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| Subject: | Temporary Accommodation Evictions Annual Report | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 22 September 2021 | | |
| Report of: | Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities | | |
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| Ward(s) affected: | All | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 Since June 2017 an annual report has been presented to Housing Committee, highlighting the numbers of placements ended by the contracted providers of Emergency Accommodation over the year.
- 1.2 This report outlines a review of placements ended over the past year and a comparison to previous year/s. The previous regular annual report of Emergency Accommodation placements ended by the Emergency Accommodation providers was presented to Housing Committee on 16th September 2020. The significant impact of the pandemic on the Housing service, including accommodating more than 800 people who had been rough sleeping or in congregate accommodation and those at risk of rough sleeping as part of the 'Everyone In' response to the Covid-19 emergency should be noted. Any comparison between ending of Emergency Accommodation placements by the provider over the past year and previous years should be viewed in this context.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee notes the performance and end of placements by Emergency Accommodation providers reported.
- 2.2 That Housing Committee note that 2020/21 was an exceptional year in terms of both client placements and the complexity of client need.
- 2.3 That Housing Committee acknowledges the continuing efforts of staff within the service, our commissioned services and contractors to maintain tenancies throughout the Covid 19 period.
- 2.4 That Housing Committee notes that the forthcoming emergency accommodation re-procurement of contracts (unavoidably delayed due to Covid 19), seeks to enhance tenancy support and sustainment of emergency accommodation.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Housing Committee requested a report into the evictions from Emergency Accommodation which was considered in June 2017. It was requested that the position be kept under review and an update report provided yearly. This report sets out the findings of the analysis of placements ended by the provider over the past year. It focuses on emergency/short term accommodation only and not longer-term leased accommodation.

3.2 Total placements / number of placements ended by the provider:

| Period | Number of placements* | Number of placements ended | Percentage of those accommodated where accommodation ended by provider |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 01/04/17 to 21/03/18 | 996 | 33 | 3.3 |
| 01/04/18 to 31/03/19 | 1040 | 39 | 3.7 |
| 01/04/19 to 31/03/20 | 1706 | 185 | 11 |
| 01/04/20 to 31/03/21 | 1581 | 253** | 16 |

*total number of placements made and not the total of different households accommodated, excluding Care & Protect clients

** includes 46 placements ending in eviction, subsequently reaccommodated and evicted from second / third property

The number of placements and placements ended increased significantly in 2019/20 and whilst placements reduced slightly in 2020/21, the ending of accommodation and percentage against placements remains high.

A more detailed breakdown is provided in Appendix 1.

By way of context, the majority of households maintain their accommodation and move on positively, including in 2020/21: 179 moved to social housing; over 120 moved to new private sector tenancies; 60 moved into supported accommodation; around 35 households were reconnected or referred to accommodation in the area they had a local connection; and 34 family reconciliations.

3.3 Reasons for the end of placements in 2020/21:

| Reason for placement ending | Client numbers |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Abandoned | 5 |
| Arrested / sectioned | 15 |
| ASB | 63 |
| Physical assault | 15 |
| Damage | 28 |
| Unauthorised visitors | 22 |
| Substance Misuse inc. dealing | 58 |
| Theft | 11 |
| Threats to staff or clients | 36 |
| | 253 |

- 3.4 Prior to a placement ending, providers have to issue warnings to residents and to inform our Welfare Officer team so that we can work with those residents to try and resolve issues.

Evictions are always the last resort and are undertaken once council staff have been notified and all avenues to sustain the placement have been exhausted.

Below are some examples of the reasons for evictions:

- Swearing shouting, barricading self into other resident's room, tampering with fire detector.
- Violent and aggressive behaviour, assault on other resident (police attended).
- Fights with another resident, police called twice.
- Damages to property including ripping out light fixture.
- Heavily intoxicated, homophobic comments, punched staff member, arrested.
- Threatened to burn down hotel.
- Assaulted another resident, visitor violations, smoking cannabis on the premises, antagonising and aggressive behaviour.
- Drinking alcohol on premises, having other residents in room, complaints about music and noise, then a row with residents when intoxicated.
- Threatened other residents with knife.
- Evicted due to drugs and drink in room, bringing people into the hotel and stealing.
- Extensive malicious damages.
- Drugs, drinking, serious threats to staff, involved in an altercation in a group more than once and spat in another resident's face.

- 3.5 Of the 253 placements ended by the accommodation provider:

144 placements were ended by 'spot purchase' providers or hotels procured as part of the 'Everyone In' initiative in response to Covid. These hotels have both onsite support workers and a security presence.

109 were ended by contracted providers (emergency accommodation block booked providers).

152 residents were subsequently re-accommodated, 6 declined further offers of accommodation, 1 was recalled to prison.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 During 2019/20 and 2020/21 emergency short term accommodation was provided under 'Everyone In' Government guidance at short notice for rough sleepers, those at risk of rough sleeping, and those in congregate accommodation due to Covid-19. Under the circumstances alternative options could not be considered.
- 4.2 During this time additional welfare officers were recruited to provide support to people placed into emergency accommodation. In addition, commissioned

support providers for rough sleeping services provided support for higher needs clients placed into the Care and Protect hotel accommodation.

- 4.3 The No Second Night Out (NSNO) accommodation offer has been developed and re-tendered to provide additional bedspaces for rough sleepers to meet those needs going forward and reduce the need for emergency accommodation.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Engagement is carried out through the Temporary Accommodation Action Group which comprises current and former residents, various support agencies, council members and other homelessness services. Since the start of the current Covid 19 emergency, this has been challenging and we are considering how we can safely achieve this going forwards.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The council's response to the Covid 19 pandemic resulted in short term emergency accommodation being made available to a large group of clients with a variety of care and support needs in addition to those owed a statutory accommodation duty.
- 6.2 As outlined in paragraph 3.2, the majority of people accommodated have been provided with a positive move on option.
- 6.3 Learning from 'Everyone In' & the lockdown periods will be considered in the developing emergency accommodation contracts and will inform our future engagement with support agencies, services and other partners.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Recommendation 2.4 notes that the forthcoming emergency accommodation re-procurement of contracts seeks to enhance tenancy support and sustainment of emergency accommodation. The 2021/21 budget includes £0.230m extra investment to enhance the level of service in the re-procurement of emergency accommodation.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 10/09/2021

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications within this report

Lawyer Consulted: Simon Court

Date: 10/09/2021

Public Health Implications:

7.7 In response to the pandemic and in line with advice from Public Health England, accommodation was provided for all verified rough sleepers and those becoming homeless who would otherwise be rough sleeping. This was to minimise the spread of infection and to safeguard rough sleepers who are considered to be amongst people at high risk if they contracted Covid-19. Many people we have provided emergency and short term accommodation for would not be owed a statutory housing duty. This is reflected in the significant increase in the number of placements since April 2020.

