

Scrutiny Housing Management Voids and Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

1. Topic

- 1.1 Review of Voids and Temporary Accommodation current processes and performance to identify efficiencies and improvements to service delivery.

2. Purpose/Scope (As agreed Scrutiny Committee – 23/7/19)

- 2.1 To consider the Voids Process using a systems thinking methodology, which will review the process end to end;
- 2.2 To consider current performance;
- 2.3 To understand costs associated with void properties;
- 2.4 To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless;
- 2.5 To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation;
- 2.6 To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value;
- 2.7 To understand the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

3. Members

- 3.1 4 (Councillors – Cumbers (Chairperson), Bindloss, Browne, Holmes)

4. Rationale

- 4.1 The objective of the review is to identify inefficiencies and issues with the current processes in order to make recommendations for improving performance and service delivery and creating efficiencies where possible focusing on best value.
- 4.2 The review will focus on improving the customer experience, streamlining current processes and identifying areas where efficiencies can be made without impacting on the delivery of the service.
- 4.3 The review will identify benchmarks and performance indicators and a reporting process so that the impact of recommendations can be measured and monitored over time.

5. Background

- 5.1 The review has come about as a response to identified issues within the voids and temporary accommodation services both in terms of performance, costs and customer satisfaction.
- 5.2 The review will look at existing policy and consider the formation of new policy where gaps are identified.
- 5.3 The review will consider existing agreements (Contracts/Tenancy Agreements etc..) and will consider any proposals for revisions.
- 5.4 The review will consider how the voice of the customer can be heard and the complex issues faced by customers who use the services.
- 5.5 The review will consider the multi-disciplinary nature of the service and how the Council services involved can work collaboratively to improve delivery and outcomes.
- 5.6 It is accepted that the voids management processes and temporary accommodation each warrant separate consideration, as such the Group will consider voids management initially, followed by temporary accommodation.

6. Methodology/Approach

The enquiry will take the form of:

- Desk-based review of papers
- Site visits / observations
- Comparisons with other authorities
- Workshops / Focus Groups
- Interview officers and stakeholders
- Calling witnesses to give evidence

7. Evidence Sources

- Information on service processes and costs of current provision
- Models of alternative delivery for temporary accommodation
- Research and evidence
- Views from a variety of stakeholders including Officers and Portfolio Holder/s

8. Witnesses/Technical Experts

May include:

- TFEC
- Housing Association
- County Council – to provide evidence/information on accommodation strategies for mental health and learning disabilities
- Allocations Team – to provide information/evidence on trends, why housing refused etc...
- Peer Local Authority
- Contractor
- Internal Audit (If fits with the work plan)

9. Other considerations

- Support for the meetings will be provided by Democratic Services
- Technical support and expertise will be provided by the Directorate for Growth and Regeneration
- Site visits will be arranged between meetings of the Group

10. Timetable

Date	Actions	Officers/Members	Notes
28 August 2019 – 3pm	First meeting: Summary/Background Review Terms of Reference Agree Timetable	Cllr Cumbers Cllr Bindloss Cllr Browne Cllr Holmes Pranali Parikh – Director for Growth and Regeneration Albert Wilson – Housing Manager Natasha Taylor – Scrutiny Officer	
20 September 2019 – 2pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree dates (early October) and schedule of evidence/witness sessions • Review current process/model of delivery (Flowchart to be provided in advance of meeting) • Review draft revised tenancy agreement 	Cllr Cumbers Cllr Bindloss Cllr Browne Cllr Holmes Pranali Parikh – Director for Growth and Regeneration Albert Wilson – Housing Manager Natasha Taylor – Scrutiny Officer	
25 October 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of evidence sessions • Review Draft Standards Policy • Review Draft Allocations Policy • Member feedback on Show and Tell Sessions 		
29 November 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	Discussion: Voids Policy (Opportunity for Task and Finish Group to feed into the new policy) Discussion: Expectations regarding Performance Measures and monitoring		
13 December 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	To agree the final recommendations and report for Scrutiny Committee - January		
January 2020	Report to Scrutiny Committee (Special Meeting – 10 Jan TBC) Review by Chief Executive Report to Cabinet – 22 January 2020		

* Dates TBC.

Note – Additional dates will be set for evidence sessions and informal meetings where necessary.