

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**6 September 2018**

### **COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LAWRENCE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING**

For the period 19 July to 1 September 2020

#### **Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Home Choice**

There were 986 live applications for July  
149 High band  
304 Medium band  
529 Low band  
4 Emergency

There were 126 new/ change of circumstances applications

18 properties were let

##### **Next Steps Accommodation Programme**

The Council submitted a funding application on 20<sup>th</sup> August for funding to support efforts to accommodate people who had been accommodated during the 'Get Everyone in' the government led drive at the start of the Pandemic to get people off the streets. Two proposals have been made- the first involves the leasing of a block of ten flats in the town by partner housing association Broadland Housing who will manage the accommodation for people leaving emergency accommodation or supported housing. There will be dedicated support for those accommodated, with accommodation provided for the medium term until more permanent accommodation can be secured. This proposal will help release the emergency and supported housing for those in crisis now including those who may otherwise be rough sleeping.

The second proposal is an initiative for people who have higher support needs and may have had a pattern of rough sleeping over a number of years. Under a model called 'Housing First' it is planned that a number of units of accommodation (up to six) will be acquired in the next six months with a high level of support provided for a medium/ long term. *'Housing First is an internationally recognised based model of housing and support for those with*

*chronic housing, health and social care needs. Housing First has been shown to be effective in supporting people with histories of street homelessness, or other types of homelessness where contact with services has been unsuccessful in breaking the cycle of instability'. This will focus on the most complex/entrenched rough sleepers and will provide valuable resource in terms of intensive support, ending their rough sleeping and sustaining accommodation.*

Announcements on the bids are expected in late September.

### **No Homelessness in Norfolk**

A new partnership is being formed to deal with housing related support. The Pandemic saw the 'Everyone in' effort and huge effort in accommodating the homeless. It is imperative that efforts are maximised to ensure that those people with high support needs get the help they need to maintain accommodation. There is a genuine danger that without appropriate support the progress made could unravel, with people losing accommodation and returning to the street. The new partnership aims to pool resources to seek funding and seek and secure funding from other parts of the public sector including central government. The new partnership will recognise that accommodation and support arrangements are delivered locally, but that working together on funding and commissioning of housing related support can bring significant benefits.

### **The Winter Night shelter**

Although the operating arrangements have not been finalised the Winter Night shelter plan to open from a new venue at St John's Vicarage. It is likely that because of social distancing requirements it will have a significantly reduced capacity, however, the charity is determined to ensure it can provide a safe bed for the night for those in desperate need who have no other options. We are currently awaiting further guidance from Government regarding the safe opening of night shelters.

### **Reid Way**

Broadland Housing Association has submitted a planning application for 7 self-contained, single storey modular units on Council owned land at Reid Way. The units will be used primarily as temporary accommodation for families. Subject to receiving planning consent the units could be completed as soon as March 2021. This project aligns with the objectives set out in the Councils Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2024.

Given the increase in homelessness due to the economic and social impacts of Covid 19 along with potential further increases with the lifting of the moratorium on evictions, the project has been accelerated to provide much needed family accommodation.

The Planning application can be viewed on the planning portal using ref 20/01274/F.

### **Moratorium on evictions**

In March Government announced a suspension of social and private rent evictions until August. This has recently been extended until 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020. At the end of this period Landlords and tenants are expected to work together to come up with affordable repayment plans for anyone with rent arrears. This is an area that we continue to monitor closely as there is potential for significant increased homelessness with the social and economic impact of Covid-19.

### **Meetings Attended**

Full council  
Cabinet  
Cabinet Sittings  
Meetings and Conversations with Officers  
Portfolio Meetings