

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
4 JANUARY 2022	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Communities	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Communities	
Contact Officer(s):	Adrian Chapman, Service Director: Communities and Partnerships	Tel. 01733 863887

PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROGRESS REPORT – HOUSING, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Communities	Deadline date: NA
<p>It is recommended that the 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 for Housing, Culture & Communities. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented at the request of the Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 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 & Communities, Councillor Steve Allen that falls within the remit of this Committee.

2.2 This report is for Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 – Overview & Scrutiny functions, paragraph No 2 Functions determine by the Council

1. Housing need (including homelessness, housing options and selective licensing)
2. Neighbourhood and Community Support (including cohesion and community safety)
4. Libraries, Arts and Museums
5. Tourism, Culture and Recreation
6. Adult Learning and Skills

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 Housing Needs (including homelessness, housing options, and selective licensing) -

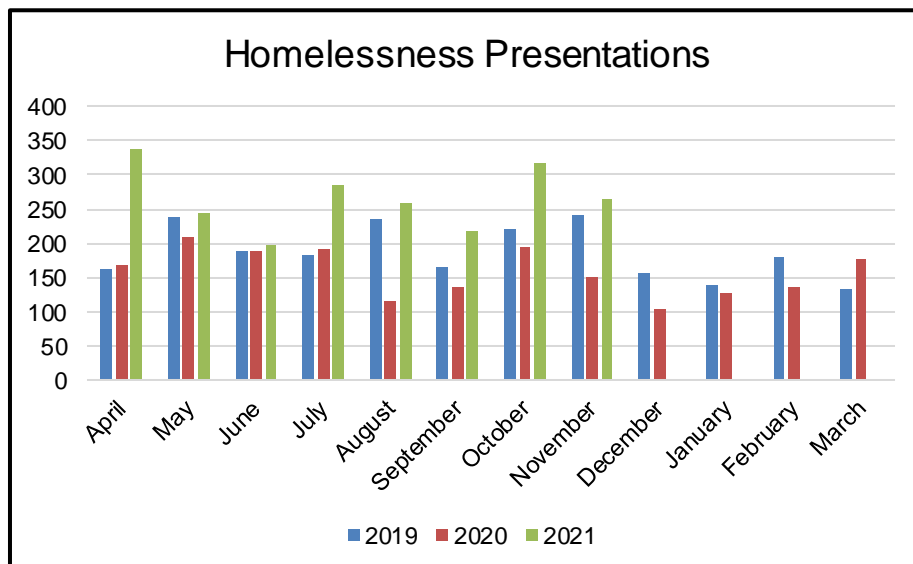
4.1.1 Context

Cllr Allen's portfolio covers the following areas :

- The Council's housing strategy
- The Council's response to homelessness including :
 1. The prevention of homelessness
 2. The supply of temporary accommodation
 3. The supply of affordable housing including the development of a housing revenue account
 4. Housing options and supporting people
- The Council's response for rough sleeping

4.1.2 The Housing Needs Service

Homelessness

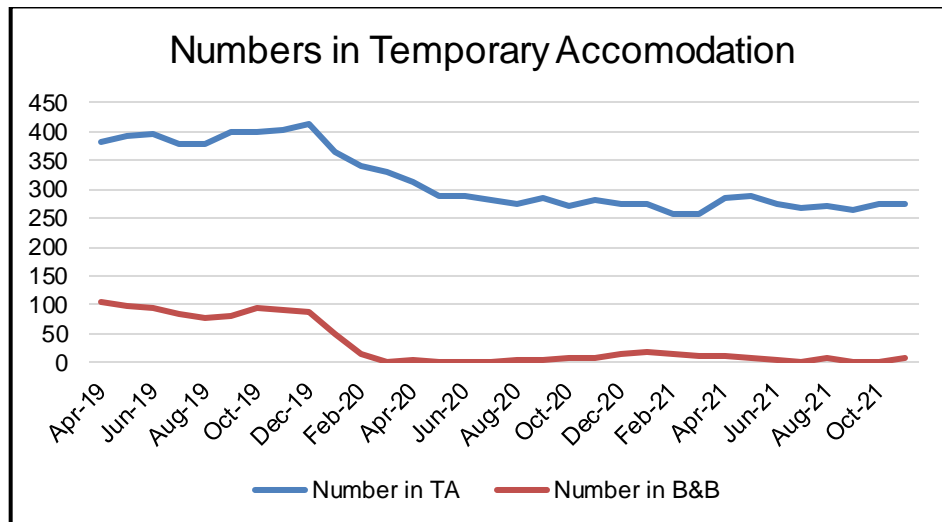


Housing Needs have faced a busy year to date, while the team have still been working remotely and have amended the service delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic, as restrictions have been lifted, we have started to see increases in presentations to the service.

The team have moved to online applications for homelessness assistance. This has enabled improvements in information gathering from customers but has also meant that applications are being received without triage. This is reflected in the increases shown in the table above.

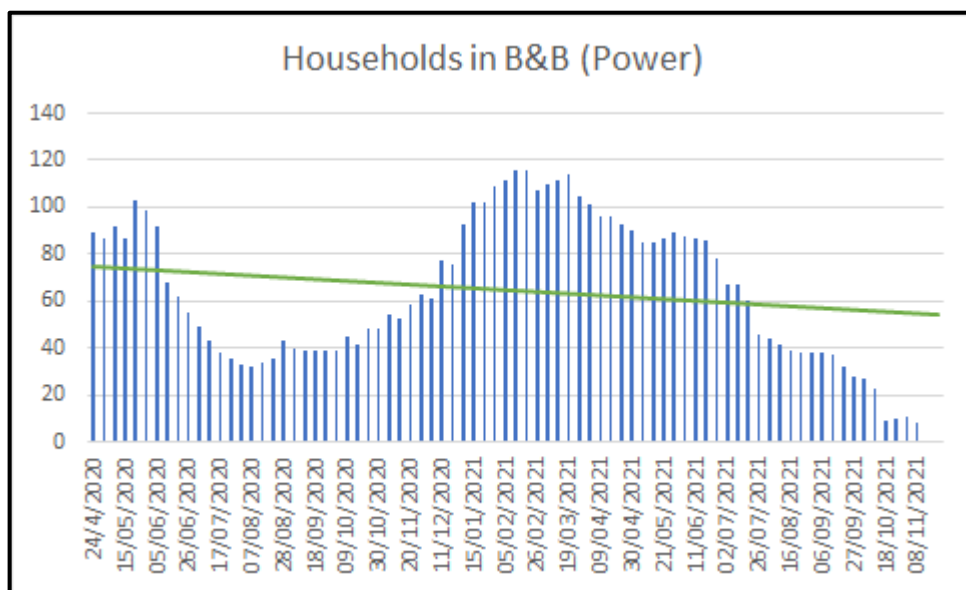
As we move into the new year we are expecting to see impacts on households of the ending of the furlough scheme as well as lifting of restrictions due to rent arrears. Some forecasting has been done to measure these impacts where possible based on the limited information available and these have been accounted for in service planning and temporary accommodation demand forecasts.

4.1.3 Temporary Accommodation



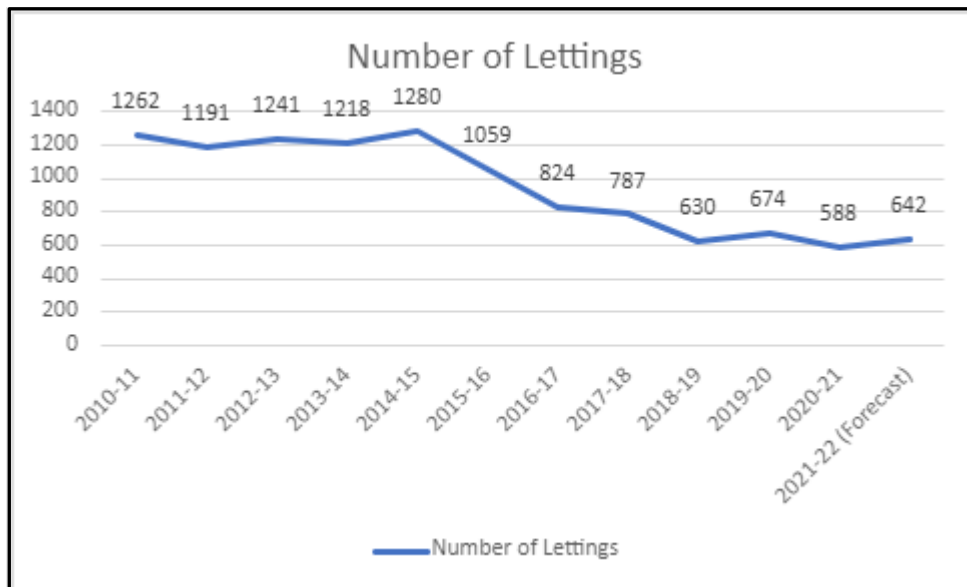
Despite the increases in demand, we have seen from households presenting as homeless the team have worked hard to ensure that this has not manifested in increased use of temporary accommodation. The table above shows that the team have been successful in managing the increases in demand and that the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation has remained consistent throughout the year.

While the table above shows the number of households accommodated under our homelessness duties the team have continued to adopt the governments “everybody in” approach to ensuring that an offer of accommodation exists for all eligible rough sleepers. The number of former rough sleeper clients accommodated has reduced and use of B&B has reduced as a result. The table below shows how the number of former rough sleepers accommodated in B&B has fluctuated since the beginning of covid and how it has reduced over recent months.



4.1.4 The Housing Register & Choice Based Lettings

The Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme and continued to let available properties promptly with very little delay during the pandemic. The number of available properties made available for letting through CBL remains low in comparison to previous years meaning that officers have to be creative in preventing homelessness or finding alternative solutions to social housing for may who approach us for assistance. The table below shows the number of properties available for letting through CBL since 2010-11.



4.1.5 Rough Sleeping

As detailed earlier the rough sleeper outreach team has continued to ensure that an offer exists for all eligible rough sleepers to leave the streets and come into accommodation. The team have been successful in ensuring that all new rough sleepers are supported into accommodation before they become entrenched.

The development of a streets to home pathway has given a clear route for the outreach team supported by partners from voluntary and statutory organisations to work against enabling effective transition from rough sleeping to settled accommodation. This work is further enhanced by the Supported Accommodation Pathway, which has brought supported accommodation providers in the city together to work together to ensure accommodation is allocated effectively to those in the greatest need and reduce instances of eviction.

While this good work continues, the UK leaving the EU on 31st December 2020 and subsequent ending of the transition period has meant that some nationals of EU countries who do not have settled status in the UK and are ineligible for support have returned to rough sleeping. We are working closely with the Home Office and the DLUHC to find solutions for this cohort and hope to be able to positively support in the near future.

4.2 Neighbourhood and Community Support (including cohesion and community safety)

4.2.1 Think Communities Support

The Think Communities team have been working in local communities to promote local action within our communities. In the last 6 months 36 individuals have been trained in developing local projects with seed funding being given to start these off, examples in the last 6 months have been:-

- £300 for Teens 2 Thrive so they can start a project 'Punching For Purpose' focussing on teenagers in Orton/Hampton aiming to improve overall physical and mental health.
- £300 to High Heritage so they can arrange events for Black History Month.
- £300 to Hampton Seniors to restart their group. Through building of positive relationships and develop a sense of community through shared experiences.

As well as this a local Think Communities Fund of £100k was launched in Summer 2021; grants between £500 to £5000 will be awarded to support groups to build community resilience and cohesion. We have had an excellent response to the fund and will be awarding funding in the coming months after scoring has been completed by our fund panel.

As part of our community cohesion work we continue to work with our community champions, interfaith network and multi-agency forum on the key issues facing the City, working in this way we have the best opportunity to in being relevant to the communities that we serve. These groups have been critical to the development of vaccination confidence and Covid compliance work. most recently we have recruited to the post of Social Mobility and Cohesion Manager.

4.2.2 **Litter Picking Partnership**

Active volunteers from the Peterborough Wombles group are working alongside PCC officers from community safety, Environment services, City Councillors and others to collaborate on a Litter Picking Strategy for the City. This work will set out a shared approach to tackling litter in our communities and encourage residents to play their part in keeping their local environments clean and attractive for all.

4.2.3 **Armed Forces Covenant**

Main areas of focus have included:

- Providing training to Peterborough Housing Associations to understand the challenges faced by ex-forces personnel and how to best support them in order to prevent homelessness for those who are a high-risk cohort.
- Working with the Armed Forces Veterans Group in Peterborough to bring them up to date on the support available including early help to prevent homelessness and escalation of debt, and mental health support.
- Working with HMP Peterborough and the Shaw Trust, to provide support for ex-forces personnel in the Criminal Justice System and provide the link into engagement with the Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board, with a focus on avoiding repeat offending, reduce homelessness and appropriate support for mental health.

4.2.4 **Covid and Vaccination Confidence**

Our communities team continue to oversee the Peterborough Covid Community Hub which works with internal council services and key community action groups to ensure that local people are offered support - Since March 3845 issues have been resolved, with over 1000 related to food and fuel support, as well as 1000 relating to support for self-isolation.

Vaccine Confidence work has been a key part of the delivery in the communities team over the last year.

Within that time we have recruited local community workers through Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service, Family Voice and Gladca to sit alongside our own communities team. The Vaccine Confidence Teams have been working together in the lowest uptake areas as well as across the City to develop and disseminate facts and to dispel myths about the vaccine.

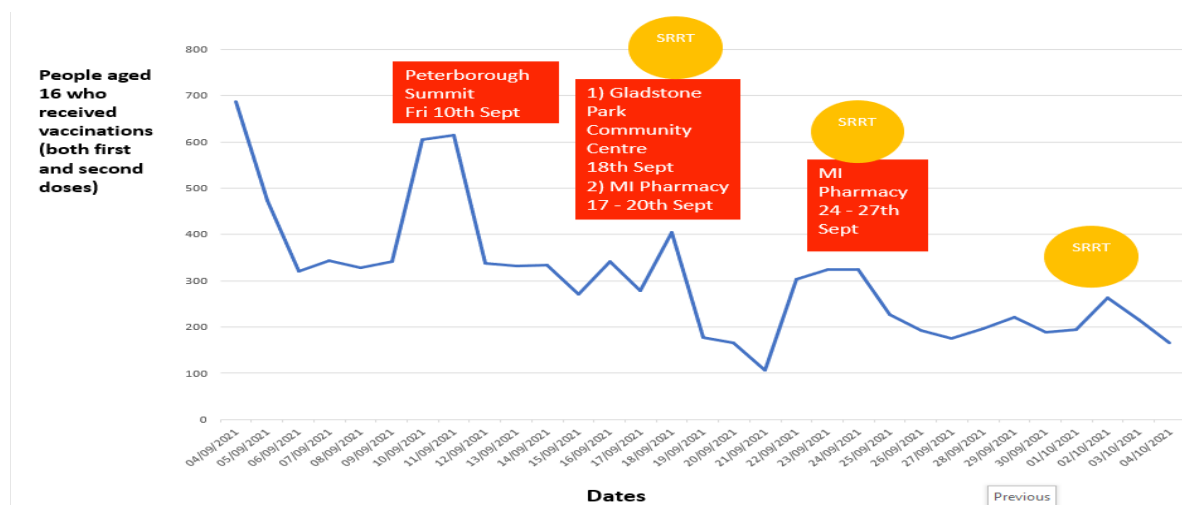
Although there are significant challenges in addressing take up of vaccine we have seen an increase in the percentage of the population being vaccinated in the lowest 3 areas of Peterborough. Although percentages increases look low (2 – 3% for first doses) this is due to the change in cohort size as eligibility criteria changes.

The team continue to work with the CCG to signpost residents to pop up vaccination centres which have been held in local communities centres, mosques, workplaces, pride festival, shopping centres, and have been promoting the vaccine at community events across the City.

From 10th to 27th September the communities team led the first Peterborough vaccine push which was aimed at promoting vaccine in the lowest take up areas of the City, our community teams worked alongside the national response team and saw positive vaccine uptake on those weekends.

2543 residents were engaged as well as 249 local businesses, employers were encouraged to share information about local provision, and we were able to gain valuable insight into vaccine hesitancy.

Fig 1 shows increase take up of vaccine on surge days.



From 1st November Peterborough entered in to Enhanced Response Area Status, we are again leading the community response liaising and directing the national team alongside our community resource to undertake door knocking and signposting for first, second and booster vaccines.

4.2.5 Safer Peterborough Partnership Delivery Group

The Safer Peterborough Partnership Delivery Group continues to meet as a collaborative space for Local Authority, Health, Community and other public sector services to work to develop solutions. Examples of work include:-

- The Light Project, Cross Keys, Longhurst, Thomas Deacon Academy and the Council housing team working together to ensure that when families go into temporary accommodation, schools are made aware and linked together.
- Delivery of an Alcohol and Drug Awareness Campaign for Peterborough as the city came out of lockdown. Messages were seen on social media platforms hosted by the Council (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) a total of 65,000 times during the week.
- The Direct Awards Scheme was established to support families, working in partnership with the local Citizens Advice Bureau and Kingsgate CMA Connect Centre. Since its launch, 469 vouchers or essential items have been issued.
- Members of the group are now linked into the Tackling Worklessness in Peterborough group (TWIP). TWIP has approx. 40 members, mainly employability specialists and include the Princes Trust, REED, working together to support those in need including young people not in education, employment of training or children receiving social services care.

4.2.6 Scam prevention and victim support

Scams awareness and prevention training continues to develop in Peterborough, an important milestone has been to build a relationship with Peterborough Royal Mail and deliver training to all the post delivery teams, as postal workers are often the first to notice an increase or higher than usual volume of scam mail being delivered to households. Moving forward we are looking to build our relationships with other delivery organisations such as Amazon to widen our reach.

Visits to Peterborough known scam victims continue following referrals from National Scams Team investigations, 245 letters have been sent over the last 6 months by our team with advice

and guidance. For repeat victims or those more vulnerable, home visits are carried out by experienced scams prevention team and a Think Communities Coordinator to give advice on community support available to prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation, both well-known triggers for engaging with scammers 13 visits have been undertaken in the last 3 months.

Syrian/Afghan Resettlement Scheme

- 4.2.7 Since 2016, the council has been supporting Syrian families to resettle in Peterborough as part of the Government programme. The council pledged to support 100 people to resettle over a five-year period, however due to the pandemic no new families arrived for most of 2020 and took until September 2021 before resettlement began again. To date, the council has resettled 79 individuals and expects to meet the 100 pledge by the middle of 2022 at the latest.

The council is also working with Government to resettle Afghani families that were evacuated in August 2021 from Kabul. The council has once again pledged to resettle 100 individuals and to date has rehoused 24 people and we are awaiting the Home Office to allocate families for two vacant properties that we have available.

Working with a mix of private and social landlords and supported by a network of local charities, faith groups and community partners, the council has provided a fully furnished and welcoming home for new arrivals. Local charity PARCA have been commissioned to provide day-day case work support and work closely with new arrivals to help settle them into UK life. This includes:

- Setting up a bank account
- Claiming Universal Credit
- Accessing GP and other NHS services
- Enrolling children into education
- Local orientation and integration within Peterborough
- Providing opportunities for cultural and social mixing
- Advice and support to gain new skills and find employment

Through Peterborough City College, adults are supported to learn and improve their English language skills as well as access any additional training that they may need.

4.3 Prevention and Enforcement Service

- 4.3.1 The Prevention and Enforcement Service covers a wider range of quality-of-life issues impacting on residents and communities across Peterborough. Since the start of the year the service has:

- Issued 8581 Penalty Charge Notices for parking offences (7653 on Street and 928 Off Street)
- Undertaken 100 schools' enforcement patrols and dealt and responded to 547 parking service requests.
- Issued 57 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping related incidents and 11 cases have been submitted to legal for prosecution.
- Investigated 31 fly posting incidents, 396 Rubbish Accumulations and 317 Abandon Vehicles
- Moved on 12 unauthorised encampments, and installed defence measures at various location to prevent future encampments.
- The service has also responded to 104 reports of anti-social behaviour cases some of which have been complex and needed a multi-agency approach to resolve the issues through the Safer Peterborough Partnership Problem Solving Group which the Senior Problem Solves coordinates and the Head of Service is co-chairs.
- 19 business in the city have applied and been issued with city centre pavement licences.
- Issued 2250 blue badges
- Implementation of the Public Space Protection Order which covers the Millfield Area of the city. Officers have also worked closely with the police including city centre patrols, and operations in the Millfield and Woodston areas.

The service also assisted with test and trace visits, distribution of information, and vaccine door knocks as part of the authority's emergency response to COVID.

Safer Streets Funding

4.3.2 The local authority and Cambridgeshire Constabulary has secured 2 lots of new funding from the Home Office 'Safer Streets Initiative':

Safer Streets 2 - This funding is aimed at tackling acquisitive crime and will allow for the below improvements measure to be implemented at the following locations.

- Improved CCTV coverage and operation at PCC CCTV Control room
- Installation of CCTV cameras Burghley Road
- LED Lighting on new link footpath and replace existing lighting columns, CCTV camera on Stanley Recreation Ground.
- Improved lighting on crescent bridge
- Secure cycle storage in city centre and cycle safety events
- Improved Street lighting in Bridge Street Peterborough
- Investment in Transforming lives project

Safer Streets 3 - The Safer Streets 3 fund is aimed at improving the safety of public spaces, with a particular focus on the areas of concern for women and girls, initiatives included:

- Taxi marshals in the city centre each weekend, throughout December.
- Training CCTV operators in spotting the signs of predatory behaviours and additional coverage during December.

Car Cruising

4.3.3 Car Cruising and anti-social driving continues to impact on local communities across Peterborough. A cross-party task and finish group is established to consider legislative, tactical and defence measures to deter those from choosing Peterborough as a destination for this behaviour.

The group are due to report findings in early 2022, but where opportunities for quick wins are identified these are being taken. For example-

- Traffic calming and defensive measures are being installed at Stapledon Road and Vivacity Gym, Hampton
- Work is underway to look nationally at what other legislation may be brought to bear to address this issue, including local injunctions, use of Public Space Protection Orders and Police enforcement

Professional begging/Anti-Social Behaviour - Op Luscombe

4.3.4 A multi-agency operation to tackle professional begging and Anti-Social Behaviour continues to be delivered in the city centre with a view to extending in other areas of the city. To date three people are being progressed from Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) to Community Protection Notices (CPNs) for persistent begging. Two others are being progressed to applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) for breaching their CPNs. The operation has also resulted in success stories with individuals engaging with services and no longer begging.

Sex Working Intervention

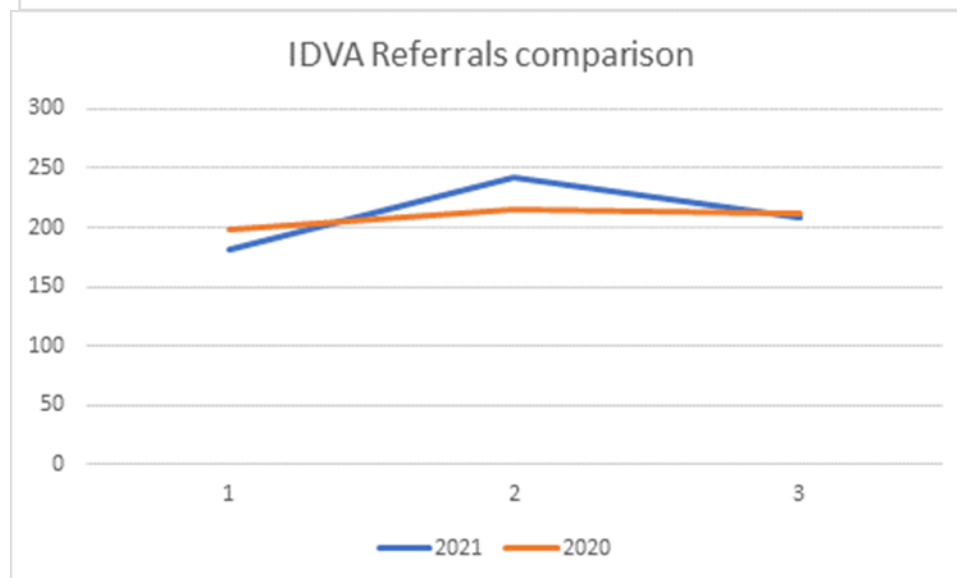
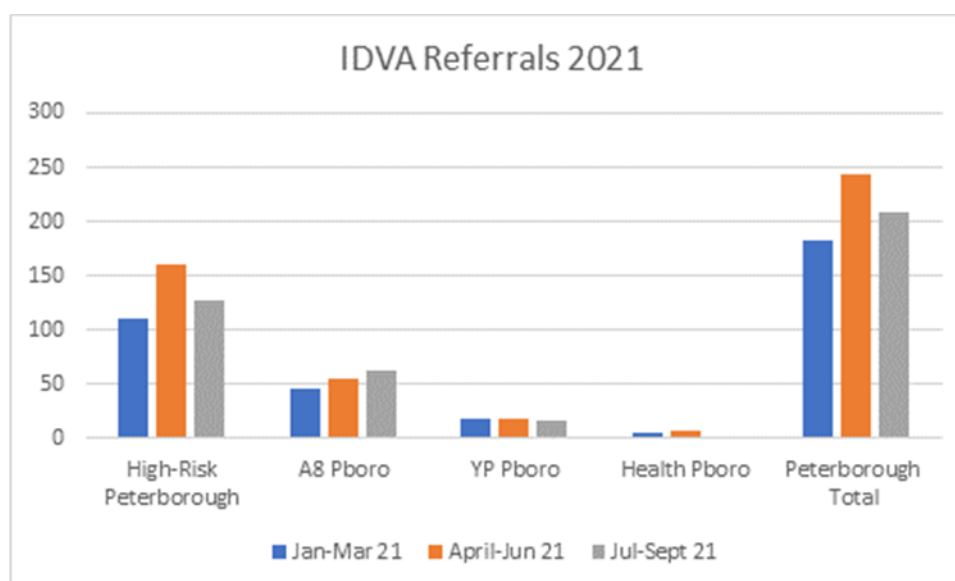
4.3.5 The Service are leading activity to address Sexual Exploitation and Sex Working in Central Peterborough. A multi-agency action plan has been developed and regular meetings take place with residents, the aim of the plan is to improve community safety and confidence in the Police, Council, and other agencies on how they respond to street sex working and sexual exploitation, drug dealing, drug use, street drinking and anti-social behaviour in the area. The plan includes improvements to the environment, target hardening and enforcement. Some key highlights of this include:

- The installation of CCTV in hotspots as a deterrent and to improve evidence gathering
- Target hardening of disused open spaces

- Working with local businesses and housing providers to secure external areas and reduce opportunities for activities to occur
- Developing a joined-up partnership plan with the Police to share information and ensure all prosecution opportunities are pursued
- Developing a joined-up partnership plan to provide support to exploited sex-workers and also to residents who suffer the consequences of public sex working

4.4 Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service

2020 saw a significant increase in reporting of domestic abuse to police and specialist domestic abuse services, thought in part to be due to the COVID pandemic. Referrals to the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Adviser) Service in Peterborough increased in 2020 by 34% compared to 2019 and 2021 has seen this increase continue with a 4% overall increase in referrals for the first three quarters of this year (compared to the same period last year).



Our frontline services have operated throughout the pandemic, and victim focussed services have collaborated to ensure needs are met effectively. Highlights:

- We have been able to continue to fund a specialist post to support victims from EU countries
- Grant funding from the DLUHC, Home Office and Ministry of Justice has also enabled us to increase specialist IDVA support with Health, Housing, Male Victims and increased Young People's posts. A specialist safe accommodation scheme is also being developed. It has also allowed us to continue support for children affected by domestic abuse.

- The Domestic Abuse Act received royal ascent in April 2021, instigating a statutory duty on Tier 1 local authorities to provide safe accommodation to victims of domestic abuse. This included the requirement to undertake a needs assessment and develop a safe accommodation strategy, which has now been approved by cabinet.
- In November, Peterborough City Council fully endorsed 'White Ribbon Day'. This international event highlights the plight of victims of Domestic and our support for this was widely publicised. Actions included a flag raising outside the Town Hall.
- Libraries across Peterborough have now been set up as Safe Spaces for victims of domestic abuse to seek support, with staff trained to respond and signpost to specialist support services.
- Peterborough Housing Team and Cross Keys are both working towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation to improve their responses and policies around domestic abuse.

4.5 **CCTV Service**

From 1st April to 31st October 2021, the CCTV service has been able to respond to 2,050 incidents across our City including incidents relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violent crime, illegal drug use, possession of weapons and theft.

As a result of CCTV intervention since April 2021 has led to 393 arrests being made by Cambridgeshire Police. This highlights the work CCTV services do to support the council and partners in responding to crime and disorder and helping to make our communities safer and reduce the fear of crime.

The CCTV service also provides the councils 'out of hours' telephone contact services in which from 1st April to 31st October 2021, the CCTV service has responded to over 1,000 service requests from our out of hours telephone contact service.

The new shared CCTV has allowed both councils, Peterborough and Fenland, to realise significant cost savings for the delivery of CCTV services. This is especially worth noting when comparing our own resourcing levels against our other shared service neighbours in Huntingdonshire, where they operate a similar service with twice the number of staff. This highlights that our own CCTV service is very much providing value for money.

Going forward the CCTV service will look for opportunities to provide cost effective services to our internal teams which includes the potential to support libraries in adopting a more agile delivery of services whilst maintaining security and staff protection.

4.6 **Counting Every Adult Service**

The Counting Every Adult (CEA) operational partnership supporting individuals who face multiple disadvantages has been at full capacity all year and the Peterborough coordinator is currently supporting interventions with 17 people. CEA have been working in partnership with the Service User Network (SUN) to bring the principle of Coproduction to this often-marginalised group. An initial meeting was held to scope how we might promote Coproduction, professionals and service users working together to design and run services, which was attended by several local services who work with people who face multiple disadvantages as well as two experts by experience. Our next step is to hold an open event on Coproduction for services and experts to begin to collate subject areas which experts feel need to be addressed.

CEA have been working with partners to create our vision for the programme following our application to the central government 'Changing Futures' programme this year. Although reaching the final stage, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were not allocated funding. However, the process galvanised a strong cross-sector partnership and energy, which a tactical group is building on, and which links with the national Changing Futures programme via learning and evaluation. The principles the proposed programme are that improving the outcomes for people with multiple disadvantages will improve outcomes for services and the wider system - by delivering four visions, to:

- Embed a Trusted Person model which supports people with multiple disadvantages to develop and maintain relationships with people they trust
- Embed a trauma informed approach to support – not just at the front line but for whole organisations to operate in a trauma-informed way
- Establish mechanics across the system to support shared learning and address barriers
- Embed co-production and co-design across the system

The Housing First programme has taken longer to see outcomes for individuals than would have been desirable for a number of reasons including the small scale of the pilot and the immediate priority of the Covid-19 response this year. However, these issues have been overcome. A referral pathway has been put into place and training on the Housing First principles to all relevant teams with Peterborough City Council and our partners will be rolled out within the next 2-3 months. Service Level Agreements to deliver housing and support in partnership have been agreed with the three main Registered Providers in Peterborough and the Housing First team. Most encouragingly the first individual to access permanent accommodation through Housing First has moved in.

See appendix 1: Case Study – Becky

4.7 Culture and Leisure

4.7.1 Separate annual reports on the work of City Culture Peterborough and Vivacity (Peterborough Ltd) form part of the agenda for this meeting. In addition:

4.7.2 5 outdoor Table Tennis tables were installed in rural locations in 2021 following the urban and parks locations installed in 2019/20, Newborough, Eye, Thorney, Glinton and Barnack. Funding was provided through Table Tennis England, Viridor and Living Sport. Funding is also in place to support activation for the tables across the city in 2022.

4.7.3 Funding through the Parks Accelerator of £1m fund contributed towards the County Parks website, Cambs and Peterborough Parks. This will highlight the main points of interest at the main parks working with partners/stakeholders. Further funding from Future Parks has now been agreed to move this forward and will be live for spring 2022 working with Nene Park Trust, Vivacity, Living Sport and East Region Parks Forum. From 2022 Living Sport will take on the management and maintenance of the website for a further 2 years.

4.7.4 Football Foundation Local Football Facility Plans – in September 2019 plans for Peterborough were approved. Work had just started in January/February 2020 but has been slow since due to furloughed resource and delivery through FA and FF. This project is an opportunity for grant funding being available to be used for grass roots football and increased participation locally based on work carried out in the summer to identify improvements needed across the city. A formal development plan has now been signed off by PCC, FA and the Football Foundation, some projects could attract up to 50% funding. Work on this has just been restarted for Peterborough but match funding must be allocated for any to be delivered and must meet the FF criteria.

4.7.5 Working with the Lawn Tennis Association we are looking to install gated access controls at Central Park and Ifter Park tennis courts. Improvements will be made to the courts' condition, repainted and lined, new posts and nets. This will also see a new partnership with a coaching organisation to deliver formal and recreational sessions but will still offer tennis for free and affordable options. Other courts will still be available for pay and play tennis as they are now. Total investment between LTA and S106 funds would value over £100k to improve the facilities and offer.

4.7.6 Animation programme – Unlocking Peterborough has been delivering city centre culture and arts performances and activities for residents since September 2021. Funding from Welcome

Back Fund has been used to project manage and deliver local and national artists from street art to street performers and acrobatics to lighting and music activities. Finale in the 18th December, the steering group working with the Culture Strategy group and Alliance will explore further opportunities and funding to support this activity moving into 2022.

4.8 **Adult Learning and Skills**

4.8.1 Throughout the whole of the pandemic, City College Peterborough remained open, initially, to offer education to the children of key workers and our vulnerable young people. Alongside this, the staff undertook civic duties, including cooking daily fresh meals that were then delivered to our students eligible for free school meals, the homeless and vulnerable residents of Cross Keys Homes. By the end of lockdown, we were cooking and delivering 200 meals per day. Staff also provided reception at the hotels housing the homeless, gave carer cover in care homes and undertook work for the reablement service.

For our adults and young people not attending college, classes were moved online, and we also developed, alongside Cambridgeshire Skills and Cambridgeshire Libraries, a bespoke website for shielded residents called 'open new doors'.

During lockdown, we also undertook daily welfare calls to our students to offer help and support.

Although these were challenging times for delivering learning, within each of the 4 areas, over the past 18 months, we still managed to achieve all of our contractual targets and maintained some very high achievement rates.

4.8.2 Full and further details were provided in the annual report to Scrutiny Committee in November, which can be found at this link:

<https://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/documents/s45312/7.%20City%20College%20Peterborough%20Performance%20and%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 Consultation relevant to each aspect of the portfolio has been carried out as part of 'business as usual' operations.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 Following debate and discussion at committee, it is anticipated that Members will be fully informed as to the progress and priorities of the portfolio holder, and the portfolio holder will be able to consider suggestions that come forward during that debate.

7. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 Scrutiny committees in Peterborough receive an annual report from all portfolio holders, as part of their responsibility to scrutinise key areas of work.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 Not applicable.

9. **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial Implications

9.1 None

Legal Implications

9.2 None

Equalities Implications

9.3 None

Rural Implications

9.4 None

Carbon Impact Assessment

9.5 There are no direct carbon impacts relevant to this report as it sets out progress against the portfolio of the cabinet Member. As and when projects or policy changes emerge relevant to the portfolio, individual carbon impact assessments will be developed.

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 Appendix 1 – Case Study - Becky

APPENDIX 1 – CASE STUDY – BECKY

Becky's Story

Becky had been rough sleeping for 2 years in Peterborough before she was picked up by the Housing First team. She had a background of abusive relationships and experienced domestic violence. She led a street-based lifestyle that included challenges with substance misuse and sex working associated with funding her addiction.

Numerous attempts to house Becky in shared accommodation failed, often with evictions as a result of anti-social and aggressive behaviour towards support staff, housing officers and police; and an incident of arson.

At the time Housing First started working with Becky, she was considered to have no housing options open to her and described as too high risk to place in to housing due to past behaviours

Once aware of Becky's situation the Housing First Navigator, Nick, worked closely with the Police to ensure a comprehensive and detailed referral was made by Becky's Probation Officer. Nick began joint working with Probation, the Police, Becky's drug recovery worker at Aspire to better understand what she wanted and aspired to so that tailored support could be available to her when she was ready.

A bespoke multi-agency team formed around Becky, modelled after the Team Around Me approach, and moved forward to support her by listening to what she was saying, gathering evidence of risk, and placed Becky at the centre with choice and control over her support and how that would look for her. This quickly developed to include Fiona from CPFT.

Because of past experiences with being in care and challenges with the existing housing pathways, Becky remained suspicious and cautious of support services so taking time to develop a trusting relationship with her has been crucial. Demonstrating our advocacy on her behalf and listening to what she feels would work and what wouldn't work for her informed our approach.

The multi-agency partnership worked with Becky to look at the reasons she had been unable to manage at all in shared accommodation and soon identified that she would benefit most from having her own tenancy, which she was keen to gain and maintain. Becky described an awareness of her issues and a strong willingness to engage with drug recovery services as well as the right mental health services but felt entirely unable to prioritise this support whilst rough sleeping or in shared accommodation that often has strict conditions that she was not in a space to comply with for any significant length of time.

During the early period working with Nick, Becky started living with a member of the public who intervened when they saw her contemplating self-harm, sitting on the edge of a bridge. After about 5 weeks this relationship broke down and, with the support of partners, Nick enabled Becky to access self-contained temporary accommodation which gave a base and foundation for the support that was primed to work with her.

Fiona arranged for a mental health assessment that concluded that the incident or arson did not present a danger to anyone else but herself and should not be a barrier to her accessing housing. Together the team and Becky established that she was ready to engage with support and take the positive risk of moving forward with her own tenancy.

Working with smaller caseloads in the Housing First model, Nick was able to place greater focus on coordinating and linking with support that was available previously beforehand, but Becky was not in a position to access whilst on the street.

Having her own space, along with intensive support from a range of agencies that place her choice and control as a priority has given Becky greater stability and the opportunity to contemplate tackling her challenges and drive her own change.

Her temporary accommodation neighbourhood had significant environmental triggers for her, but despite this she made significant progress with all support. Support agencies around the city have noticed that Becky appears to be in the best space she has been in in years.

The positive steps that Becky has taken whilst in temporary accommodation demonstrated to a local housing association landlord that, if the continued ongoing intensive support was in place, Becky was in a good position to take the positive risk of accessing her own tenancy.

Her tenancy is just the beginning of discovering what she is capable of and Becky is now in a position to attempt to challenge herself and try to make changes that she has wanted to. Ambitions of meaningful education and work, and of establishing a closer relationship with her daughter are more tangible than ever.

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