

HOUSING AND HOW IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE HEALTH AGENDA

Health Liaison Board - 8 February 2017

Report of Chief Officer Communities & Business

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report updates Members on the work of this Council's Housing and Homelessness advice services and how this work contributes to the health agenda.

This report supports the Key Aim of safe and caring communities and healthy environment

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Lowe

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Recommendation to Health Liaison Board: that Members note this report.

Reason for recommendation: This Council has a statutory duty to provide housing and homelessness advice. By integrating Housing and Health together this Council provides holistic preventative services, based on individual needs, to address their health, wellbeing and housing.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Under the Housing Act 1996, this Council is responsible for delivering homelessness prevention and housing advice services. As part of this work, this Council seeks to manage to demand for social and affordable housing, deliver incentives to better engage with private sector landlords and, through the work of the Housing Standards Team ensure residential properties do not have an adverse effect on health.
- 2 Private Sector Housing has a duty to take appropriate enforcement action when it considers a Category 1 hazard exists in a property. Category 1 hazards are those defects which often have the most significant effects upon a residents health and safety such as inadequate heating, damp and mould growth.

- 3 Disabled Facility Grants are a statutory grant providing adaptations to an applicants property to overcome obstacles in accessing basic facilities, works commonly undertaken include stairlifts and flush floor showers.
- 4 The 2015 Kings Fund report 'The District Council contribution to Public Health' states 'that district councils are in a good position to influence many factors of good health through their key functions'. This Council recognises that early intervention and prevention services are vital to support local people, particularly those who are vulnerable or in need of additional support.
- 5 Being homeless is associated with an array of poor physical and mental health needs, with 73% of homeless people reporting to have a physical health condition and 45% having a diagnosed mental health problem.
- 6 The quality of someone's home has a substantial impact on their health; a warm, dry and safe home is associated with better health. Poor housing conditions are estimated to cost the NHS £2 billion every year due to the detrimental impact on health.
- 7 This Council works with key partners including Kent Public Health Team, GP Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), housing associations, health and social care providers and the voluntary sector to deliver health and housing interventions against the priorities in the Sevenoaks District Community Plan.

Sevenoaks District Integration of Housing and Health

- 8 The Portfolio Holder has integrated the communities, housing and health teams within the Council to have a greater impact on improving the health and wellbeing of local residents through the delivery of targeted preventative interventions.
- 9 This work aims to address the wider determinants of health such as housing, debt, employment, training, mental wellbeing, ill health prevention, local environment and social isolation.
- 10 This Council offers a holistic approach to wellbeing through its HERO advice service which provides one-to-one appointments to support people into employment and training, reduce debt to avoid evictions and improve the quality of life of those in greatest need or affected by a life crisis.
- 11 The HERO, Housing and Healthy Living Officers are working together to deliver new integrated services to support people with better access to local services and advise on behavioural and lifestyle changes. Some examples of preventative interventions being delivered by this Council through the integrated Housing and Health team include:
 - The HERO Advisers continue to provide advice surgeries for a number of key partners including West Kent Housing Association, Dartford Borough Council and the Sevenoaks and Edenbridge Children's Centres managed

by Kent County Council. Since January 2016, the HERO Advice Service based at Children's Centres has had a total of 146 customers referred for the HERO Advice Service. Some of the key outcomes show that the HERO Adviser has supported customers to reduce debt totalling over £37,600 which has had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of families, as well as preventing homelessness and supporting people to access local mental health and other support services.

- A new six month pilot initiative from January 2017 will work in partnership with St John's Medical Centre to provide patients registered with the practice access to one-to-one advisors to support them with lifestyle, housing and wellbeing advice. This pilot will be evaluated with the participant outcomes and feedback determining future models for delivering targeted holistic advice services as part of an integrated Health Hub.
 - The HERO Advice Service also delivers targeted and tailored support for ex-armed forces personnel and their families. To date, the Adviser has supported seven ex-servicemen to access local specialist trauma and mental wellbeing support services, housing options, found financial support to reduce debt, secured retraining, employment and volunteering opportunities.
 - To improve health outcomes by reducing the length of stay in acute and community hospitals, this Council is providing housing related support to Hospital Discharge Co-ordinators. This work assists with earlier discharges through targeted housing and wellbeing initiatives. These include providing home adaptations to older people through the Disabled Facilitated Grant (DFG) and supporting people to access local voluntary sector support services to reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing.
- 12 In December 2016, this Council secured additional two year funding from the DCLG for a SuperHERO service to further upskill HERO Advisors to have a greater understanding of health and wellbeing through signposting and advice as part of the national Making Every Contact Count (MECC) initiative. This work will commence in early 2017 through targeted community outreach advice services in partnership with GP surgeries, Children Centres and housing associations.
- 13 Work continues to evaluate outcomes and performance data to demonstrate the positive impacts on people's housing, health and wellbeing through service delivery using this integrated model. This Council continues to seek other external funding to be able to offer more targeted preventative services for those most in need including people at risk of homelessness and ill health including those affected by mental health conditions.
- 14 Further information on this work will be presented to Members at the Health Liaison Board.

