

ADULTS & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
14 JANUARY 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cllr Steve Allen. Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Recreation	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Steve Allen. Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Recreation	
Contact Officer(s):	Adrian Chapman, Service Director: Communities & Safety	Tel. 863887

PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROGRESS REPORT: HOUSING, CULTURE & RECREATION

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet member for Housing, Culture & Recreation	Deadline date: NA
<p>It is recommended that the Adults & Communities Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider and scrutinise this report and endorse the approach being taken under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented at the request of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 Each year, the Scrutiny Committee receive an annual report from the relevant Cabinet Members, setting out achievements and challenges, as well as opportunities, that fall under the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.

2.2 This report is for the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2 Functions determined by the Council:

- 3. Housing need (including homelessness, housing options and selective licensing)
- 6. Libraries, Arts and Museums

2.3 The portfolio responsibilities of all Cabinet Members directly contribute to relevant corporate priorities.

2.5 The portfolio responsibilities of all Cabinet Members directly contribute to the Children in Care pledge.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Context

- 4.1.1 This report is being presented to the Committee to allow them to scrutinise the work being undertaken under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation, Cllr Steve Allen. Cllr Allen's portfolio covers the following areas:
- the Council's housing strategy
 - the Council's response to homelessness including:
 - (i) the prevention of homelessness
 - (ii) the supply of temporary accommodation
 - (iii) the supply of affordable housing including the development of a housing revenue account
 - (iv) housing options and supporting people
 - the Council's response for rough sleeping
 - Culture and Recreation, and being the Strategic Partnership lead for the work of Vivacity and responsibility for the Council's functions in relation to:
 - (i) the Peterborough Museum
 - (ii) libraries and archives
 - (iii) the Arts
 - (iv) sports strategy

4.2 Housing Strategy

- 4.2.1 The delivery of affordable housing through our Affordable Housing Provider partners is looking positive for this financial year. In April 2019 it was forecasted that 262 new affordable homes would complete by 31 March 2020 (a 79% increase on last year's affordable completions) with a tenure split of 157 affordable rented tenure and 105 shared ownership tenure homes being provided.
- 4.2.2 During the course of the year, the expected total figure has grown, and the latest forecast indicates that 371 new affordable homes will complete by 31 March 2020 (a 154% increase on last year's completions) with a tenure split of 237 affordable rented tenure and 134 shared ownership tenure homes being provided.
- 4.2.3 This significant in-year increase has largely been as a result of deals brokered between affordable housing providers and developers for block purchase of either fully completed or under construction homes, originally intended for open market sale. Many of these units are on larger sites where the market has slowed down, and lack of demand has encouraged the developer to look to the affordable housing market for sales. This has helped to boost the affordable provision on some sites where the percentage of affordable homes to be provided through the section 106 agreement had fallen short of the 30% sought by our affordable housing policy within the Local Plan. The fact that the units are being delivered outside of the section 106 requirements has helped to make the delivery of these additional affordable homes more financially viable for the affordable providers because they are eligible for grant funding.
- 4.2.4 Many of the units forecast for delivery this financial year are due to complete close to end of March. This does mean that there may be some slippage of units into next financial year reducing the total as of 31 March 2020, but overall there is a drastic increase in the number of affordable homes coming forward, with signs that this positive trend will continue into next financial year.

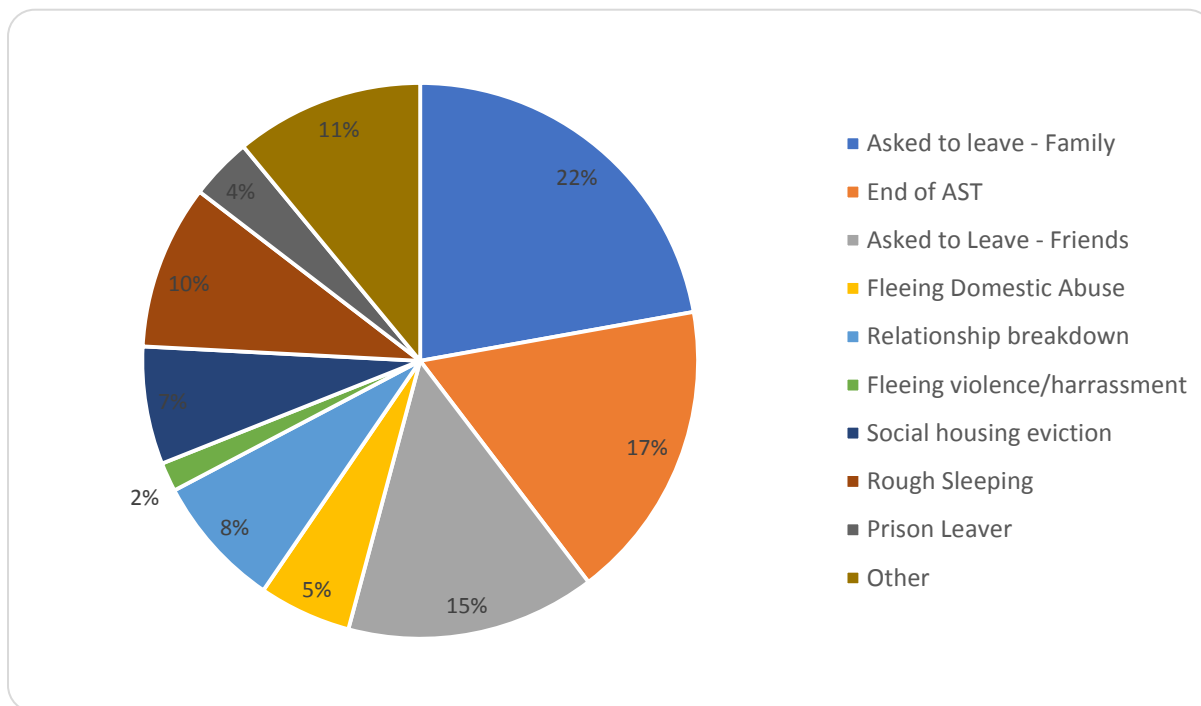
4.3 Homelessness

4.3.1 Homelessness Presentations

2019 has been a challenging year for the authority in relation to homelessness. The demand remains as high as anticipated, with 1,691 households presenting to us for assistance so far in this financial year as they are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Should this continue for the rest of the year we are likely to see around 2,442 presentations. This is compared to 2355 last year. A 3.69% increase.

4.3.2 Reasons for Homelessness

The main reasons for households becoming homeless remain similar to previous years, with the majority being made homeless from family or friends or after having to leave their private sector tenancy after receiving a notice to quit. The chart below shows the breakdown of reasons for homelessness as at 6 December 2019. (n.b. AST = Assured Shorthold Tenancy).



4.3.3 Prevention

Although demand continues to be high the team have been successful in increasing the number of cases where homelessness has been prevented and temporary accommodation has not been required as a result. This is most commonly by supporting the household to remain in their current property or by assisting them in finding alternative accommodation prior to the becoming homeless.

To date this year the team has prevented homelessness in 270 cases. This is compared to 167 in the whole financial year last year.

There has also been an increase in the number of households who have had their homelessness relieved by finding accommodation for them as part of the ongoing work undertaken with the client in their personalised housing plan.

To date this year the team has relieved homelessness in 181 cases. This is compared to 166 in the last financial year.

This coming year the team will have a sharper focus on the main reasons for homelessness and aim to increase the number of successful preventions even further to keep more households in their home or by securing alternatives prior to them having to leave. This should have a further positive impact on the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation.

4.3.4 Temporary Accommodation

Demand

A total of 410 households were in temporary accommodation as at 6 December 2019. The Council's use of B&B accommodation has reduced during 2019/20 despite an increased forecast in homelessness presentations relative to 2018/19 of around 87. At the beginning of

2019 we were accommodating 100 households in B&B accommodation in the city. As at the 6 December 2019 we were accommodating 89.

54 of the 100 households accommodated in B&B at the beginning of 2019 were families who had been there for over 6 weeks. The team has been successful in reducing this number down to 19 as at the 6 December 2019.

Supply

Over the course of the past year action has been taken to boost the supply of temporary accommodation for households at risk of homelessness.

58 properties have been purchased on the open market in particular to meet the demand for 2 and 3 bedroom properties. Properties have been selected in areas with good access to education, health and community facilities and good public transport links. The acquisition of these properties has been funded from a £10m invest to save initiative with provision also made for property management and maintenance. The homes purchased have helped alleviate temporary accommodation pressures and reduced the use of B&B accommodation. In addition the Council has secured 20 flats at Tysedale which have been refurbished for use as temporary accommodation.

Leasing from private landlords with 5 years rental of private properties with rents aligned to local housing allowance rates has been promoted with condition survey work managed by NPS to ensure homes are safe and suitable for occupation. 46 properties are currently being used either as temporary accommodation properties or for discharge of duty.

The Council continues to lease a number of properties and hostel beds in bulk from Cross Keys Homes and has taken the step of purchasing 84 properties at St Michael's Gate that were previously owned by private landlord Stef and Philips.

The development of a housing revenue account

Councils are permitted to hold up to 200 properties before being required to open a separate Housing Revenue Account [HRA] in which all funds related to housing, e.g. rent payments and repair and service charges, require to be held separately from the general fund.

In September 2019 the Council notified the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of its intention to re-open a housing revenue account. This was done for 3 main reasons. First, MHCLG in July 2020 lifted the HRA borrowing cap to enable councils to play a more active role in addressing England's affordable housing crisis. Second, there are advantages to borrowing within an HRA because there is no requirement for minimum revenue provision or capital repayment within an HRA. Third, it is likely that the Council will hit the 200 homes ceiling at some point in the near future that would require it to re-open a Housing Revenue Account.

Work is presently being done to prepare a 40-year business plan that will forecast the anticipated income and expenditure within a housing revenue account. This is being modelled with a view to the Council moving to a position where it could have up to 1,400 homes in its ownership.

In the period since the HRA report was approved by Cabinet the Treasury has raised the borrowing rate through the Public Works Loans Board [PWLb] by one percentage point which makes borrowing through an HRA slightly less attractive than when the report was presented to Cabinet. 40-year PWLB interest rates are currently 2.87%.

In addition to the facility presented by an HRA to develop the Council's own stock, work has progressed through Medesham Homes, the Council's joint venture with Cross Keys Homes, to develop affordable rented homes through the reinvestment of right to buy receipts and commuted S106 monies. 29 homes were delivered in December 2018 at Midland Road and Medesham Homes propose to complete a further 110 in the coming year in 3 developments: Bretton Court, Thorney Green (Eye), and Belle Vue (Stanground).

4.3.5 **Housing Options and supporting people**

As with homelessness the demand for social housing continues to grow and the housing register and choice based lettings remains the route for many into affordable rented housing. We have seen increases in the number of properties being made available for letting through the schemes mentioned previously, but also with further development from our partner registered providers.

This coming year the housing allocations policy will be reviewed to ensure it continues to be effective in ensuring those in the greatest need, who are unable to secure accommodation through other routes, are prioritised.

The Council continues to fund a number of supported housing projects through its housing related support programme. These projects continue to offer an invaluable service, which includes accommodation provision to those in the greatest need in the city, who have likely to have previously failed in managing a tenancy and need support in understanding the responsibilities of managing their own home.

In addition, the team have had the following successes during 2019:

- The team have jointly commissioned the multi-disciplinary floating support service with Cambridgeshire County Council
- The team are continuing to work with the team in Cambridgeshire to see if there are opportunities for further joint commissioning
- The sale of the Mayors Walk Hostel and Flats by Genesis to Futures Housing Group and the successful continuation of the service

4.4 **Rough Sleeping**

4.4.1 Rough Sleeping continues to be an issue in the city, but the work and relationships that have been formed as part of the Safer off the Streets partnership continue to make positive strides towards highlighting the extent of the issue, and the Council's Rough Sleeper team's intelligence base is more comprehensive as a result.

4.4.2 The Council has been successful in bringing in additional funding to the city to support work to support those sleeping on the streets. This funding has come from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. £280,968 has come from the Rough Sleeper Initiative.

This funding pays for:

- One rough sleeper team leader – Provided by PCC
- Two rough sleeper outreach officers – Provided by PCC
- 12 crash beds at Fairview Court – Provided by Longhurst Group
- Extending the Winter Night Shelter from 13 to 20 weeks - Provided by the Light Project Peterborough
- 2 single person tenancy sustainment officers – Provided by Longhurst Group
- Drug and alcohol outreach provision - Provided by Aspire
- GP outreach services – Provided by Boroughbury Medical Centre
- Landlord Incentive Scheme – Provided by PCC

4.4.3 In addition, the Council was successful with a joint bid in partnership with Cross Keys Homes to the Rapid Rehousing Pathway fund. This provided £113,157 which is now funding:

- A Single Person Floating support worker working with rough sleepers currently in temporary accommodation to help them sustain temporary accommodation and move forward into permanent accommodation – Provided by Cross Keys Homes
- A Mental Health Navigator to support rough sleepers with accessing mental health and wellbeing services – Provided by Boroughbury Medical Centre
- A European Economic Area Navigator to support rough sleepers, especially those from

Eastern Europe, to support them to gain eligible status and move into accommodation or to consider reconnection to their home countries – Provided by PCC

4.4.4 The initiatives detailed above as well as the presence of the Garden House, operated by the Light Project Peterborough, has meant that we now have the most comprehensive offer available for single homeless people than ever before. We have submitted a further application for Rough Sleeper Initiative funding to support our ongoing efforts during 2019/20 and are hopeful for positive news in the near future.

4.4.5 There is still much to be done in this area and there is still an element of the rough sleeping community who are unwilling to engage with services and are sometimes engaged in antisocial behaviour. Over the coming year the Council will be refreshing and presenting its Homelessness Reduction and Tackling Rough Sleeping Strategy, which will seek to address these ongoing challenges in its approach.

4.5 Culture and Recreation

4.5.1 Until now, the responsibility for scrutinising the culture and recreation elements of Cllr Allen's portfolio has fallen to the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee. However, from January 2020, this responsibility transfers to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

4.5.2 *Strategic Partnership with Vivacity*

Over the last year, the work to build and consolidate a reinvigorated strategic partnership with Vivacity has continued to go from strength to strength. Whilst Vivacity continues to develop and build the cultural and leisure offer to the City, intense work has taken place in partnership between Vivacity and the City Council during 2019 to develop a sustainable operating model for the future. This is in the context of reducing Council budgets and continued budgetary pressures for Vivacity. We have jointly reviewed current and potential areas of activity which are deliverable within an overall reducing resource envelope, whilst remaining aspirational for the future. We are also reviewing how and where we should deliver the library service that is relevant for the 21st century, this includes an exciting new partnership with Civic who are supporting work across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with a pilot project to re-imagine how we build on libraries as a core community asset for the future.

It has been agreed that the revised business model for Vivacity will be implemented in a phased approach over the next 5 years.

Alongside this, and expanded on in a separate report, a strategic alliance between Vivacity, Peterborough City Council and the Arts Council has seen new energy being put into creating a Cultural Strategy for the City. This will be developed in collaboration with a broad coalition of cultural leaders and partners. This will be completed by September 2020

4.5.3 Peterborough Music Hub

The Peterborough Music Hub (PMH) has had a busy and productive year with new activity, evaluation of the academic year 2018/19 and planning/preparation for the current and new academic year ahead. As ever the hub has been working with schools and ever more children and young people delivering high quality outcomes and outputs for the progression of music in the city. Initial analysis of data this year in comparison to last shows an increase in engagement with both schools and individuals with a focus on more sustained and meaningful outcomes.

In 2018/19, 94% of all Peterborough Schools actively engaged with Music Hub Activity (up from 89.7% in 2017-18).

4.5.4 Sports Strategy

Early in the 2020 calendar year, work will begin on a full feasibility study for a sports centre and

library in Werrington. This will confirm the best location for the facility to potentially address the lack of leisure facilities within this area and the city generally as highlighted by Sport England.

There is work being developed on a Park Pedal concept that is operational in Norwich currently, developed by Pedal Revolution. This is the same concept as ParkRun but on bikes, with a 5-mile route completing laps to encourage confidence on bikes. Focus will be on young children, families and the older population. The Council is working with Nene Park Trust on this initiative.

There is ongoing work with tennis clubs to discuss citywide development of the sport and funding opportunities moving forward in line with the Lawn Tennis Association capital plans nationally. This is also echoed with the English Cricket Board with regards to cricket clubs locally, where we are looking to leaver funding to the city to improve facilities and equipment to encourage more participation.

A Tennis coach has been employed for Central Park to help activate the area and have more activity within the park. Year one is now completed with a good increase in use at the park and playing tennis, but with learning to take into 2020 to ensure more focus on local engagement and more weekend events to promote activity.

Table tennis England and Viridor granted the council £9,000 (£4,500 each) for outdoor table tennis tables across the city. 2020 will see a further 6 tables installed in more rural areas.

A ping pong parlour in Serpentine Green shopping centre and Queensgate has been set up working with Vivacity along with the local business park. Table Tennis England are keen to see this move forward within the city. This offers free activity to residents in a safe environment and promotes social interaction using table tennis as the catalyst.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

6.1 It is anticipated that this report will provide the Committee with an overview of some of the work that is being undertaken under this portfolio. It also provides an opportunity for the Committee to ask questions and scrutinise the work being undertaken.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

7.1 To ensure that the Portfolio Holder is working to deliver the priorities set out for the role in the Council's Constitution.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 N/A

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 N/A

Legal Implications

9.2 N/A

Equalities Implications

9.3 N/A

Rural Implications

9.4 N/A

Carbon Impact Assessment

9.5 N/A

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None