Voluntary Action.** In response to a question from a Member, the Community Development Officer explained to the Committee the work done by the organisation, 'Central Surrey Voluntary Action'.
- b) **Town Hall Tenants and Relocation.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained that all of the Town Hall tenants, including the voluntary organisations, would be included by the Council in the Town Hall relocation process. He explained it would be down to the decision of the individual organisations as to whether they wish to join in the relocation.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **approve the proposed support for voluntary organisations in 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.**

## 18 SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN

The Committee received a report setting out the Council's proposed Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Revision of Action Plan Wording.** In response to a concern raised by a Member, the Community Development Manager confirmed that she would revise the wording at 5.4 of the action plan to remove reference to the word 'triage' in favour of alternative wording.
- b) **Support for Staff.** The Community Development Manager explained that support for Council staff would be provided through the relevant Line Management. Robust debriefings would be provided, along with any necessary consultations with Human Resources.
- c) **Training.** The Community Development Manager explained that trauma-informed training opportunities would be provided for staff in order to help staff to identify and respond to trauma and provide the appropriate support for residents. She explained that in-house training would be provided, as well as the opportunity for staff to attend mental health and suicide first aid courses. She stated that the opportunity to provide training for Members would also be investigated.
- d) **Identifying vulnerable Groups.** The Community Development Manager explained that the Alison Todd protocol, attached at appendix 2 to the report, includes an assessment tool that looks at how the Council responds to suicidality across seven key areas. She explained that the protocol would help to inform further suicide prevention action plans and help to inform a more focussed approach to suicide prevention with respect to groups identified as vulnerable.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **agree to adopt the Suicide Prevention Action Plan and associated programmes of work set out at Appendix 1 to the report.**

## 19 FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25

The Committee received a report recommending fees and charges for which the Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2024.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Ewell Court House.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained that the Council leases out Ewell Court House and receives a guaranteed base rent from the tenant.
- b) **Financial Support.** The Head of Operational Services explained that the Council is able to cover costs via the Disabled Facilities Grant for qualifying residents who are unable to pay for services such as the Community Alarm or Bathing services.
- c) **Competitiveness and Flexibility.** The Head of Operational Services explained that, whilst flexible and open to negotiation where appropriate, the Committee's fees and charges had been set in accordance with the market in order to be competitive and to cover costs for the Council.
- d) **Houses of Multiple Occupation Charges.** The Head of Housing and Community explained that, whilst the HMO charges had been set in line with the advice of the relevant Service Manager, it should be noted that those charges can only be set so as to cover the Council's expenses and not to make a profit.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (6 for, 1 abstention) to:

- (1) **agree the fees and charges for the Community and Wellbeing Committee for 2024/25.**

## 20 REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25

The Committee received a report setting out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2024/25.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Homelessness Action Plan.** Following a question from a Member, the Head of Housing and Community explained that the Homelessness Action Plan, agreed by the Committee in the previous year, was making good progress in its implementation.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (5 for, 2 abstentions) to:

- (1) recommend the 2024/25 service estimates for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council in February 2024;**
- (2) support in principle the future savings as set out in section 5 of the report for inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.**

## 21 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25

The Committee received a report summarising the proposed 2024/25 capital programme and a provisional programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29, and seeking the Committee's approval for the programme to be submitted to Council in February 2024.

The Committee Considered the following matters:

- a) **External Funding.** Following a question from a Member, The Head of Property and Regeneration explained that due to the Council having a limited pot in the Capital Programme, there is a strong focus on securing external sources of funding, with a section of the Council dedicated to investigating and pursuing such opportunities.
- b) **Bourne Hall Maintenance:** The Head of Property and Regeneration explained that external sources were being investigated in order to secure funding for Bourne Hall, including a decarbonisation fund from the Government. He explained that in order to facilitate that funding, potential projects to improve the insulation of Bourne Hall were being investigated.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (6 for, 1 abstention) to:

- (1) submit the capital programme for 2024/25 as identified in section 3 of the report to the Council for approval on 13 February 2024;**
- (2) note the provisional forecast of schemes for the capital programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29;**
- (3) note that schemes subject to external funding from Disabled Facilities Grants will only proceed once funding has been received.**

## 22 URGENT DECISIONS

The Committee received a report on the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with Appendix 2 to the Constitution – The Scheme of Delegation paragraph 3.1.



Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) note the urgent decisions taken and the reason for those decisions.**

*The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.17 pm*

COUNCILLOR CLIVE WOODBRIDGE (CHAIR)

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## HOMELESSNESS: ANNUAL ACTION PLAN UPDATE

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
<b>Report Author</b>	Arjan de Jong
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Urgent Decision?</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	Appendix 1: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan update May 2024 Appendix 2: Homelessness Strategy Update

### Summary

EEBC continues to have a significant financial outlay on temporary accommodation costs to meet its homelessness obligations under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The level of expenditure exceeded the budget set for 2023/24 and it will be a significant challenge to meet 2024/25 budget targets. This report sets out the actions taken to minimise homelessness expenditure, identifies the funding which was utilised to cover the additional expenditure for 2023/24 and gives an indication of the anticipated costs for 2024/25.

### Recommendation (s)

#### The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree the priority actions points which have been taken to manage homelessness over the past 18 months.
- (2) Note the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) and homelessness grant reserves to cover the increase in expenditure, during 2023/24, to enable the Council to meet its duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- (3) Agree that a further update regarding nightly paid accommodation (NPA) expenditure be provided at the Community & Wellbeing Committee in October 2024.

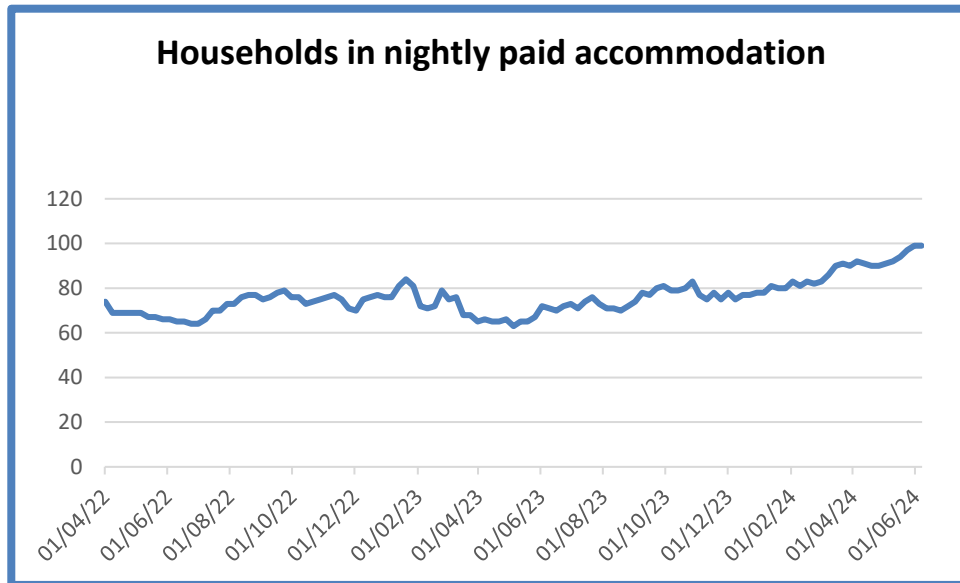
### 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assist homeless households under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If we do not meet our statutory obligations, then the Council will be in breach of its obligations and open to legal challenge.

## 2 Background

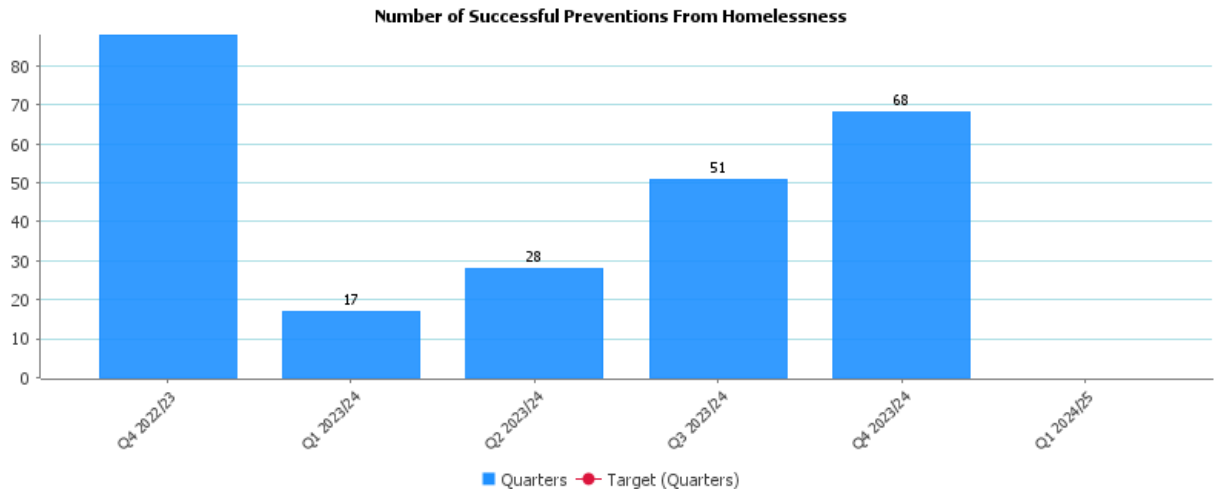
- 2.1 Expenditure on nightly paid accommodation to meet homelessness obligations is very significant. The net total level of expenditure was £1,665,493 for 2023/24. This was largely due to the consistently high number of homelessness approaches, a 15% increase in rental costs by our accommodation providers and a lack of alternative accommodation options.
- 2.2 The climate in which officers operate is increasingly challenging and even since the implementation of the homelessness strategy, in November 2022, the working environment has become more demanding. The ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis continues to have a significant impact on the number of households requiring assistance and the complexity of issues with which households present has intensified.
- 2.3 The demand on the small stock of private rented properties is as high as ever, including competition from other areas, such as London boroughs, for placements.
- 2.4 In addition, affordable housing options in EEBC are severely limited, which is in part due to the low level of affordable housing development in recent years.
- 2.5 The Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan 2022-27 was agreed at the Community & Wellbeing Committee in November 2022. The Action Plan identifies the key objectives and lists the appropriate actions to be taken during the lifetime of the strategy and has been updated to reflect the progress made over the past 18 months (appendix 1).
- 2.6 The actions in appendices 1 and 2 demonstrate the success and hard work of the housing options and solutions team. However, despite their positive performance the number of households in temporary accommodation, including expensive nightly paid, is steadily increasing, as shown in the below graph.

Fig X



- 2.7 The graph provides a snapshot of numbers in nightly paid accommodation at the end of each month. What it does not demonstrate is the large number of households entering and leaving nightly paid accommodation each week. This turnover of households in accommodation is achieved by the interactions from housing officers.
- 2.8 With out this turnover, the numbers of households living in nightly paid accommodation and the associated expenditure would be significantly higher. The relative steady state of numbers of households in nightly paid accommodation over the past 18 months illustrates the success of the officers in finding housing solutions, despite the considerable challenges.
- 2.9 Staff turnover and the subsequent recruitment process can impact on the delivery of homelessness prevention work. The chart below (fig Y) illustrates the positive impact of a fully staffed team on homelessness prevention. It is anticipated that the service will be able to increase the focus on homelessness prevention measures, which will help to reduce nightly paid accommodation costs.

Fig Y

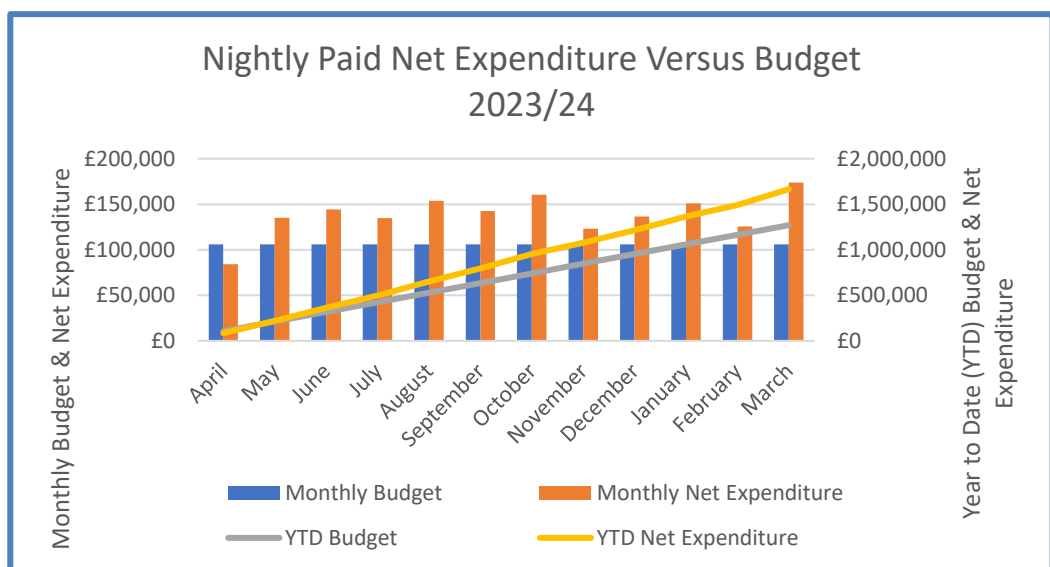


2.10 In addition to increasing demand, the cost of accommodating households in nightly paid accommodation has risen due to several factors. Competition from other local authorities, including London boroughs, is increasing demand and therefore costs and a number of landlords are leaving the nightly paid sector. In addition, the sharp increase in energy costs and inflation last year has led to all our providers raising their rent levels by 15%.

2.11 The rent level which the Council can charge households for temporary accommodation is restricted by the Housing Benefit temporary accommodation subsidy formula and this has not increased since 2011. Consequently, the Council is unable to mitigate the increase in temporary costs by charging homeless households higher rents.

2.12 Fig Z (below) shows costs for 2023/24. The total cost resulted in a budget overspend of £395k in 2023/4.

Fig Z



- 2.13 Due to demand for accommodation, officers are on occasion having to use economy hotel accommodations when no other accommodation is available. The gross cost for this can be in the region of £140 per night. The average net cost of nightly paid accommodation (NPA) for a small family increased by over 18% when compared with 2022/23 and is now c£23,500 pa.

### 3 Priority action points

- 3.1 The housing service has made significant progress since the implementation of the strategy in November 2022. The update for the first full year of the strategy 2023/24 shows a high number of completed tasks, ongoing work and identifies work streams moving forward, some of which are listed below.
- 3.2 One of the measures taken to minimise expenditure is to establish a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme, where the Council leases a property for between 3-5 years from a private landlord for use as temporary accommodation. PSL properties are a significantly cheaper accommodation option and represents a significant cost avoidance. As a result, we have expanded the PSL scheme and will continue to add to our portfolio.
- 3.3 Preventing homelessness is a key area of focus and “Commitment to refer” isa protocol which is in place with Registered Providers (e.g.Town and Country Housing) to ensure early identification and intervention for people in housing debt to prevent eviction.
- 3.4 The Housing Options (Move On) Officer, recruited in June 2023, has had a very positive impact and helped to move on over 65 homeless households into temporary accommodation, either moving them on from expensive nightly paid accommodation (NPA) or preventing them from being placed in NPA. This work has helped manage the increase in the cost of NPA and has also led to a reduction in void costs the council incurs from our Registered Providers who provide Temporary Accommodation Now all team vacancies have been recruited to, this role will be even more proactive.
- 3.5 The Housing Delivery Group is an officer group from housing, finance and property which meets quarterly to consider how the housing potential of EEBC and other public body assets can be best utilised. The group is currently working on bringing forward a variety of projects, including micro homes, Ewell Court cottage and partnership opportunities.
- 3.6 The Strategic Housing Manager has responded to Local Plan consultation with specific reference to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), to ensure robust policy in place to increase affordable housing delivery on section 106 development sites and to shape affordable housing policy.

- 3.7 There are a few actions in the action plan which have slipped due to competing priorities within the team. This will be addressed in the coming months and an internal officer working group will meet in July to manage outcomes and agree where to focus resources over the upcoming 12 months and to identify the key partners to help deliver actions.

#### **4 Next steps**

- 4.1 The issues faced by the council in accommodating homeless households are unlikely to dissipate over the coming 12 months. It is therefore likely that despite continued positive performance from officers, the number of households in temporary accommodation will remain high for the foreseeable future.
- 4.2 The economic outlook remains challenging and has had a direct impact on housing delivery, leading to fewer residential developments coming forward and thus an overall reduction in house building and the development of affordable housing. In addition, schemes such as the Homes for Ukraine scheme and the government's asylum dispersal proposals continue to add to the pressure on limited affordable housing options still further.
- 4.3 The links between health and homelessness is recognised in the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy and in our close working with Surrey Downs Health and Care. The new Epsom and Ewell Neighbourhood Board will also consider possible practical interventions to support the health of homeless residents.
- 4.4 The on-going position within the service will continue to be reported monthly to the Chair and Vice Chair of this committee and officers will continue to complete the agreed actions as set out in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan and seek other opportunities to increase the supply of suitable accommodation.
- 4.5 Officers will continue to outline the benefits of the PSL scheme to landlords and continue to work with housing associations and other partners to find creative solutions to increase the overall supply of affordable housing within existing stock. Officers will also seek to incorporate the housing related proposals of the Corporate Peer challenge.

#### **5 Risk Assessment**

Legal or other duties

##### **5.1 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 5.1.1 Minimising homelessness will have a positive impact on inequalities.

##### **5.2 Crime & Disorder**



5.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5.3 Safeguarding

5.3.1 Assisting homeless households to access safe and secure accommodation will have a positive impact on safeguarding.

5.4 Dependencies

5.4.1 Expenditure will continue to be monitored closely and adverse variances reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee through the Council's agreed budget monitoring procedures, and to the Chair and vice Chair of this committee.

5.5 Other

5.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## 6 Financial Implications

6.1 The original budget for 2023/24 was based on 58 families in nightly paid accommodation. For 2024/25, the budget was increased to support an average of 70 households, but as at 31 May 2024, the Council was supporting 97. In addition, the average net cost of nightly paid accommodation for a small family has increased by an average of 15% when compared with 2022/23 due to an inflationary increase in prices charged by accommodation providers.

6.2 A quarterly report is prepared by the service and reported to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to update on homelessness figures and current pressures. DLUHC responded to the increased pressures on local authorities in 2023/24 with additional grant funding of £165,909 to help ease the financial pressures.

6.3 The full year spend was £1.665m. This was met through the original budget, homelessness grant reserve, additional grant funding from DLUHC, the Council's contingency for inflationary pressures and general fund balance.

6.4 For 2024/25, the Council has been awarded £649,727 Homelessness Prevention Grant, which is £162,734 higher than had been originally expected in the budget.

6.5 However, should demand pressures continue throughout 2024/25, it is anticipated that in the absence of further government funding, there may be a continued need to apply the reserve while the service progresses initiatives to bring demand down to levels manageable within the budget.

6.6 The anticipated overspend for 2024/25 based on the figures for April and May is £350,000.

- 6.7 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The cost of managing homelessness continues to represent a key risk to the Council's financial position. Increased costs of nightly paid accommodation, combined with higher numbers of households requiring support, reinforces the importance of the council progressing the homelessness reduction action plan initiatives identified in this report. Should demand remain at exceptionally high levels for a prolonged period, the Council may need to consider corporate measures to contain expenditure within available resources. Expenditure will continue to be monitored closely and adverse variances reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee through the Council's agreed budget monitoring procedures.

## 7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council's obligations, powers and duties in relation to homeless households are contained within the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If we do not meet our statutory obligations, then the Council will be in breach of its obligations and open to legal challenge.
- 7.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None other than as set out in this report.

## 8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 8.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:  
Safe & Well: Work with partners to improve health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.
- 8.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Not applicable.
- 8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**
- 8.5 **Partnerships:** Registered Providers, in particular Town & Country Housing (formerly Rosebery) and Transform, East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS), local letting agents, private sector landlords, Surrey Housing authorities

## 9 Background papers

- 9.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

### Previous Reports:

- [Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022/27](#) - Community & Wellbeing Committee November 2022

### Other papers:

- none

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**Key Objective 1 - The early identification, intervention & prevention of homelessness**

No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
1.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan (ERSP)	Housing Solutions Manager	Quarter 1/ Annually	Year 1	Slippage	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP for 24/25 being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be submitted
1.2	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Housing Solutions Manager	Quarter 1/ Annually		Slippage	Follow on work from 1.1 Scheduled for Q1 2024/25
1.3	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Housing Options Manager	2024/5		Slippage	As above
1.4	Housing Services to deliver briefings to colleagues, professionals and elected members to provide up to date information about housing and homelessness to ensure that correct information is disseminated to residents	Strategic Housing Manager	Annually		On Track	3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.
1.5	Further develop partnership working with the DWP and local jobcentre plus to strengthen referrals and manage the impact of universal credit	Housing Options Manager	On-going		On Track	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.
1.6	Encourage early identification and interventions from public sector partners, community and voluntary sector organisations who are able to effectively inform those at risk of homelessness to seek advice from EEBC	Housing Options Manager	2023/4	Year 1	Completed	Surrey wide Mental Health protocol launched January 2023 and training rolled out March 2023, although adherence to the protocol remains a challenge. Regular operational (TCH) and also the CAB. Meeting with food bank (Good Company) held April 2023. Surrey wide young person & care leavers protocol finalised.
1.7	Review and update housing options information & pathway plans ensuring the customer has access to accurate, useful and comprehensive information about housing options	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Pathway plans updated Sept 22 and published on Homechoice website
1.8	Review & simplify the tasks for PHPs and accompanying advice literature.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Homechoice and Personal Housing Plans updated.
1.9	Publicise and promote the Council's prevention services more effectively in an accessible format and encourage residents to contact us early and before a crisis, ensuring customers know how and where to approach and what to expect from the service	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	HSM liaising with key Registered Providers (RPs).
1.10	Review use of social media and how we communicate our services to the wider general public for example Facebook, twitter, chat pages	Housing Options Manager	2024/25		On Track	Review with Communications
1.11	Devise an early identification & intervention protocol with all Registered Providers to address factors such as arrears, anti-social behaviour and tenancy sustainment	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		Completed	Commitment to refer' is in place.
1.12	Work with Private Sector Landlords and Lettings Agents to develop early signposting protocols for tenants with arrears or other tenancy concerns, to the Housing Options Service, to prevent homelessness	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	Landlord Forum scheduled for Autumn 2024
1.13	Review the referrals received through Duty to Refer to establish where further work needs to be completed in terms of links and training	Housing Options Manager	2023/24		Completed	All agencies except General Hospitals using the 'Jigsaw' Duty to Refer system. Most referrals are considered an appropriate use of the Process. General Hospitals ICT systems template referrals working generally well. We are offering further training to Epsom GH.
1.14	Explore a trauma-informed & motivational interviewing approach to the delivery of homelessness services	Housing Options Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Surrey County Council (SCC) & EEBC training of trauma-informed approach identified as part of safeguarding training. All housing officers attended a training session 'working with trauma' February 2024.

1.15	Identify training needs and delivery training to meet any skill gaps and updates on new legislation and case law	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	<b>Completed</b>	Untegral component of My Performance Conversation (MPCs) where needs and appropriate training are identified. Ongoing process & discussed at MPS's.
1.16	Ensure flexible use of the Council's Homelessness Prevention fund	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	<b>Completed</b>	Fliexible use of HPF is in embedded in options work. For example, assisting clients with moving costs so they can downsize to free up larger social housing property.

Key Objective 2 - Reduce Rough Sleeping						
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
2.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan (ERSP)	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP for 24/25 being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be
2.2	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	East Surrey contract extended until Septmeber 2024. Procurement for new contract underway and anticipated Q3 24/25. Single Persons Officer meets with ESOS mo
2.3	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Housing Options & Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Implemented annually where appropriate
2.4	Provide ESOS assessment beds	Housing Options Manage	On-going	On-going	Completed	3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.
2.5	Explore a 'Housing First' model for the most vulnerable homeless applicants	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23 2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.
2.6	Conduct a promotional campaign to the residents of EEBC to provide information and awareness on rough sleeping and promote good practice amongst the general public to prevent people becoming entrenched into street life	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	ESOS/Streetlink poster displayed at points around the borough - Rough Sleeper page added to website
2.7	Review accommodation and health support needs of single people with complex needs or challenging behaviours who experience recurring homelessness	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		Completed	The creation of the Single Person Officer post has enabled Housing Services to routinely review accommodation and health support needs of single people with comp with Hep C Trust to enage rough sleepers.
2.8	Develop a No Second Night Out approach to prevent all rough sleeping	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Assessments beds provided in conjunction with ESOS. £30K assessment bed funding granted by RSI
2.9	Apply for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding to create a new post of Single Person Homeless Support Officer to work solely with Rough Sleepers and single homeless people at risk of rough sleeping	Housing Solutions Manager	Jun-22		Completed	HSM liaising with key Registered Providers (RPs).
2.1	With our East Surrey Partners apply for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding to enhance the ESOS Outreach Service	Housing Solutions Manager	Jun-22		Completed	EEBC submitted a joint RSI bid with MVDC, TDC, RBBC & ESOS and the partnership successfully secured £636,036 of RSI funding. This funding enhances our existing E fund the existing East Surrey Outreach Service Navigator Officer role for a further 3 years; Create 2 new East Surrey Outreach Service Support Officer roles for 3 years £30k per LA each year); Provide money for personalised budgets for rough sleepers. (This is used for items like mobile phones or to purchase white goods/furniture w
2.11	Look to implement corporate "sponsorship" of up to 5 people with more complex and longer-term patterns of rough sleeping at requested by DLUHC	Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25		On Track	Working with Hope into Action



Key Objective 3 - Increase accommodation options: Social Rented Housing; Private Rented Accommodation; Supported and move-on Accommodation; In-borough Temporary Accommodation							Key
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative	
<b>Social Renting</b>							
3.1	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	Year 4	On Track	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP for 24/25 being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be submitted 31/04/24	On Track
3.2	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Draft Local Plan anticipated to be adopted 2026/27	Completed
3.4	Work with Homes England to identify opportunities for the use of the Affordable Homes Programme 2021 to 2026 to fund Council developments of new affordable housing.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 1	On Track	Strategic Housing Manager has quarterly meetings with the Planning Policy Manager to contribute to shaping AH policy.	
3.5	Identify opportunities for the development of social/affordable/temporary accommodation on Council owned sites. List of sites being prepared.	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	Year 3	On Track	3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.	
3.6	Purchase residential street properties to provide social/affordable, supported & temporary accommodation.	Head of Housing & Community	On-going	Ongoing	On Track	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.	
3.7	Explore opportunities for joint working with housing providers to create additional social/affordable, supported & temporary accommodation.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	On Track	2 RSAP properties purchased with Transform. TCH purchasing former leasehold properties which are in redevelopment areas for short-term use as TA. 1 x property purchased.	
3.8	Develop a programme for the dispersal of s106 affordable housing funding to provide additional, social/affordable, supported and temporary accommodation.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 3	On Track	Potential Mount Green property conversion on Grove Rd, progress delayed to due internal NHS comms. East St site of 31 homes (16 AR) received planning permission December 2023 - potential for whole site to be delivered as affordable.	
3.9	Review nomination agreements.	Housing Solutions Manager (HSM) / Strategic Housing Manager (SHM)	2025/26	Year 3	On Track	Discussions ongoing with relevant provider where appropriate.	
3.10	Investigate ways to assist and / or incentivise social housing tenants under occupying larger family homes to downsize.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 2	On Track	HSM liaising with key Registered Providers (RPs).	
<b>Private Rented Accommodation</b>							
3.11	Review and update Rent Deposit Scheme policy, procedures and scheme documents.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Joint work with Housing Services, Housing Benefit & TCH has led to 11 households being downsized. Freeing up larger family sized social housing. Policy to be agreed with TCH.	
3.12	Introduce rent in advance as a loan.	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25	Year 1	On Track		
3.13	Set up e-learning pre-tenancy training and life skills to those threatened with homelessness or in temporary accommodation.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	All agencies except General Hospitals using the 'Jigsaw' Duty to Refer system. Most referrals are considered an appropriate use of the Process. General Hospitals ICT systems will not allow access to this site, however template referrals	
3.14	Review the current private rented sector (PRS) offer and explore/trial landlord incentives with a view to increasing local PRS opportunities.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Surrey County Council (SCC) & EEBC training of trauma-informed approach identified as part of safeguarding training. All housing officers attended a training session 'working with people with personality Disorder' in February 2024.	
3.15	Provide enhanced information and support to customers on how to search for PRS properties to enable them to undertake future searches independently.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Integral component of My Performance Conversation (MPCs) where needs and appropriate training are identified. Ongoing process & discussed at MPS's.	
3.16	Arrange and co-ordinate an annual Private Sector Landlords forum.	Homelessness working group	2024/25, then annually		On Track	Flexible use of HPF is in embedded in options work. For example, assisting clients with moving costs so they can downsize to free up larger social housing property.	
3.17	Work across the housing market to maximise opportunities to increase the range of accommodation options for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Scheduled for Autumn 2024. DWP have confirmed willingness to attend.	
3.18	Support and advise private sector landlords to understand the implications of Universal Credit and develop appropriate strategies to encourage landlords to accept customers in receipt of welfare benefits.	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	Rent-in-advance (RIA). New Move-On officer has develop links with organisations that assist our client to relocate to other parts of the county with support package to help them settle into new area.	
3.19	Encourage landlords to increase the length of tenancies to provide stability and security to tenants.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	Landlord forum (Sept 2024) and accompanied comms	
3.20	Encourage landlords to offer more affordable rents - closer to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going		On Track	as above	
3.21	Facilitate the use of empty properties.	Head of Housing and Community	On-going		On Track	as above	
3.22	Investigate the feasibility of rent guarantee/ insurance schemes for tenants and landlords.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Empty property group formed autumn 2023. Exploring joint resource with Mole Valley. Wrote to long-term ( 2yr+) in February. Held session with empty property officer of other Council to expand knowledge.	
<b>Supported and move-on Accommodation</b>							
3.23	Review our current provision of supported accommodation and explore the need for specialist supported accommodation for clients that have multiple and complex needs.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25		On Track	This will be undertaken as part of 3.14	
3.24	Look to increase supported accommodation in partnership with other boroughs/districts, public bodies and Housing Associations.	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Exploratory discussions with Riverside and TCH re: medium need supported accommodation units & housing first type model. SCC to be contacted re: revenue funding.	
3.25	Work with local social landlords to investigate developing a trial of a Housing First style approach.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	As above. No current government funding available.	
3.26	Work with Transform Housing & Support to deliver 4 units of supported move-on accommodation for Rough Sleepers, funded through Rough Sleeper Accommodation Program (RSAP) and the Homes England Move-On Fund.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Two RSAP Housing First properties purchased by Transform in 2023. Two properties in South Street completed	
<b>In-borough Temporary Accommodation</b>							
3.27	Review the supply of temporary accommodation and identify future local temporary accommodation needs and how these can be best met.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Discussions ongoing with TCH regarding the future use of temporary accommodation units at West Hill Court. Upper High St decommissioned but alternative units to be sourced by TCH, as apt of the TA agreement, which may include medium support units. Reviewing TA agreement with TCH with intention to renew.	
3.28	Review and update temporary accommodation procurement plan.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Slippage	SHM to complete by Q2 2024/25.	
3.29	Review and update the temporary accommodation placement process.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	HSM reviewed in RSL TA process in July 2023 and TA process in February 2024.	
3.3	Increase the number of private sector leasing scheme properties.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Temporary Accommodation Appentice started April 2024, which will help expand scheme. Additional Private Sctor lease (PSL) taken on in March 2024 and new comms added to website.	
3.31	Work with Sanctuary Housing to develop up to 14 units of in-borough temporary accommodation at Defoe Court.	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23		Completed	Lease expires 2026. Initial discussions to renew July 2024.	



Key Objective 4 - Improve the Health & Wellbeing of homeless people						Key
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
4.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan (ERSP)	Housing Options Manager	2026/27		On Track	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP fo
4.2	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	
4.3	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Work with SCC Public Health has enabled greater access to GP's for homeless households
4.4	Work in partnership with Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) to focus on delivering better coordinated services to improve the lives of adults facing Severe Multiple Disadvantage.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.
4.5	Work with SCC Public Health/SAM to pilot the "Bridge the Gap" trauma informed Outreach Support Service for homeless people.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.

On track
Slippage
Off Track
Completed

Key Objective 5 - Ensuring sufficient support is available for homeless people						Key
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
5.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan (ERSP)	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23	Year 1	Completed	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP for 24/25 being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be submitted to the DLUHC for funding.
5.2	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	Single Persons Housing Officer will be leading on this.
5.3	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEPE) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	East Surrey contract with ESOS/Thames Reach extended to September 2024. Procuring for next contract from September.
5.4	Continue to support those households to access employment, education and training through continuing to fund ETHOS and through working with the Employment Hub.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.
5.5	Ensure that homeless households have the skills required to maintain a tenancy.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.
5.6	Continue to work with tenancy sustainment and floating support services to ensure that those households placed in temporary accommodation are receiving appropriate support and assistance.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	The Move-On officer post is supporting homeless households in temporary accommodation and ensuring that households have a move on plan.
5.7	Work with SCC to review our current provision of Housing Related Support provision.	Housing Solutions Manager	Annually			Joint meetings with SCC relating to Safe Accommodation for survivors of DA- workshop held 16/04/24. On going work with SCC commissioners.
5.8	Proactively work with households in temporary accommodation to identify and secure suitable alternative accommodation and ensure that each household has a move on plan. Investigate options of having a dedicated Housing Officer to support homelessness households once in temporary accommodation	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Move-On officer supports homeless households move on from both nightly paid accommodation and temporary accommodation.
5.9	For some homeless households there are issues that prevent move on from temporary accommodation. There are a variety of reasons for this which include; the benefit cap, history of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, offending, complex health issues and other risk issues that make both social and private landlords reluctant to accept them as tenants. We will identify these issues and put in place measures to try to address them.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	HSM liaising with key Registered Providers (RPs).
5.10	Continue to support homeless household to find and secure private rented accommodation through the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Rent Deposit Officer has assisted 8 homeless households into private rented accommodation. 6 additional properties lined up.
5.11	Offer tenancy support and sustainment to households who are assisted to access private rented accommodation via the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Rent Deposit Officer provides on-going support to those homeless households assisted via Rent Deposit scheme.
5.12	Continue to support individuals and families that experience domestic abuse.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Referrals / IDVAs etc
5.13	Continue to fund the Sanctuary Scheme to help victims of domestic abuse safely to remain in their homes.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	All agencies except General Hospitals using the 'Jigsaw' Duty to Refer system. Most referrals are considered an appropriate use of the Process. General Hospitals ICT systems will not allow access to this site, however template referrals working generally well. We are offering further training to Epsom GH.
5.14	Identify support needs at an early stage and refer to appropriate services (drug/alcohol, mental health, young persons, domestic abuse, ex-offenders, money advice, employment support, floating support, foodbank, CAB).	Housing Options Manager	2023/4	Year 1	On Track	Surrey County Council (SCC) & EEBC training of trauma-informed approach identified as part of safeguarding training. All housing officers attended a training session 'working with people with personality Disorder' in February 2024.
5.15	Promote resilience and support to those who are or used to be homeless, to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them from becoming homeless again.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2025/6			Integral component of My Performance Conversation (MPCs) where needs and appropriate training are identified. Ongoing process & discussed at MPS's.
5.16	Work with Children's Services and the Family Support team to identify families who need some additional help beyond accommodation needs and ensure arrangements are in place to refer households with children to Early Help/Family Support as early as possible.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	Flexible use of HPF is embedded in options work. For example, assisting clients with moving costs so they can downsize to free up larger social housing property.
5.17	Work with partners to identify tenants at risk of "cuckooing" and ensure rapid interventions are in place to support them.	Housing Options Manager	On-going		On Track	Regular meetings with key RP partners and Community Safety Officer.
5.18	Work in partnership with Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) to focus on delivering better coordinated services to im		2023/4	Year 1	On Track	Rent-in-advance (RIA). New Move-On officer has developed links with organisations that assist our client to relocate to other parts of the county with support package to help them settle into new area.
5.19	Make referrals to furniture projects to ensure that homeless households have a furniture offer when moving into new accommodation	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Referrals to furniture project embedded into Housing Options/ RDS/ nominations process to ensure homeless households have a furniture offer (if needed)

On track
Slippage
Off Track
Completed



**Key Objective 6 - Partnership working**

No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
6.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan (ERSP)	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		Slippage	Submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) April 2023. New ERSP for 24/25 being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be submitted 31/04/24
6.2	Continue to work with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24, then annually	Year 1	Slippage	Stakeholder analysis Q1 2024
6.3	Deliver Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24, then annually	Year 1	On Track	Meetings held with individual local RP's - RHA (TCH), Mount Green, Orbit, PA.
6.4	Host an annual Private Landlord's Forum to increase the availability of private rented accommodation in the borough and to encourage good practice.	Homelessness working group	2024-25, then annually			3 Assessments available. £30K Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding awarded for 24/25.
6.5	Work in partnership to ensure appropriate multi-agency joint working and referral arrangements are in place for Housing Options Service and to explore how preventative services can be developed and improved.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Two Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Housing First properties provided by Transform.
6.6	Promote more joined up working with, health, prison and probation services to prevent homelessness on discharge or release from an institution	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Surrey wide Mental Health protocol launched Jan 2023. Training rolling out March 2023. New Care Leavers protocol about to be launched. On going partnership work with Probation/Prison service
6.7	Work closely with the SCC Public Health and Health Services to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable homeless people	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Ongoing work in relation to Surrey Adults Matter (SAM), Bridge the Gap, Mental Health Protocol
6.8	Further develop partnership working with the DWP and local Jobcentre plus to ensure the Housing Options Service has access to information and receive regular updates, including training on UC and other benefits.	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Regular partnership meetings with DWP are ongoing
6.9	Maximise funding opportunities through partnership working to identify and bid for new initiatives, building upon recent successes (e.g. MEAM, Housing First, RSI, Next Steps and RSAP).	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	HSM liaising with key Registered Providers (RPs).
6.10	Work with partners to identify how those with lived experience of homelessness can be included in the design and delivery of services.	Housing Options Manager	2024/25			
6.11	Campaign and raise awareness of issues of homelessness that are linked to affordability and to LHA rates and Benefit Cap.	Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25			
6.12	Work with our Surrey partners in implementing the Domestic Abuse Act	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	On Track	NSDA (North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service) & SCC have now set up County wide Sanctuary Scheme - replacing local Sanctuary Scheme. Work shop held with SCC /D&B's 16/04/24 reviewing Safe Accommodation provisions
6.13	Work with our Surrey partners and Children Services in reviewing and implementing the Joint Housing Protocol for 16 & 17 year olds & the Care Leavers Protocol	Housing Options Manager	2022-23	On-going	Completed	All agencies except General Hospitals using the 'Jigsaw' Duty to Refer system. Most referrals are considered an appropriate use of the Process. General Hospitals ICT systems will not allow access to this site, ho
6.14	Work closely with our Surrey partners and Health Services to review and implement the Mental Health Protocol and the Hospital Discharge Protocol	Housing Options Manager	2022/3	On-going	Completed	Surrey County Council (SCC) & EEBC training of trauma-informed approach identified as part of safeguarding training. All housing officers attended a training session 'working with people with personality Dis

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## **Homelessness Strategy update – April 2024**

The housing department has made significant progress since the implementation of the strategy in November 2022. This is the update for the first full year of the strategy 2023/24, which shows completed tasks, ongoing work and identifies work streams moving forward.

The current climate in which officers operate is unprecedented. Officers are consistently having to push back against other statutory agencies making inappropriate referrals, dealing with a desperate client group who are increasingly taking their frustration and anger out on officers through verbal and non-verbal threats of harm to officers and/or themselves.

Many of the factors present at the implementation of the strategy are still relevant now though the working environment has become even more demanding, due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, continued poor housing supply, rental increases and a lack of resources for other agencies.

Despite the commitment and hard work of officers, there has been a slow but steady increase in nightly paid (NP) placements, which for the first time since the pandemic inched above 90 for several weeks towards the end of the financial year, resulting in increased costs towards temporary accommodation placements. The rise in placements is the result of a steady increase in approaches throughout the year, Q1: 57, Q2: 76, Q3: 66 and Q4: 93.

On a positive note, we have successfully recruited to the final housing options officer post and have added a temporary accommodation apprentice to the team which will enable us to be more proactive in publicising the PSL scheme. We are hopeful of recruiting to the vacant housing adviser role in April, which if successful will ensure we have a full team for the first time since June 2023.

Critically, the approval of the scheme at 79-81 East St, with a 50% affordable rented element and the potential that it may even deliver a fully affordable scheme, means that we have some affordable housing in the pipeline and the potential delivery of the micro homes project(s), with the aim to increase in-borough temporary accommodation, will have a significant impact on nightly paid expenditure.

### **Objective 1 - The early identification, intervention & prevention of homelessness**

- The Housing Options (Move On) Officer, recruited in June 2023, has had a very positive impact and helped to move on over 65 homeless households into temporary accommodation, either moving them on from NP accommodation or preventing them from being placed in NPA. This work has resulted in a reduction in the net costs of NPA from November and has also led to a reduction in void costs the council incurs from our RSL TA providers. Once the team is fully staffed, this role will be even more proactive.
- Regular operational meetings with partners including DWP, CAB and the Food Bank are held to improve early identification and prevention approach.

- A Surrey wide Mental Health protocol is now in place. – Following Surrey wide training for all associated professionals, barring the occasional emergency, this appears to be working as well as can be expected considering the increase in Secure Hospital admissions.
- Commitment to refer – protocol in place with Registered Providers to ensure early identification and intervention to prevent eviction.
- Homechoice & PHPs – PHP's continue to be refined with the emphasis on achievable tasks. Hyperlinks to the Homechoice for Advice Leaflets will be added.
- Homelessness Prevention Fund utilised for rent deposit scheme, rent tops up and temporary payments to prevent homelessness.

### **Objective 2 - Reduce rough sleeping**

- The Single Person Housing Options Officer (SPHOO), recruited in November 2022, has proven to be an enormous success. She has worked closely with East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) to successfully find solutions for several entrenched and hard-to-place street homeless, who have been bouncing between agencies for years. During this work she has developed close working relationships with other key agencies.
- One long term entrenched rough sleeper has been assisted into private rented accommodation and another has moved on and no-longer appears to be rough sleeping in the borough. Significant progress has been with EEBC's long term rough sleeper we now have a housing pathway plan in place.
- Two RSAP Housing First properties were purchased by Transform in 2023. Both are occupied by EEBC nominations. We are currently reviewing the possibility of adding a further one or two 'supported' units within the temporary accommodation stock, depending on the availability of appropriate units and ongoing revenue funding.
- The Ending Rough Sleeping Delivery Plan was updated for 2023/24 and submitted to DLUHC.
- Summer SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Provision) approach was agreed with key partners.
- The SPHOO is heavily involved in the identifying and treating Hepatitis C campaign.
- We have started work with partner LAs to recontract the East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS) for a further 3 years.
- A new Ending Rough Sleeping Plan for 24/25 is being developed jointly with East Surrey D&B's to be submitted to DLUHC on 31/04/24.

### **Objective 3 - Increase accommodation options**

- Regular meetings are held with key providers to increase opportunities/options for new housing development.
- The Housing Delivery Group meets quarterly to consider the housing potential of EEBC and other public body assets, including Fairview Road and Stoneleigh library. The group is currently working on bringing forward a variety of projects, including micro homes, Ewell Court cottage and partnership opportunities.
- The Strategic Housing Manager has responded to Local Plan consultation with specific reference to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), to ensure

robust policy in place to increase affordable housing delivery on section 106 development sites. In addition, we hold quarterly meetings with the Planning Policy Manager to shape affordable housing policy.

- We are working closely with Housing Benefit and TCH to downsize households in social housing to free up larger accommodation, which has resulted in more than 11 properties being made available.
- We continue to expand the Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme, with a new property taken on in April 2024 and have started planning for a Landlord Forum to be held in Autumn 2024.
- We have also added further resource to the TA section through the recruitment of an apprentice, to assist with PSL expansion and TA management.

#### **Objective 4 – Improve the health and wellbeing of homeless people**

- Ongoing work with Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) to improve coordination between agencies and improve outcomes for individuals.
- Ongoing work in relation to Bridge the Gap. SCC looking for funding to expand scheme in future years.
- We have collated a GP access list to enable homeless people to access a GP.

#### **Objective 5 - Ensure sufficient support is available for homeless people**

- The East Surrey contract with ESOS/Thames Reach has been extended until September 2024, to enable work to commence on the procurement of new contract, which is intended to cover a three-year period.
- Continue to refer to ETHOS to assist with skills and employment.
- The new Move-On officer post is supporting homeless households in temporary accommodation and ensuring that households have a move on plan.

#### **Objective 6 - Partnership Working**

- Regular meetings held with Mount Green Housing to review opportunities and assets.
- Strategic meeting with TCH set up in January 2023 and meeting biannually. Looking at various options including estate improvement and regeneration, including temporary accommodation.
- Protocols agreed and in place to ensure effective partnership working.
- We are planning to hold a Homelessness Forum with key partners in Q1 2024/25 to improve relationships with partners.

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## URGENT DECISIONS

**Head of Service:** Victoria Potts, Director of Environment,  
Housing and Regeneration

**Report Author** Andrew Bircher

**Wards affected:** (All Wards);

**Urgent Decision?(yes/no)**

**If yes, reason urgent decision  
required:**

**Appendices (attached):**

### Summary

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution

### Recommendation (s)

#### The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the urgent decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions, since the last meeting of the committee.**

## 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The scheme of delegation sets out that the Chief Executive and Directors are authorised to take decisions on grounds of urgency regarding matters which would otherwise be reserved for determination by a Committee or Council. A matter can be deemed urgent if, in the reasonable opinion of the officer concerned, a delay would seriously prejudice the interest of the Council or of the public and it is not practicable to convene a quorate meeting of the relevant decision-making body in sufficient time to take the decision.

2.2 Since the last meeting of the Committee, three urgent decisions have been taken by the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Chair, Cllr Clive Woodbridge, and published in Member News in line with the Council's Constitution, Appendix 2, Paragraph 3.1. iii. The decisions are set out below.

2.2.1 **Decision 118** – Response to Social Housing Allocations Consultation

2.2.2 **Urgency reason for decision 118** - Insufficient time before the next committee as the deadline for consultation response is 26th March

2.2.3 **Decision 129** - Community Football.

2.2.4 **Urgency reason for decision 129** - The current Service Level Agreement (SLA) has expired, and we require an urgent decision to allow the Council to enter into a new SLA. This decision is needed before the next committee in July.

2.2.5 **Decision 130** - Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) – Service Level Agreement (SLA) addendum

2.2.6 **Urgency reason for decision 130** - We require an addendum to the existing SLA that is held with EERN for the provision of support under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The addendum would be for an additional £10,000 to be paid to EERN and is for the continuation of their drop-in sessions. This decision is required before July's committee as to allow the service to continue.

### 3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising directly from this report

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arise from this report

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arise from this report

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arise from this report

3.5 Other

3.5.1 none

#### 4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Finance are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

#### 5 Legal Implications

5.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** Legal are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

#### 6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- N/A

6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations –** None.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** - None.

6.5 **Partnerships:** N/A

#### 7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

**Previous reports:**

- None.

**Other papers:**

- None.

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