

UPDATE ON TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AND EMERGENCY PLANNING PROVISION

Housing and Health Advisory Committee - 12 June 2018

Report of	Chief Officer Communities & Business Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
Status:	For Information
Also Considered by	Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee - 26 June 2018
Key Decision:	No

Executive Summary: This report updates Members on this Council's responsibilities for emergency and temporary accommodation as part of the Corporate Emergency Plan and the housing advice and homelessness service

This report supports the Key Aim of providing the right support at the right time, a safer place to live, work and travel and delivering a sustainable economy

Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Roddy Hogarth Cllr. Michelle Lowe
Contact Officer(s)	Alex Dawson, Ext. 7268 Hayley Brooks, Ext. 7272

Recommendation to Housing and Health Advisory Committee:

Members are asked to note the report.

Reason for recommendation: This Council is responsible for providing emergency and temporary accommodation as part of the response to a major emergency incident and to those in priority need as part of the housing advice and homelessness service.

Introduction and Background

- 1 This Council has a legal obligation and a duty of care to provide emergency and temporary accommodation in certain circumstances in response to the needs of local people.

- 2 The main legal duties for this type of accommodation are:
 - a) Major Emergency Plan including;
 - Those who have been evacuated and unable to return for a period of time as set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and;
 - Those with a priority need for accommodation as they have been made homeless or threatened with homelessness as a result of an emergency such as flood, fire or other disaster” as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (Section 189 (1)(d));
 - b) Those who are legally homeless includes;
 - Those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and have been as eligible and in priority need, as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (Part 7), Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
- 3 This Council has a planned approach for providing urgent and temporary accommodation to local people in emergency situations at their time of need. Officers are trained to assess and respond as required as part of the Major Emergency Plan and housing advice and homelessness service, which includes when and how this will be provided.

Major Emergency Plan

- 4 As part of the delivery a local and national framework of emergency planning and response, the Council works in partnership with a number of other agencies and organisations as a member of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF).
- 5 The KRF has in place, a number of overarching and multi-agency plans including the Kent and Medway Evacuation and Shelter Plan, which the Council’s own Major Emergency Plan and specific departmental plan for Temporary Shelter and Homelessness in the Event of an Evacuation sit under.
- 6 The Council is responsible for the provision and running of rest centres which are intended to provide basic care at short notice for up to 48 hours.
- 7 SDC has designated the three Sensio leisure centres at Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge for use as rest centres, each of which have the capacity to hold about 300 people.
- 8 A number of Council employees have volunteered to be rest centre managers and the council is currently providing a bespoke training programme to either refresh or train new volunteers.
- 9 As local authorities and the various agencies need to fully test and exercise their plans, a full exercise, around a Grenfell Tower scenario will be undertaken by the Council this autumn.

Housing Advice and Homelessness Service

- 10 As part of this Council’s housing services, trained officers assist and advise people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, in line with the relevant legislation, in order to try and prevent homelessness and provide advice on housing options. This includes a 24/7 out-of-hours service provided by Officers.
- 11 If homelessness is not successfully prevented, this Council may owe the main housing duty to those who are eligible. In this instance, Officers will take a homeless application and assess their eligibility and priority need for emergency or temporary accommodation. The assessment will include whether the individual is in priority need of accommodation and not homeless intentionally, as defined by the housing and homelessness legislation set out in paragraph 2.
- 12 This Council works with private providers to access emergency bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation in and outside the District. This type of accommodation is nightly paid and used to alleviate homelessness when the need is urgent and immediate.
- 13 Local partnerships with West Kent Housing and Moat Homes enables this Council to access housing association (HA) properties for temporary accommodation for those assessed as in need. This accommodation may be occupied until a more permanent housing solution has been found, such as they have been housed via the Social Housing Register or supported into a private rented property.
- 14 The demand of this type of accommodation is on the increase, in line with national homelessness data trends. The annual data for this type of accommodation is set out below:

	B&B Nightly Paid Accommodation		HA Temporary Accommodation	
	No. of customers	Total Number of Nights	No. of customers	Total Number of Nights
2017/18	77	2284	82	18,993
2016/17	44	964	73	19,338

- 15 This Council continues to work proactively with providers, partners and customers to identify new housing opportunities, prevent homelessness at the earliest stage and to find people reasonable and suitable properties based on their housing needs.

Key Implications

Financial

This Council received a Flexible Homelessness Support Grant in 2017/18 of £155,434 and £178,842 in 2018/19. This funding covers the cost of providing emergency and temporary accommodation for homelessness services.

Through a County wide Mutual Aid Agreement, the Council and its staff may help other LA's in the event on an emergency elsewhere.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Providing emergency and temporary accommodation forms part of this Council legal duties as part of emergency planning and housing/homelessness service. Full details of the relevant legislations are set out in paragraph 2 above.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

To update Members on this Council's legal responsibilities for providing emergency and temporary accommodation as part of the emergency planning arrangements and the housing advice and homelessness service.

Appendices None

Background Papers:

[The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

[KRF Pan Kent Strategic Emergency Response Framework](#)

The Kent and Medway Evacuation and Shelter Plan

[SDC Major Emergency Plan](#)

[SDC Major Emergency Plan - Housing and Homelessness Plan](#)

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