

Accommodation and support proposal being taken through Council management teams

Purpose

This paper recommends that BCC develop an Accommodation and Support strategy sets out the reasons why the strategy is required.

Issues

Accommodation and support is a key priority for the following reasons:

- The Labour Group 2018 Manifesto promises to tackle homelessness. Good housing solutions and preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place will be key to delivering this aspiration.
- Citizens have identified Housing and Housing Support as a key outcome. This is detailed as the Prevention First Outcome within the Cabinet Report entitled Putting Prevention First, Delivering the Vision for Adult Social Care, which was approved by Cabinet in November 2017.
- Citizens continually tell us that the provision of accommodation and support to live independently is an issue across the city. This is also evident from the number of Members Enquiries we receive.
- The new social work model with its focus upon community based solutions (via Three Conversations) and locality working provides a good basis to explore greater independence for citizens in their housing options.
- Birmingham along with the other West Midlands Combined Authority Areas is Housing First pilot site. Learning from this work will support the broader work around vulnerable groups and their housing solutions.
- While housing related support is different from social care, or housing management and advice, it is essential to support Social Care delivery and provision.
- To deliver the vision for Adult Social Care, we need to ensure we have an appropriate range of housing and support options for citizens located in the City.
- Within Adult Social Care and Housing, we commission and provide different aspects of accommodation and support, but without a clear approach or planning strategy as to what we expect each element to deliver or how they relate. We have the building block to ensure that more people are supported as far as is possible close to where they live, connected with their community assets and family networks. There is an opportunity to establish a positive accommodation and support pathway specifically for people with learning disabilities and mental health support needs in line with best practice relating to homelessness prevention pathways.

Current Position

There is currently not a shared vision across partners as to how we will support the delivery of accessible and cost effective accommodation for vulnerable people. Currently social work practice is driving the choice of housing options, without a clear plan for how we will support decision-making for access to the spectrum of support from residential care to Supported accommodation to supported independent care.

Work is starting in relation to how we better transition young people from packages of children's social care into adult social care, which includes exploration of the full range of possible of accommodation and support options.

The market has developed Extra Care Housing and there is no clarity for Social Workers as to how best to utilise such resource for citizens. Evidence from the work of Specialist Impact Team and voids in the City suggests the lack of coordinated approach means that we are not utilising housing options appropriately.

Given the pressures on the social housing sector in the City, a step change is required for adult social care to move into considering broader, innovative tenure options including private rented sector, live and work schemes, home - share, modular housing and home ownership. Dependent upon the needs of the individuals these options could include some housing related floating support to help sustain the accommodation, retain a preventative community based approach and prevent or lower the of any crisis or higher cost interventions.

Recommendations

It is recommended that work takes place in partnership between Place, Adult Social Care Economy Directorate and Children's Trust to deliver the following:

- 1) An accommodation and support pathway for people with learning disabilities and mental health support needs. This could be through a co-design approach with existing supported accommodation and care providers across the different funding streams and citizens. This will enable the creation of an excellence pathway, determine the level and type of provision at each stage of the pathway and provide visibility for how citizens are able to access, exit and regain access according to their needs. The design of the pathway will be to enable independence at all stages. The pathway will then enable a focused discussion in relation to the gaps, what we need to do more of, less of in order to get VFM and good outcomes for citizens.
- 2) Learning from the work on positive pathways via the Homelessness Partnership Board and the Regional Homelessness Taskforce will need to be included in this work in order to ensure a read across with that work and also so that we maximise any opportunities.
- 3) Explore the different types of housing models and tenures that will be suitable for people with learning disabilities. Options should be truly affordable to the citizen and enable their participation in employment options. Housing costs should not act as a deterrent for getting people with learning disabilities into paid work.