

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 21 JUNE 2022 FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2022

EC74: SUPPORT IN SAFE ACCOMMODATION FOR NORFOLK 2021/2024

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The Housing Strategy Officer presented the report which presented the Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk 2021/2024. She explained that the Council would be asked to endorse the Strategy which followed on from the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act. She outlined the requirements the Act, the duties placed on Local Authorities and the key aspects of the Strategy.

The Chair thanked the Housing Strategy Officer for her presentation and invited questions and comments as follows.

In response to a question from Councillor Bambridge regarding gaps in accommodation, the Housing Strategy Officer explained that the Council was working with Norfolk County Council to look at accommodation options, with some new accommodation recently being made available in West Norfolk. Councillor Bambridge commented that she understood that the Dogs Trust could assist in finding foster placements for Dogs if people needed to leave their homes because of Domestic Abuse. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that work to ensure that a wide range of organisations were working collaboratively was being looked at.

In response to questions from Councillor Moriarty, the Housing Strategy Officer explained that the Domestic Abuse Act recognised victims of Domestic Abuse as a priority need for homelessness. She also referred to the grants available from Government. Some of the grant was being used for pilot projects for new accommodation in West Norfolk and she explained that the funding could be used for Capital and Revenue projects. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that the Council participated in the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, which brought together support services for victims and survivors. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that there had been an increase in dementia cases and elderly abuse and work was being undertaken with Adult Social Care and Adult Social Services.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and made reference to the Norfolk County Council Community Safety Scheme and IDAS. She asked what would be done to support children and what services were available for perpetrators. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that Norfolk County Council were the lead organisation on this and the Strategy ensured that organisations were working collaboratively to provide the necessary support.

Councillor Kemp also made reference to support for people with disabilities and high dependency and the Housing Strategy Officer explained that flexible accommodations would be looked at on a case by case basis.

Councillor Rust addressed the Panel under Standing Order 23 and asked if any data was available on financial difficulties and the breakdown on different people who required support. She also asked why some data for West Norfolk was missing in the Strategy. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that data was now available for West Norfolk and would be updated in the annual data report.

Councillor de Whalley raised concern on the lack of data and asked what support was available for people moving out of safe accommodation. The Housing Strategy Officer explained that the lack of data had been recognised and work was on going to ensure data collection was robust. This also linked with the accreditation programme work. She also provided information on those moving out of safe accommodation and the demand on social housing. She explained that all cases were different and some people wanted to move back home, but a range of options would be explored.

Councillor Squire referred to the support available for people who wanted to stay in their own homes and the Housing Strategy Officer referred to the information in the report which listed a range of support services. She agreed to circulate this list to all Councillors.

The Chair asked for the Panel to be kept up to date as appropriate.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the Safe in Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk 2021/2024 being presented to the Councils Cabinet.

The Panel supported and recognised the Councils membership on the Norfolk Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

The Panel supported the Housing Department in undertaking the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation over the next 2-3 years.