

**Subject:** **NEXT STEPS - ROUGH SLEEPING AND ACCOMMODATION DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC AND RECOVERY REPORT - Extract from the Proceedings of the Housing Committee meeting held on the 22 September 2021**

**Date of Meeting:** **7 October 2021**

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**Wards Affected:** **All Wards**

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

***Action Required of Policy & Resources Committee:***

To receive the recommendations of the Housing Committee for consideration.

**Recommendations:**

- (1) To approve a capital budget of £2.800m to be included in the HRA Capital Investment Programme 2021/22 financed by HRA Borrowing of £2.100m funded by the rental stream and an MHCLG contribution of £0.700m. This is for the purchase of 12 new homes to deliver a Housing Led Support scheme for higher need rough sleepers.
- (2) To approve a capital budget of £3.240m be included in the General fund Capital Investment Programme 2021/22 for the acquisition of 30 properties on 10-year leases to deliver Rapid Re-housing for lower need rough sleepers. This will be funded by a contribution from MHCLG of £1.163m and will require borrowing of £2.080m, funded by the rental stream.
- (3) To approve the extension of emergency short term hotels from October until March 2022 in light of continuing pressures of those to whom the council owes a statutory accommodation duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act in emergency accommodation.
- (4) To agree to use the remaining 2021/22 Contain Management Outbreak Fund (COMF) grant (estimated at £1.615m) to support the continuing pressures caused by the pandemic of those in emergency accommodation to whom the council owes a Housing duty.
- (5) To agree to the acquisition of a hotel to deliver in the region of 15 - 20 rooms to enable provision for the SWEP between October 2021 and March 2022.

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

## HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors: Gibson (Joint Chair), Hugh-Jones (Joint Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Williams (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Barnett, Fowler, Meadows, Osborne and Platts.

### PART ONE

#### **27 NEXT STEPS - ROUGH SLEEPING & ACCOMMODATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC & RECOVERY REPORT**

- 27.1 The Head of Housing Needs introduced the report to the committee.
- 27.2 Councillor Mears considered the finances should be totalled at the end of the report and was informed that the hotel acquisition was for 6 months only and cost £138,000. The 81 rooms referred to in the report were spread between hotels and hostels in the city. The funding comes from successfully grant funding bids. It was noted that the authority has a statutory need to help those in temporary accommodation. It was confirmed that the Contain Management Outbreak Fund (COMF) has funds remaining and costs would be neutral to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 27.3 Councillor Barnett was informed that the 45% of social housing lets were too homeless, 57 to transfers and 69 to home seekers.
- 27.4 Councillor Gibson was informed that written answers given to the committee regarding the questions relating to the calculations of move-on rates, out of the two groups in the report, what was the percentage of homes achieved for those moved-on, number of those suitable for re-connections and what assumptions are there about rent recovery.
- 27.5 Councillor Williams noted the 42% of social housing lets to homeless people and noted the government should stop the right-to-buy scheme.
- 27.6 Councillor Mears considered that the finances needed to be clear in the report. The councillor was informed that the written responses would be given regarding the funding from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) which covers all of Sussex and Brighton and Hove. The Executive Director - Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities stated that there isn't a separate pot for Brighton and Hove and work would be needed before details can be given. The councillor welcomed a complex briefing on the matter.

27.7 Councillor Meadows was informed that the council have a statutory requirement to support to support homeless and those on the housing register. It was noted that many homeless have many and varied issues, which includes housing.

27.8 Councillor Gibson considered the table in the report regarding the social housing lets to be very useful, however the out-of-city placements were a concern where people would be isolated from services and support. It was considered good that the government want to end homelessness and wish that the right-to-buy scheme would be reduced. The government were also asked to repeal the £20 less in universal credit following the easing of pandemic regulations. It was considered that the report sets out many positives and highlights the huge challenges such as the lifting of the evictions ban and furloughing. It was noted that numbers of homeless have been reduced and are second only to London. No Second night out scheme was considered successful, and it was also considered good to prevent the revolving-door scenario for the homeless. The councillor commended the report and asked that the re-connections be monitored and for the committee to support the recommendations.

27.9 The Assistant Director of Housing that there has been a 40% fall in out-of-area placements. Currently 122 have been placed in Eastbourne compared to 75 before the pandemic.

27.10 A vote was taken, and by 7 to 3 the recommendations were agreed. (Councillor Meadows noted recommendation 2.1)

27.11 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Housing Committee note the low number of verified rough sleepers and that the Council will continue to seek to offer accommodation to all verified rough sleepers where this is permissible within the Council's powers to consolidate this achievement; and
- (2) That Housing Committee recommends to Policy & Resources Committee:
  - (1) To approve a capital budget of £2.800m to be included in the HRA Capital Investment Programme 2021/22 financed by HRA Borrowing of £2.100m funded by the rental stream and an MHCLG contribution of £0.700m. This is for the purchase of 12 new homes to deliver a Housing Led Support scheme for higher need rough sleepers.
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