

**Briefing Paper to the** Wyke Area Committee

19th January 2022

**Wards:**

Avenue, Bricknell and  
Central

## **Supported Accommodation Review Team and Hull Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

### **Briefing Paper of the Head of Strategy, Market Intervention and Growth**

#### 1. Purpose of the Paper and Summary

1.1. The purpose of this briefing paper is to update Members of Wyke Area Committee on the work of the Supported Accommodation Review Team (SART); the Supported Housing Needs Assessment undertaken as part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)-funded Supported Housing Overview Pilot (to attempt to improve the quality and value for money delivered by the supported housing sector); and provide an overview of Hull's Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (PHRSS).

#### 2. Supported Accommodation Review Team (SART) update

2.1. SART concluded the operational phase of DLUHC's Supported Housing Overview Pilot on 30 September 2021.

2.2. The additional funding allowed the SART to more than double the usual output of the Team during the 11 month Pilot. Housing inspections and Support Reviews completed exceeded the Pilot targets, with 150 housing inspections having been undertaken (Target: 120 inspections) of which 37 were in Avenues Ward and 26 in Central Ward, with subsequent housing enforcement action. Also, 207 Housing Benefit and Support Reviews have been undertaken (Target: 120) of which 29 were in Avenues Ward and 29 in Central Ward, followed by requirements to improve resident support where necessary.

2.3. Relationships with other Neighbourhoods and Housing Teams such as Private Housing, Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM), Homelessness,

Homesearch and Tenant Participation have also been formalised and strengthened whilst feeding into the service's strategy.

2.4. The additional Pilot activity has also strengthened joint working with associated services including Housing Benefits, Adult Social Care, Legal Service, Love Your Street, Neighbourhood Nuisance and external partners.

2.5. Completion of related project work will include a Scores on the Doors / Support Tracker, and specific work related to professionalisation of the sector including provision of free training for support Providers, standard support documentation, and work with residents to raise their expectations of supported accommodation.

2.6. These activities will have impacted positively on the lives of supported tenants, whose opinion we continue to seek through the continued work of the SART post Pilot. Our continued work with partner teams should also see a positive impact on communities and neighbourhoods as an improved supported housing sector leads to increased independence for tenants.

2.7. The SART has also worked closely with DLUHC/DWP as "Working Group" members alongside the other Pilot LAs, providing advice on Pilot outcomes which will be used to form National policy, by sharing sample documents and good practice information in the following three areas:

- New Providers (Gatekeeper Role)
- Conducting Support Reviews
- Formation of Multi-Disciplinary Review Teams

### 3. Supported Accommodation Needs Assessment

3.1. The Needs Assessment (NA) completed by Homeless Link, funded through the Supported Housing Overview Pilot, incorporates two distinct pieces of work; quantitative data collection and qualitative service user engagement. The Homelessness Flows Model is designed to capture what has happened in the most recent year, and then uses this as a scenario-modelling tool to speculate current levels of demand, the rate of acceptance/refusal for those attempting to access supported housing as well as future demand for supported housing.

3.2. The model was populated using statutory data provided by Housing Options (number of homeless presentations and duty stages), rough sleeping intelligence, housing benefit information (number of live claims where there is an exempt rate in payment) and the housing outcomes for these individuals (including where a referral made to a supported housing provider was not

accepted, an eviction took place, etc.).

3.3. This was complemented with a snapshot support needs survey; indicators of the need for Supported Housing were developed (based on sectoral definitions and previous Homeless Link work in this area); and support needs were categorised into six areas:

- Financial management
- Community engagement
- Family / personal relationships
- Personal capacity
- Health
- Achieving housing goals

It was assumed that to need supported housing an identified support need in at least two of these areas was required.

3.4. A survey was sent to all providers of supported housing – commissioned and non-commissioned services. It was also additionally completed for people with identified support needs who had been accepted as being owed a homelessness duty (prevention or relief) over a fixed two-week period; identified support needs were scored, and this was used to categorise people to high, medium and low support categories for modelling purposes.

3.5. The outcome of this modelling estimates demand for supported housing at the end of 5 years will be around 2362 people in a 12 month period, this is broadly in line with the current capacity of the existing supported housing 'system' (2318 people served per annum, including commissioned and non-commissioned provision). At the current turnover rates of existing units this equates to a need for 1570 units of support/supported housing in Hull by 2026 (with around 1300 units already being supplied in Hull in 2021 (commissioned and non-commissioned for single homeless adults). The non-commissioned supported housing sector in Hull provides around 1000 units of low-level supported/intensively managed housing.

3.6. Current system capacity is broadly in line with the observed need for supported housing in Hull.

The result of the support needs survey found that 57% of the 727 current supported housing service users (727 being the total number of responses received) met the criteria for needing supported housing. The result was not that different for commissioned units (62%) and non-commissioned units (54%). For the Housing Options survey the equivalent percentage was 58%. This suggests that some supported housing is being utilised by people who do not require housing related support (HRS).

3.7. As well as commissioning HRS services and specifying access routes to this support, we must better utilise existing non-commissioned provision with improved referral routes and improved move-on routes; this work is underway and part of the core function of the Supported Accommodation Review Team.

3.8. The prevalence of different levels of support needs were identified in the snapshot survey using specific criteria to score needs meaning that a determination could be made about the distribution of those who have low, medium or high needs.

Distribution based on commissioned provider-only responses:

Low 21% of total

Medium 49% of total

High 28% of total

As well as support level needs the Needs Assessment also determined the amount of individuals who would benefit from dispersed, rather than, congregate, supported accommodation.

3.9. Based on the Snapshot Survey it is estimated that up to 80% of supported housing demand should be met through a dispersed supported housing model; the main reason for this is the high level of vulnerability to exploitation among the cohort, combined with a high level of people who present a risk of exploitation clearly in congregate housing people from each of those groups are housed in close proximity with shared/communal spaces. HRS providers will be assisted to a) ensure that the funding received under a HRS contract is used solely for the provision of support and housing benefit is maximised where required to provide Intensive Housing Management (i.e. managing the risks posed between these groups in congregate housing) and b) ensure that their accommodation offer (if they have one as part of their delivery model) is able to provide sufficient separation/dispersal where this is necessary to mitigate the

risks posed by this co-location of vulnerable and exploitative service users.

3.10. Full Needs Assessment report can be found in **Appendix 3**.

#### 4. Preventing Homelessness Strategy

4.1. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that all local authorities have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district. Homelessness strategies must be renewed at least every five years and review, development and delivery of the PHRSS is driven by the Neighbourhoods and Housing Service Area and the multi-agency Preventing Homelessness Focus Group.

4.2. The PHRSS at **Appendix 1** (covering the period 2017 – 2021) was approved by Cabinet in April 2017 after comprehensive review of the evidence base and consultation with a range of partners and those with lived experience of homelessness.

4.3. During this period 2017 – 2021 there have been vast, fundamental changes to the way homelessness services are delivered and funded:

4.3.1. the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) was implemented on 1 April 2018 (requiring a fundamental shift in the way Local Authorities deliver their statutory homelessness functions);

4.3.2. government adopted the national Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 (underpinning a range of 12 – 18 month-long funding streams and with an overarching aim of halving 2017 rough sleeper numbers by 2022, eliminating rough sleeping by 2027), and;

4.3.3. the provisions within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 come into effect in the current year (the main one in the area of homelessness being in relation to the conducting of a local needs assessment, development of local DA Strategy and commissioning requisite Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation).

4.4. The PHRSS is underpinned by a live action plan (**Appendix 2**), overseen by the Strategy and Appraisals Team: as per Appendix 2, the vast majority of key actions included in the action plan are complete or have been superseded by new or emerging actions/needs. The Strategy is split into two themes - 'Improving access to housing and preventing homelessness' and 'Relieving homelessness and tackling rough sleeping'; the PHRSS action plan and this paper is broadly split into those two themes (though clearly the two are intrinsically linked).

4.5. One of the actions which was not fully completed was around communications and education campaigns to encourage those threatened

with homelessness to seek help earlier than might otherwise be the case; this will remain a key objective in any future PHRSS. **Table 1** below (which summarises some of the key measures included at Appendix 3) highlights the need for this given twice as many homelessness approaches come at relief stage (i.e. the household is homeless) as opposed to approaches when homelessness is threatened within the next 56 days but still potentially preventable. This metric – prevention versus relief approaches – is a key measure and one which we aim to swing in the other direction over the course of the next PHRSS.

	2019/20	%	2020/21	%
Total number of households assessed	3,295		2,672	
Total households assessed as owed a duty	2,969	90.1%	2,530	94.7%
Threatened with homelessness - Prevention duty owed	1,124	34.1%	817	30.6%
Of which: due to service of valid Section 21 Notice	220	6.7%	80	3.0%
Homeless - Relief duty owed	1,845	56.0%	1,713	64.1%
Not threatened with homelessness within 56 days - no duty owed	326	9.9%	142	5.3%

Table 1

4.6. The number of households assessed in 2019/20 (see Table 1) is higher than we would expect (impacted to some extent by the significant increase in approaches at the start of the first national lockdown); the 2020/21 figures appear to be closer to the numbers of cases the Council would expect to deal with over a 12 month period based on total presentations pre-HRA. The proportion of households seeking assistance at relief stage increased from 2019/20 – 2020/21 (i.e. this metric moved in the wrong direction); this is largely due to the overall number shrinking combined with the reduction in section 21 notices served (due to moratorium on notices/evictions implemented in 2020) and potentially a higher proportion of households ‘putting up’ with unsuitable housing arrangements – only seeking assistance if/when those arrangements became untenable and homelessness had occurred.

4.7. **Table 2** places Hull’s 2020/21 statutory homelessness data alongside that of statistical neighbour LAs; this shows that Hull sees more homelessness approaches per 1,000 of the population than any of the other areas, that we assess more

households in total than any of the other LAs and that the proportion of households who have a support need of any sort is around the middle of the comparator group. This latter statistic should be treated with extreme caution given it appears that there are significant differences between top/bottom LAs and perhaps suggests that different reporting methods/definitions are being used by different LAs.

	Hull	Stoke	M'brough	Blackpool	N.E. Lincs	Salford	Doncaster	Rotherham
<b>No. households assessed</b>	2,672	1,423	987	1,178	1,304	2,592	1,664	1,547
<b>No. households assessed per 1,000</b>	10.24	5.56	7.13	8.51	8.15	10.20	5.35	5.84
<b>No. households owed a duty</b>	2,530	1,383	986	1,105	1,275	2,576	1,662	1,537
<b>% owed duty</b>	94.7%	97.2%	99.9%	93.8%	97.8%	99.4%	99.9%	99.4%
<b>Total households with support need(s) owed a duty</b>	1168	603	552	859	726	324	1330	665
<b>% with support needs</b>	46.2%	43.6%	56.0%	77.7%	56.9%	12.6%	80.0%	43.3%

Table 2

- 4.8. The second theme in the current PHRSS is largely framing objectives associated with relieving rough sleeping. Rough sleeping is the most acute form of homelessness – unlike the majority of homelessness in Hull (which is largely about helping people to find secure housing) rough sleeping is a more complex issue spanning health (physical and mental health), housing, social care need, substance misuse, offending behaviour and a history of trauma. The latter section of Appendix 2 details the range of activity undertaken in order to relieve rough sleeping in Hull.
- 4.9. A recent data review (covering the same period as the statistics in previous sections) found that 182 individuals slept rough over a two year period and there were 252 instances of rough sleeping i.e. some individuals experienced multiple rough sleeping instances over the two year period; seven of the 182 slept rough for that entire period (two of these remain on the streets), the median number of days spent sleeping rough was 25 days and, on average, men spend a third longer sleeping rough than women.
- 4.10. In order to determine rough sleeper numbers in the city (and the scale of the issue), and provide the help and support they need, we commission a rough sleeper outreach service, provided by Emmaus Hull and East Riding. This team works 365 days a year; any member of the public can notify them if they find someone sleeping rough (via their own website/phone or through StreetLink), this intelligence complements the team completing their own 'rounds' of known hotspots. In addition to this live data which informs day to day and service referral activity there are regular, formal counts of rough sleepers.
- 4.11. Ultimately the measure used to determine the levels of rough sleeping in England is a single night count – usually carried out in the early hours of an October/November morning – and which is completed in every LA area. The numbers of rough sleepers in Hull grew from 2010 (seven) to 2018 (28) – this tracks the general increase in rough sleeping in England over the same period; after this (and following significant grant funding via the DLUHC enabling some of the activity summarised above and included at Appendix 3) the direction of travel has been downwards with a current rough sleeper figure in the region of between 11 and 14 on any one night. Again, this decrease is mirrored across England and observed more prominently in those areas in receipt of significant rough sleeping investment from DLUHC (across all funding streams this additional funding is in the region of £600m+ per annum); Chart 1 shows the estimated number of people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn in England since 2010.

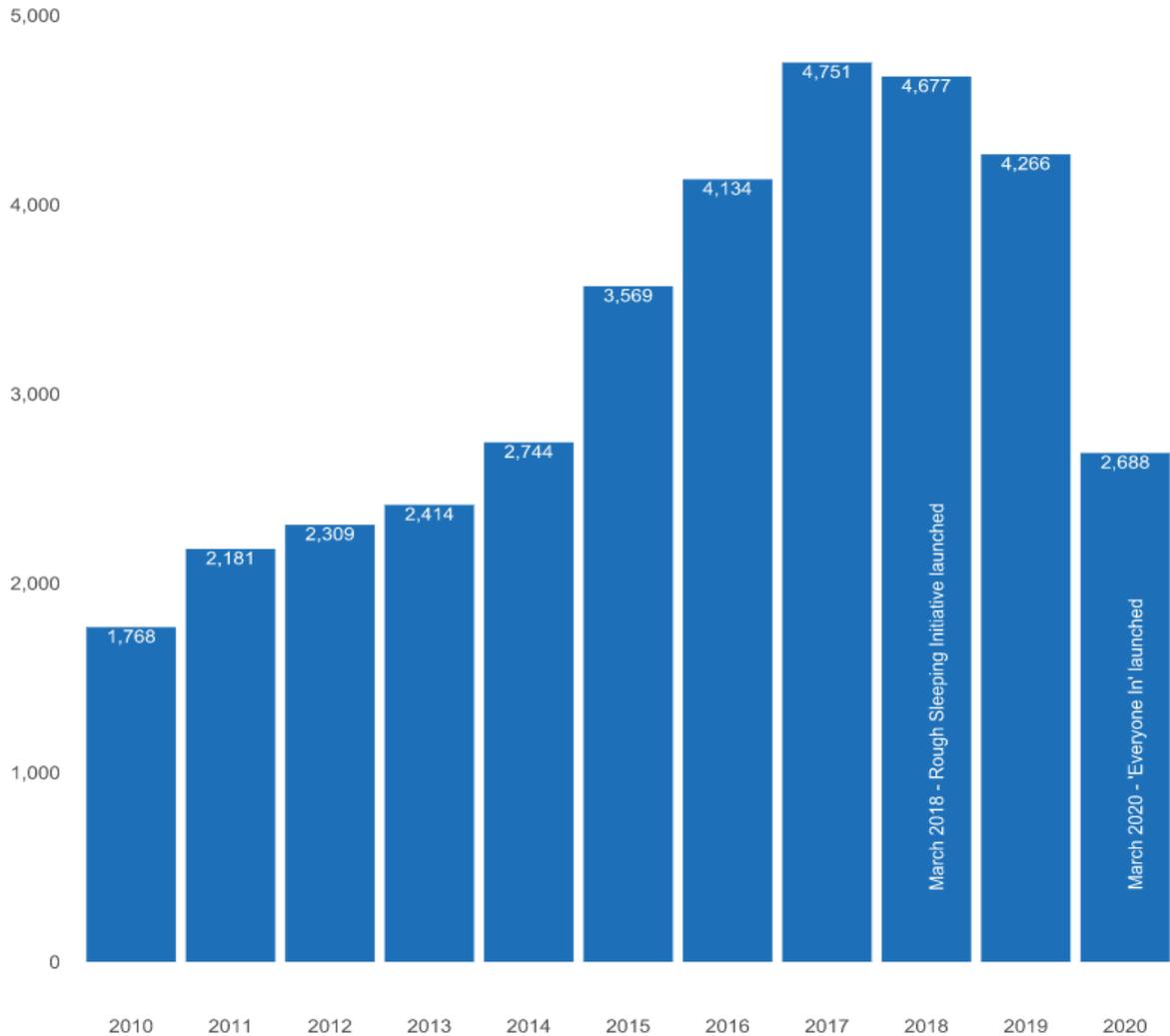


Chart 1

4.12. For Hull-only, Chart 2 provides official rough sleeper counts the same time period; Hull has at least halved the number of rough sleepers seen during a single night count from 2017 to 2021 and thus achieved the target set out in government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy (setting out a halving of numbers between 2017 – 2022) which underpins the funding the Council has received.

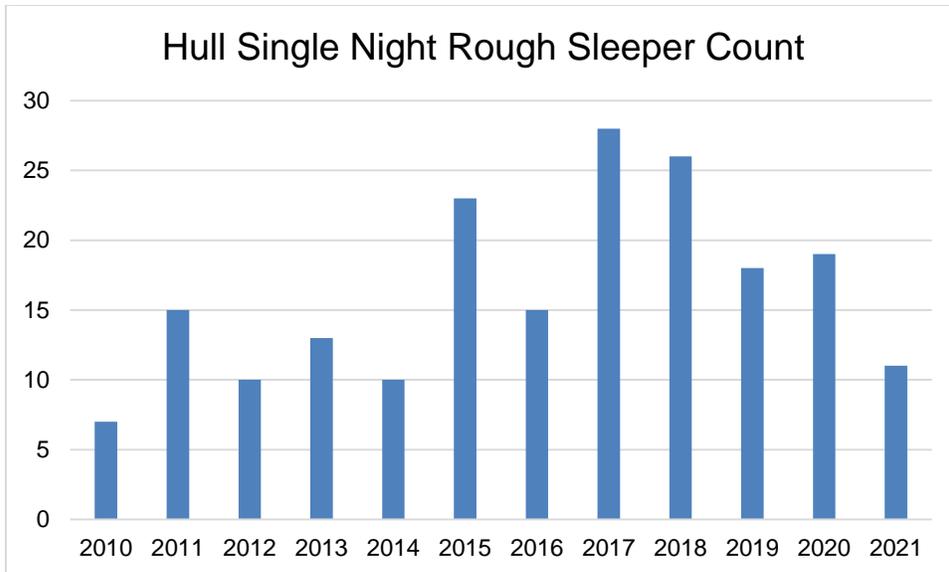


Chart 2

4.13. Locally, the focus over the last four years – in response to multiple government funding grants – has been on rough sleeping, supported accommodation and intensive support for those in most acute need i.e. the latter of these two priorities. To this end, the year on year increase in rough sleeper numbers has been arrested and, despite the impact of the Covid pandemic, numbers are decreasing and we expect this trend to continue

4.14. The current strategy features heavily the as-was impending welfare reforms/potential impact, introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (both now implemented) and identified some key actions for dealing with rough sleeping/entrenched homelessness (which are now largely implemented due to the increased levels of homelessness grant funding being received in Hull). It has largely cemented the links between homelessness and health sectors with the CCG being a key partner (CCG commissioning/supporting all of the recent activity in respect of recent grant funding awards) and a myriad of health/homelessness initiatives

4.15. In terms of key/issues requiring a strategic response, and in response to what has been set out in all of the previous sections, the broad outline (themes and summary of the activity therein) of the developing PHRSS for 2022 onwards is as follows:

**1. Housing supply, access and pathways**

The Hull City Council housing ‘front door’ and access to Registered Providers, Private Rented Sector and other forms of housing. Developing new, affordable housing generally and some of different/innovative types (e.g. shared accommodation, modern methods of construction).

**2. Homelessness advice and helping people to help themselves**

Delivery of core prevention and relief duties according to the Homelessness Reduction and Housing Acts – including developing a Domestic Abuse Hub in the Options Team – as well as broader training/education about housing and homelessness for residents and partner organisations. The provision of tenancy sustainment and good quality preventative support, the development of independent housing advice and our online offering.

**3. Supported Accommodation**

Ensuring the sufficient supply of good quality supported accommodation via the Supported Accommodation Review Team function, commissioning of housing related support (HRS) and driving up standards and increasing professionalisation across the sector.

**4. Youth and Family Homelessness**

Delivery of core prevention and relief duties according to the Homelessness Reduction and Housing Acts and, for 16 and 17 year olds, the Children Act; continuing to develop joint protocols between homelessness and children's services to ensure statutory/regulatory compliance and the delivery of aspirational housing services and options for younger people. Working closely with Children and Families Services to ensure that housing/accommodation plays its role in prevention of crisis and children coming into care.

**5. Rough sleeping and trauma**

Further developing rough sleeping initiatives, embedding the Making Every Adult Matter approach and delivering the Changing Futures/Trauma informed city programme (to ensure that rough sleepers with very complex needs are able to have their needs fully met).

- 4.16. Work will continue towards delivering the current PHRSS overarching priorities and actions detailed within the Action Plan until the new PHRSS is fully developed and adopted. This work is subject to ongoing review, partnership development work and scrutiny at the multi-agency Preventing Homelessness Focus Group.

4.17. The new PHRSS will be adopted in early 2022 and be subject to the normal Council decision making process; members of the Commission are welcome to make suggestions/comments on what might need to be included in the next iteration of the PHRSS today but will also review the document as part of that decision making process early in the new year.

5. Housing Related Support (HRS) recommissioning

5.1. Housing Related Support is currently being recommissioned with contracts due to be awarded in April 2022; the Council aims to reduce the number of service users in large-scale supported accommodation settings by specifying a cap (65 from November 2023, 45 by November 2024) in the number of service users to be supported in any one setting. These new contracts will go live on 1 November 2022.

5.2. Area Committees and ward members will be updated on any changes to HRS provision in their areas/wards as we move into and beyond the current commissioning exercise; given the tendering opportunity is just about to be published (at the time of writing) it is not yet possible to discuss what sort of provision/delivered from which property/ies will come forward via the open tender exercise.

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Officer Interests: None

Background Documents: - None