

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 24th SEPTEMBER 2020

REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE HOUSING SERVICES PARTNERSHIP

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE HOUSING

SERVICES PARTNERSHIP

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update members of the Health & Wellbeing Board on the work of the Leicestershire Housing Services Partnership (HSP) and the work of the Chief Housing Officers Group (CHOG)

Link to the local Health and Care System

2. Housing in Leicestershire is the statutory responsibility of the seven district councils. The HSP was formed as a partnership in recognition that the impact of poor and inadequate housing which reaches wider than just the statutory agencies. The Chief Housing Officers Group (CHOG) includes those of Leicester City and Rutland.
3. The Lightbulb (Home) Project was realised as a consequence of the Housing Offer to Health report commissioned from the Chartered Institute of Housing by the HSP in 2013.
4. The Lightbulb (Hospital) project is funded fully by health and supports hospital discharge by finding suitable housing solutions for patients in acute settings.

Recommendation

5. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the report.

Background

6. The COVID pandemic has meant that the CHOG has been focussed on Homelessness and, delivering the agenda around Rough Sleepers and the 'Everyone In' initiative. The Housing Services Partnership has met relatively infrequently in the past few months and, the meetings have been used to update wider partners on Homelessness position to work collaboratively to source accommodation and, to gather intelligence on the impact of the Covid pandemic on wider housing issues such as rent arrears, Anti-Social Behaviour incidents and increased demand. This has included updates from the CAB Leicestershire and the DWP.
7. Throughout the pandemic homelessness levels have been monitored. Between April 5th to 23rd August there were 2458 new homelessness applications (1116 of these

were in the City and 1342 in the County), 215 for Domestic Abuse (71 in the City). 421 new rough sleepers reported (156 in the City), 228 people are still accommodated due to COVID (139 of these are City).

8. There have been 1358 people moved into settled accommodation (587 of these are City) to date.
9. Rent arrears overall are increasing and, with evictions suspended until September it is anticipated that there will be a further increase to numbers of homeless as court action recommences.
10. A County/Rutland bid for the Next Steps funding to support those still accommodated through COVID has been submitted to government for approximately £600,000. The City have put in their own bid to this funding stream.

Hoarding

11. As previously reported, Hoarding has been an escalating problem within communities across the County and, this has impacted many partners as well as leading to delays in hospital discharge. 'Clean & clear' is still the highest reason for referrals to the Lightbulb HET team. All district Councils have agreed to dedicate an element of their DFG budget totalling £315, 000 to address this issue in a consistent way across the County.
12. In summary, the pilot will develop the following:-
 - An understanding of hoarding demand across all services and associated costs and resources needed to help manage the increasing demand.
 - A common hoarding needs assessment for Leicestershire residents –capitalising on opportunities; to provide efficient, cost effective service delivery through service redesign; to create more effective working practices, and improved processes to create more timely and appropriate solutions to aid hoarded households.
 - A broader, targeted offer of support - Providing a pragmatic response to a wide range of complex issues that contribute to hoarding including therapy work alongside practical support, and helping to prevent such work being required in the future.

Lightbulb

13. The support from the Lightbulb team for people at home has continued throughout the pandemic Housing Support Coordinators have made over 800 calls to residents across Leicestershire, The Lightbulb Occupational Therapists and Housing Support Coordinators have adapted to ensure all customers waiting for a physical assessment have received a call with advice of the current restraints and have provided short term support. Staff have trialled and rolled out telephone assessments, resulting in over 200 referrals being resolved between March and June.

14. This is reflected in Lightbulb having only 22 cases waiting to start the Disabled Facilities Grant process of a total of 427 cases that are being worked on.
15. It is anticipated that these issues and the difficulties experienced with building contractors and building suppliers will increase Disabled Facilities Grant end to end times going forward and underspend of the Disabled Facilities Grant funding. As at the end of Quarter 2, DFG spend was £302,175 and commitment against spend equated to £799,85. The budget available for 2020/21 is £3,604,459
16. The HET team has continued to operate and following a successful pilot and subsequent business case an extension of the HET service into the Rehabilitation wards at the Bradgate Mental Health Unit, was agreed on 24th August until the end of the financial year 20/21 with a potential of extending this service into the following financial year

Resource Implications

17. There are no resource implications within this report.

Officer to Contact

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